



Excel Academy Eagle Update

February 2, 2024

UPDATES FROM THE SCHOOL



Dear Eagle Families,

One of the things I love most about Excel Academy is how our teachers and staff work to find ways for ALL students to shine. Whether it's through academic achievement, strong character, athletics, creative and performing talent, or innovative thinking, we strive to find ways for students to tap into their strengths, try new things, and develop new interests and skills. I'm thrilled and proud to share information about some of the academic competitions our students are participating in this year.

FUTURE CITY COMPETITION 2024: Students in the STEM

Challenge elective (first semester) worked on designing a Future City that was at least 100 years into the future and that had a clean and reliable source of energy for electricity production. Students submitted a 1,500 word essay about their city and put together a scaled model to present to the judges. Many thanks to Teacher Sponsor, Mrs. Haberman and Ms. Tory Fahrenholz, Process Engineer with Linde Engineering Americas, for serving as the team's Engineering Mentor. Congratulations to the team members who competed at the Colorado School of Mines on January 20th: Freya S. (6th), Frances B. (7th), Noah K. (7th), Logan Yeager (7th), and Argjend K. (8th). Check out the photos below and stop in to see their Future City model in the display case across from the main office.

SCRIPPS SPELLING BEE 2024: We are excited to host our School Spelling Bee this Friday, February 9th. Students in 3rd through 8th grade will attend the competition, and families of our

competitors are invited to join us in the gym (remember to bring an ID and sign in at the office). Thank you to Ms. Kaschub for coordinating all things related to the Scripps Spelling Bee at Excel!

DENVER METRO REGIONAL SCIENCE & ENGINEERING FAIR 2024: Thank you to our Excel PTO for funding our school's competitors in this year's DMRSEF coming up on February 23rd at CU Denver. Congratulations to 6th graders Freya S. and Harlow H. for qualifying with their project, Mountain Pine Beetle Scent Study, supported by

e-CYBERMISSION 2024: This is a virtual science and engineering competition that is free to enter and is sponsored by the US Army. Students can win savings bonds at each level of competition. This year we have two teams entering: a 6th grade team consisting of Freya S. and Harlow H., and a 7th grade team with Ethan C. and Huxley Q. The first round of virtual judging takes place March 13th - 27th, with regional judging April 23rd-26th. State winners, regional finalists, and national finalists will be announced on May 3rd.

THE STOCK MARKET GAME 2024: The Stock Market Game introduces young people to saving and investing through a simulation of the stock market and bond market. Students get to trade and manage their own virtual \$100,000 investment portfolio to see how they perform over time. This online simulation of the global capital markets engages students in the world of economics, investing, and personal finance in order to prepare them for financially independent futures. Ms. Copeland teaches this elective class this semester with 17 students participating.

Many thanks to the teachers and families who support our students throughout competitions. While it's exciting to win, there biggest value is in the learning along the way. Beyond the content and process of engaging with the materials, many of these competitions also provide opportunities to develop other skills essential for today's workforce: teamwork, cooperation, innovative thinking, resilience, and public speaking. Congratulations to all of our student competitors!

In Partnership,
Kresta Vuolo
Executive Director



Future City 2024 Team Photo

From Left: Ms. Fahrenholz, Fancis, Noah, Argjend, Logan, Freya, Mrs. Haberman



The Judges Room

The team did a 7-minute presentation to a panel of 10 professional judges. Judges then had 8 minutes to look at the model and ask questions.



The Competition Floor

This is where all middle schools were presenting their cities to engineers, teachers, and other students.



P. S. I LOVE YOU DAY: WEAR PURPLE ON FEB. 9th

We are excited to join hundreds of schools across our nation in celebrating P.S. I Love You Day on the second Friday in February. P.S. I Love You Day spreads light on the importance of being kind to one another. It emphasizes the power of extending friendship to those who might be different, the importance of being aware of our words and actions, and encourages us to reach out to someone who might be lonely and stand up for someone who might be mistreated. Excel Academy will take part on this day and celebrate with various activities. To help spread the message, we encourage everyone to wear purple on Friday, February 9th. Wearing the same color shows that we are united as a community.

Our classes will hold their P. S. I Love You Day parties at the end of the day on Friday, February 9th. The activities connected to P.S. I Love You Day support our school's efforts to increase social-emotional skills and wellness. See communications from your child's homeroom teacher for information. Volunteers who have signed up to support P. S. I Love You Day will need to sign in at the front desk and provide their ID for our Raptor check-in system. Please allow plenty of time to park, walk, and sign in.

P.S. I Love YOU DAY

Leadership Coffee Chat Recap

Thank you to the guardians who joined our Leadership Coffee Chat on Wednesday morning. Here's a recap of the topics those in attendance raised and discussed.



