



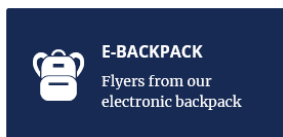
Colonial Hills Elementary School
2023-24 New Family Orientation

August 29, 2023

Provided By the PTA . . . Because We've Been There!

Communication Channels

- **Mrs. Berridge's Newsletter:** Mrs. Berridge communicates with families via a weekly newsletter. The newsletters are distributed via email usually Friday afternoons and are also available on the school website. She gives a wonderful overview of each week along with providing useful links to upcoming events.
 - E-Backpack: This resource has replaced the sending home of traditional paper forms for school events. One of the main ways the PTA and other groups communicate with families is via E-Backpack.
 - The Lunch Menu and MyPaymentsPlus are accessible via the school website under "Quick Links"
 - If you are not receiving the weekly update, please contact Jodi McNeal, the school secretary, at 614-450-5406.



- School Website:
<http://www.worthington.k12.oh.us/colonialhillses>
- E-Backpack link:
<https://www.worthington.k12.oh.us/Page/3563>

- **Teachers:** Teacher communication varies from class to class. Some teachers provide weekly updates via e-mail, while others provide monthly newsletters, some use FaceBook.
 - Parent/Teacher Conferences: These conferences are usually held in October and February. The exact dates are noted on the school calendar that goes out at the beginning of each school year. Teachers reach out to their families (via email, folders, etc.) regarding how to schedule the conference.
- **PTA:** The PTA tries to communicate via several channels. Its main means of communication are through...
 - Mrs. Berridge's newsletter
 - PTA Facebook Page (Colonial Hills PTA)
 - E-Backpack, this is where you will find the minutes for each of the monthly PTA meeting
 - The PTA also emails its members through MemberHub. Make sure to join the PTA to be included on the PTA master email list.
- **District communications & website :**
 - Watch your mailbox for regular newsletters, financial updates, and notifications about big events, for example middle school open houses and community meetings.
 - Visit the website, another excellent resource for district and school news, dates, deadlines, lunch menu, My Payments Plus and the Superintendent's blog.
 - My Payments Plus (www.mypaymentsplus.com) is where you'll go to set up an account to easily pay school fees, field trip fees, and set up your child's lunch money account. Lunch menu and MyPaymentsPlus are accessible via the school website under "Quick Links."
 - Superintendent's Blog sign up by going to the www.worthington.k12.oh.us > Leadership > Superintendent > "Read More from Trent."

- **Automated Messages:** Depending on how you requested to be notified via the annual update of your emergency Data Review, the District will leave you a voicemail or send a text message regarding school cancellations and delays.
- **Infinite Campus:** To log in go to worthingtonoh.infinitecampus.org
Student report cards and attendance records may be accessed here. Infinite Campus is also used for EPP (Enrichment Placement Program) teacher communication/assignment.

PTA Events

- **August** – The Ice Cream Social is held during the evening of the school’s Meet the Teacher. The purpose of this event is to help students and parents ease into the school year, see familiar faces, and get excited about the year ahead.
- **September** – The Walk-a-thon, a PTA fundraiser to kick off the school year. The goal is to provide the kids with a healthy activity that promotes community building. Each class gets a chance to walk or run the famous Colonial Hills Spiral Mile on South Field. The funds raised during this event help the PTA in providing community building events throughout the year. It is one of the PTA’s two biggest fundraisers. Without it all of our fun school events would not be possible. In 2022 \$5900 was raised to support the calendar of events provided by the PTA.
- **October** – During the school’s fall party, weather depending, the kids walk a parade route in their costumes through Colonial Hills while led by a samba band directed by Ms. Wessel.
- **November** – The Pancake Breakfast is a community event that allows families to come together before the holidays and celebrate our school community.
- **November/December** -
 - The PTA organizes Secret Holiday Helpers, which is a collection for CHES families in need and provides assistance over the holidays. The PTA never knows the identity of the families but only their wish list. An online sign-up is circulated via the PTA emails and on the PTA Facebook page. Last year we helped to support 20 families in our community with the Holiday Helpers program.
- **January** – The two big events to kick off the new year are the Cardboard Challenge and Pastapalooza.
 - The Cardboard Challenge brings students together one Saturday in January. This event promotes creativity and teamwork as the students work together to build structures out of cardboard boxes.
 - Pastapalooza is an annual spaghetti dinner (usually from Villa Nova) that has been a CHES event for multiple decades. While it is a fundraiser, it is also a community-building event. The 5th grade students serve the spaghetti dinner, along with selling desserts and drinks to raise funds for their end of school celebration in May.
- **March** – The first week of March is Read Across America Week, an annual reading motivation and awareness program that calls for every child in every community to celebrate reading. On the Thursday of that week, we come together as a school community to enjoy a night of games, crafts, friends, reading, fun and community service.