- **1st SEMESTER AWARDS CEREMONIES:** Parents shared that they appreciated the smaller ceremonies in the cafeteria for our elementary students.
- **PREPARING FOR NEXT GRADE LEVELS:** Parents expressed desire for families and students to have opportunities to meet the teachers and learn more about next year's grade levels. Staff shared that plans are in the works for students to have an opportunity to visit the next grade level closer to the end of the school year. We will also think about ways for families to learn more about the teachers at the next grade level.
- **ENROLLMENT FOR 2024-25 SCHOOL YEAR:** A parent asked how enrollment for next year is looking. Ms. Vuolo shared that while it's still early, enrollment is currently on track to meet or exceed this year's levels. We are currently full in 5th grade, and nearly full in most other grade levels. We still have availability in kindergarten, which is not unusual as families who are enrolling their oldest child in kindergarten for the first time are oftentimes unaware that enrollment begins in January. We are also happy to share that we have several students/families who enrolled elsewhere this year are returning to Excel next year and will also be welcoming some students/families impacted by the four schools Jeffco will be closing at the end of this school year. .

- **TEACHER & LEADERSHIP RETENTION:** Parents asked whether we anticipate a high level of staff turnover for the upcoming school year. Ms. Vuolo shared that based on the staff Declaration of Intent/Desires form results from this week, we anticipate the majority of our staff returning, including all of the members of the school's current administration indicating intent to return. Though the declaration/intent form is preliminary, it provides insight that informs our planning and budgeting for the upcoming year. The form also provides opportunities for staff members to share other positions/grade levels/content areas of interest so that we can support our colleagues in their professional growth.
- **SPRING EXPLORATIONS:** The spring round of Explorations begins on February 21st. We've made some adjustments and enhancements based on feedback from teachers, students, and families and look forward to the next iteration!
- **STAFF TURNOVER DISCUSSION:** Our administrative team answered questions about factors that contributed to Excel staff turnover during the past two years, and ways we are working to stabilize our staffing. We also discussed declines in the number of people entering the teaching profession and increased percentage of those leaving the field since COVID.
- **SUGGESTIONS FROM GUARDIANS:** Parents in attendance suggested that the school provide training for teachers in finding ways to utilize volunteers, shared some ideas for supporting families who might be impacted by next year's Friday 2:15 dismissal time, and suggested that teachers share more with families about not only curriculum but also classroom routines.

We hope you will join us at our next Leadership Coffee Chat, which will be held on Wednesday, March 6th. This is an adjusted date due to the Colorado League of Charter Schools Annual Conference.



Kids Heart Challenge: FINAL WEEK!

Please take a moment to [click here](#) to read Ms. Pezzulo's update for our final week of the Kids Heart Challenge.

SOAR Winners

Congratulations to this week's SOAR drawing winners!

Self-Discipline

Outstanding Effort

Acceptance of Others

Resilience

KG Jacob S.

1st Dawson W.

2nd Sam P.
3rd Blake C.
4th Wolfgang Y.
5th Finley M.
6th Kennedy D .
7th Bella E.
8th Ella H.

Classroom: Mrs. Mackey's 1st Grade Class for Outstanding Effort.



Excel Athletic Update from Coach Miller

The girls' basketball season opened up with a clash between the Lincoln Leopards and our Excel Eagles. The "B" team led things off. Inexperience and lack of height attributed to the slow start for the Eagles. For many of the girls it was their first game and first experience playing basketball and initially it showed. Improvement from the first half to the second was noticeable as the girls started to move the ball better, turn the ball over less and get shot opportunities. Despite the final score the girls played very good defense. Addy Saucedo was our lone scorer for the game with 2 points in the 36-2 loss. The "A" team was a much different story. Height, experience and tenacity were the characteristics that allowed the Eagles to prevail. The Eagle defense was stifling allowing only 5 points for the Leopards. Meanwhile, balanced scoring by the Eagles paved the way to victory. Gianna Marcolina led the way with 6 points, followed by Sophie Valdez and Xoe Quintana with 4 each, Lily Doeseckle with 3, and Giselle Ibarra with 2 points. The Eagles will host Clear Creek Middle School on Tuesday, February 6th starting at 4:15pm.

Game Change: The home game with ECDS originally scheduled for February 8th has been rescheduled for February 20th!

FROM THE CLINIC

Required and recommended vaccines

Students attending Colorado kindergarten – 12th grade schools for the 2024-25 school year: We know there's nothing more important than making sure your children stay healthy and learning all year long. Getting vaccinated is an important part of keeping kids in school, as it prevents them from catching and spreading diseases that can make them sick. The letter below includes important information about Colorado's school vaccine requirements, as well as other resources.



LETTER

FROM THE EXCEL ACADEMY BOARD OF DIRECTORS



January Board Update & Looking to Fill an Immediate Vacancy

The Excel Academy Board of Directors held their monthly meeting and annual training on board roles and responsibilities facilitated by the Colorado League of Charter Schools on January 23. Ms. Vuolo shared her [director's report](#), which provided an overview of the many amazing events happening throughout the school community. The Board also approved changes to the 2024/2025 school schedule as previously communicated in the Eagle Update. We are excited to announce that the board unanimously voted to renew Ms. Kresta Vuolo's contract as Excel's Executive Director for the 2024/2025 school year.

The Excel Academy Board of Directors is looking to fill a recent vacancy for a term running through July 2025. If you are interested in giving back to your local community and serving on Excel's Board, please consider applying through [this form](#) by Wednesday, February 7. We are looking for a parent or community member who is passionate about the long term sustainability of Excel Academy, and supporting our mission and vision. The board supports the "business" of the school and experience in law, finance, technology, facility planning, data analysis, strategic planning, human resources, operations, marketing, leadership, community outreach, or education would be particularly useful, but are not required. Board members must be available to attend one [monthly board meeting](#) and participate on one [board committee](#). The volunteer time commitment is approximately 4 hours a month. Serving on the board is a great way to give back to your community and make a difference in our young learners' lives. Learn more about charter school boards by reading [this introduction](#) or visit the [Board of Directors page](#) on the Excel website.

In Partnership,
Your Excel Academy Board of Directors

UPDATES FROM THE PTO

Excel PTO Community Night Out! Kids Welcome!

Join us on February 9th at 3rd Shot Pickleball from 6:00 - 9:00 pm. All levels and abilities, including those who are new to pickleball, welcome. Equipment also available to use.

Click [HERE](#) for details.

Click [HERE](#) to RSVP on Track it Forward



Keep Kooon... **20% OF FOOD SALES* BACK TO**

EXCEL ACADEMY PTO

Show this flyer or simply mention the fundraiser to your server to have your sales counted.

FUNDRAISER DETAILS

7460 W. 52Nd Avenue, Arvada, CO 80002
February 22, 2024*

If ordering online, please follow these instructions:

- 1 Start your order at order.redrobin.com and select the restaurant above.
- 2 In the menu, go to the category labeled "Fundraisers (To-Go-Only)" and click on that item.
- 3 Click the "Add" button and then "Add to bag".
- 4 Add your meal items and check out.
- 5 Drive at Red Robin, come in, say hi, grab your food and be on your way! If your location has curbside pick-up, we can bring it to your car too!

*Fundraiser during restaurant operating hours. Visit redrobin.com and find this location to view hours. Donation based on all eligible food items sold for food sales only. Excludes sales from catering (for select locations), 3rd party ordering and delivery sites, alcohol, gift cards, merch, tax and gratuity. Offer valid if flyer is distributed or used for approval during fundraiser only & check.

Red Robin Excel FUNdraiser Night! February 22nd ALL DAY!

It is time for some BURGERS and FRIES!

Excel Academy PTO will receive 20% of fundraiser sales during this fundraiser! Participate by showing the flyer below to your server, mentioning Excel Academy, or by ordering online at redrobin.com or on the Red Robin mobile app. For online and mobile app orders you must add the fundraiser to your cart before you check out for the sales to count towards the fundraiser.

[Red Robin Flyer](#)

Red Robin Address: 7460 W. 52Nd Avenue Arvada, CO 80002

See instructions for ordering online in the attached flier!.

"SIGN-UP FOR RaiseRight and start earning for the school with your purchases!



Gift card fundraising, also known as scrip fundraising, has been the #1 fundraiser for nonprofit organizations across the U.S. for more than 25 years. Why? Because it's easy and more convenient than selling goods or recruiting volunteers. Earn simply by buying gift cards to use for everyday purchases, instead of cash or credit cards. You can also purchase electronic cards with instant availability for your online purchases. You receive the full amount on the gift card, and the PTO receives a percentage of every purchase from RaiseRight. Sign up today!

Sign-Up at this link: [RaiseRight](#)

PTO Links

[Excel Academy PTO Website](#)

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

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

YMCA Summer Day Camp!

YMCA Summer Day Camp! Registration now open for the Excel location!

www.DenverYMCA.org

Ages: 5-12

Cost: \$230/week for members, \$280/week for non-members

Hours: 8:00 AM- 5:30 PM

Summer Camp [FLYER](#)



It's Girl Scout Cookie Time!

Excel students in Girl Scout troop 68204 will be selling your favorite cookies after school 3:30p- 3:45p. the week of Feb 20-24. Cash and credit cards will be accepted. Boxes are \$5-\$6 each. Find the girls in the grassy area at the end of the drive line.

Thank you so much for you help!
Kelly Pilger



Help Venezuelan Refugees

My name is Elaina, and I am in 4th grade and I'm doing a personal service project to help the Venezuelan migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers that have been placed in Colorado. They came all the way from Venezuela with only the clothes on their backs to America; some had to walk 4 months straight. By Donating you can change lives. Help today by donating items to the box in the school vestibule starting on January 15th. Click [HERE](#) to see what they need. Thank you

Helpful Links & Resources

- [Order Breakfast or Lunch:](#) **January** meals available to order. (due a week before the week of meals)
- [Excel Academy Standards-Based Grading Scale](#)
- [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

- Email:** Julie.Smith@jeffco.k12.co.us
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- Location:** [11500 West 84th Avenue, Arvada, CO, USA](#)
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Julie Smith

Julie is using Smore to create beautiful newsletters