- **April** – The Art Show is held every spring. It is a community-building event and an opportunity for the students to share their works of art with friends and family. Their art is displayed in the halls museum-style. The PTA provides dessert.
- **End of School Year Celebrations**–
 - During the last few weeks of school, the gym teacher coordinates traditional Field Day events for the first through fifth grades. They participate in field-day style games on South Field and wear tie-dyed shirts they made in art class with Ms. Liddil.
 - On the last day of school, the PTA hosts an End of Year Celebration, there are stations set up around the campus for each grade to rotate through, staying 20 minutes at each. The stations have included SuperGames inflatables, a dance party and bubbles, water games, Dairy Queen treats, Kona Ice, etc.
- **Miscellaneous**
 - Spirit Days – The *last Friday of every month* is Spirit Day! Students are encouraged to wear school colors and show their Cougar Pride!
 - Skate Parties – There are typically three to four parties each year at Skate Zone 71. These are small fundraisers for the PTA and fun for the kids.

Year-Round Fundraisers:

- **Square One** will occur in November. This gives family and friends an opportunity to purchase pieces of artwork created by your student(s). Many families use this fundraiser for holiday gift giving. The proceeds of this benefit the art program.
- **Scholastic Book Fair**– The PTA hosts two each year, the proceeds of which benefit the school library. The sales are held in the library and are often held concurrently with parent/teacher conference week.
- **Trick-the-Trail** – This is a Cross Country fundraiser. Participants pay to submit a carved pumpkin into a contest. The jack-o-lanterns are lit and line the trail through the school ravine. It's free to come look at all the pumpkins and vote for your favorite while enjoying the music, food and storytelling. There's usually a bonfire on South Field with storytellers.
- **Plant Sale** - occurs in the spring and the second of our top two fundraisers. We work with Foertmeyer and Sons', a family business in Delaware. Their prices, plants and catalog were the best among companies the PTA considered, and the PTA earns an average of \$5.30 per plant sold.
- **Spirit Wear** – There are typically two to three sales a year. There's an online store that's open for about two weeks. It is promoted via Mrs. Berridge's newsletter and the PTA Facebook page. The last Friday of every month is Spirit Day!
- **Shopping** – The best and easiest way to support our school through shopping is by signing up for Kroger Community Rewards. Open your Kroger app if you have one go Account > Rewards > enter our school code: un581 . Last year we raised \$1600.00 from these rewards alone!
- **Prideful Paws** - This is a great way to spread Cougar Pride through our community. Paws are meant for a Paws-itive purpose (birthday, big game, great report card, survived a challenging week, thanking someone). Contact Sarah Mullen for more information at sarahemullen7@gmail.com or look for a Prideful Paws link the Ms. Berridge's Friday Notes.

School Athletics and Enrichment

- **Cross Country** – The school has a strong Cross Country program that is open to first through sixth grade. Practices are before school. Students can choose which meets to attend but are asked to attend the meets hosted at CHES. The focus is a healthy lifestyle, and there are plenty of students who walk a portion of the mile.
- **Orchestra and Band** – Orchestra is offered beginning in 5th grade. Students are invited to choose the instrument of their choice. Ms. Wessel leads 4th and 5th graders in learning to play the Samba drums to perform in the Halloween parade through Colonial Hills; students must sign up for this. Practices are after school.
- **School Choirs** – The 5th grade has an optional choir during the first half of the school year. And the 3rd and 4th grade have an optional choir during the second half of the school year. Choir practice is once a week before school, and concerts are held in the evening.
- **Folk Group** – This group is older students (4th – 5th grade). The folk group is more than 20 years old.

Room Parents and School Parties

- Room Parents are primarily responsible for planning four classroom parties:
 - Fall/Halloween – festivities include a costume parade through the neighborhood led by a samba band, and parents are welcome to attend
 - Winter/Holiday – traditional winter holiday celebrations in the classrooms
 - Valentine's Day – traditional Valentine card exchange, games and snacks
 - Last Day of School – The PTA provides pizza for the whole school, and room parents are asked to coordinate any additional snacks and drinks for lunch. Room parent volunteers are needed to help run the stations the PTA coordinates around the campus.
- Room Parents also organize teacher gifts for the end of the year and/or as appropriate if the teacher is getting married or having a baby, for example.
- Food offered at parties is to be communicated to the parents two weeks in advance. Because of allergies, please do not bring in any extra food for the classrooms.
- Room parents often solicit any needed donations for the classroom, such as pencils, tissues, etc.

Other Notes

- Outdoor Learning Space opened in 2021 and was created by passionate parents to make outdoor learning more accessible for our students and teachers. If you love the outdoors and what to be a part of helping to keep the ravine and outdoor classroom looking great, contact Rebecca Garabed at r.garabed@gmail.com or Lindsay Roop at lindsay.babbitt@gmail.com
- SeeSaw is a learning management system used in the classroom. For more information, as your child's teacher how it is being utilized in the classroom.
- Hello Id (wscloud.helloid.com) is the home page where you can find the schools apps your student uses throughout the day. With you students Login and password you can access these apps outside of school for extra practice. Examples of school apps include ST Math and Lexia. Ask your student's teacher which apps their class will be utilizing this year.
- Reflections is a National PTA Art program. This year's theme is "I am hopeful because..." and students have the opportunity to have their work progress to District, State and National competitions.
- Visitors/volunteers in the school need to bring their ID into the building and get added to the new system at the first desk in the office.
- Parent Volunteers need to go through a background check before chaperoning a field trip. The District Office assists with this process.
- The Circle of Grandparents is a wonderful way for extended families to be involved.