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District 301 Distributes Food Baskets

In November, Central families and staff donated enough food to provide holiday baskets to approximately 260 families in the Central community! These baskets included such items as canned fruits and vegetables, stuffing mix, juice, cake mix, cereal, pasta, and much more. Our Transportation staff delivered the holiday boxes before Thanksgiving to support our families in need. Thanks to all who donated!

An extra thank you goes to the CHS Student Council, FFA and Service Club who organized the food drive and assembled the boxes under the guidance of Steve Diversey, Zandra McGuire, and Dave Semmen. Thanks for all your hard work on behalf of the Central community!



Snow Days and Emergency Closures

Should we experience inclement weather this winter, the District may need to make a decision to close school for the safety of our students and staff. (Please review the article later in this Gazette for more information about the emergency closure notification process.) In the event of a “snow day”, schools will be closed with no in-person or remote instruction occurring. The missed day will be made up at the end of the school year as part of the five emergency days that were built into the calendar.

The district has an approved remote learning plan in response to COVID-19 that allows us to teach students remotely, but e-learning days due to an emergency closure are addressed by a separate state statute. District 301 does not currently have an approved e-learning plan for emergency closures.

Dr. Todd Stirn
Superintendent
Dr. Esther Mongan
Assistant Superintendent

District Contact Information

District Office
847.464.6005

Central High School
847.464.6030

Central Middle School
847.464.6000

Prairie Knolls Middle School
847.717.8100

Country Trails Elementary School
847.717.8000

Howard B. Thomas Grade School
847.464.6008

Lily Lake Grade School
847.464.6011

Prairie View Grade School
847.464.6014

Transportation Office
847.464.6052

Food Services
847.464.6043

Athletic Department
847.464.6038

Curriculum Corner

Assessments

The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) has delayed the start of 2021 spring assessments to at least March 15, 2021. Initially, ACCESS testing for our English Language Learners was set to begin upon our return from Winter Break in January. At this point, there is discussion that the delay for all assessments may be permanent. We will keep you abreast as information regarding spring assessments is updated.

5Essentials Survey

The 5Essentials Survey will be administered this year as a way for the State and school districts to see the impact of COVID-19 on the learning environment. Information regarding the administration dates for Central 301 will be coming out within each school's newsletter after the break.

Instructional Model Remains the Same

We are excited that we continue to offer both in-person and remote learning for our students and families. This instructional model will remain throughout the rest of the 2021 school year. Our families have made their selections for semester 2 and student schedules should be available for our families on the following dates: Prairie Knolls Middle School—January 2; Central Middle School—January 1; and Central High School—January 3.

Illinois School Report Card

The suspension of in-person instruction last spring affected many metrics within the Illinois School Report Card for the State and our District. Since there were no assessments given in the spring of 2020 there is very limited data to report regarding school and district success. There were several metrics (early college coursework (9-12), freshman on track, graduation rate, number of school days, student and teacher attendance, student mobility, dropout rate, chronic truancy, chronic absenteeism, etc.) that were calculated; however, please note that they were "calculated with concern" due to the impact of policy changes.

Second Semester Bus Routes

Due to some students changing their attendance model for the second semester, many hybrid (in-person) students will see a change to their bus routes. All families with hybrid students should check their students' bus information in their Skyward Parent Portal before school resumes on January 4th.



If you have any questions or concerns regarding your student's bus schedule, please email the Transportation Department at transportation@central301.net or call 847-464-6052.

Upcoming Dates

Dec. 21

BOE Meeting

Dec. 21 - Jan. 1

Winter Break

Jan. 18

MLK Day - No School

Jan. 19

BOE Meeting

Feb. 15

President's Day - No School

Feb. 16

BOE Meeting

Feb. 26

No School for Students

Mar. 15

BOE Meeting

Mar. 18

Evening Parent-Teacher Conferences

Mar. 19

Half Day of School

Mar. 29 - Apr. 2

Spring Break

Emergency School Closures

We want to remind families of District 301's policies and procedures regarding emergency closings. It is the district's policy to operate school whenever possible, but there may be occasions when we need to close. Only school closures will be announced. If no announcement is made, you should assume that school is in session. We will use multiple avenues to relay weather-related closing information to our families and staff. When the decision to close is made, the announcement will be made via an automated phone call, e-blast, district website post, and social media post. The announcements happen very quickly and it is possible that a Facebook post could reach you before your automated phone call. Below is a list of ways you can learn of school closings:

- An automated phone message to families and staff
- An email message to families and staff
- The District 301 website: central301.net
- A District 301 mobile app alert
- The District 301 Facebook page: www.facebook.com/centralschooldistrict301
- Local television stations and radio stations
- The Emergency Closing Center website: www.emergencyclosings.com



Central schools provide students with a safe and effective learning environment. When severe weather occurs, Dr. Stirn consults with numerous people, including area school officials and the district's directors of transportation and facilities, to help make the decision to remain open or closed. A decision will be made based on all these factors and what we feel is best for our students.

Did You Know?

Elgin Community College offers free college and career readiness workshops for students and parents to help them prepare for next steps after high school. Their next event is a virtual workshop on January 12, 2021 titled "Explore College Resources from College Board", geared for students in grades 9 to 12. Event registration is required and can be completed at <https://elgin.edu/about-ecc/college-readiness/college-readiness-events/>. Visit ECC's website for details about other upcoming events including Financial Aid 101, Money Management and more!

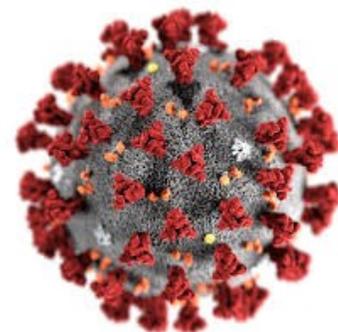
Recordings of past events are available for viewing at <https://elgin.edu/about-ecc/college-readiness/college-readiness-events/recordings/>.

did you know ...

The winter break begins after school on Friday, December 18th, and continues through Friday, January 1st. School will resume on Monday, January 4th. Have a safe and enjoyable break!

COVID-19 Vaccination Plan

A COVID-19 vaccine is a critical component of the national strategy to reduce COVID-19 related illnesses, hospitalizations and deaths. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is working with public health departments, health care providers, pharmacies, and other partners to make sure people can easily receive a COVID-19 vaccine. Both the Pfizer and the Moderna vaccines require two shots administered about a month apart. Immunization will begin with the Phase 1a and Phase 1b population groups. The Phase 1a group vaccine distribution began in Kane County on Wednesday, December 16th. Individuals in this priority group include high risk workers in healthcare settings. The Phase 1b distribution of the vaccine is expected to begin later in December and will include residents in Long Term Care (LTC) facilities. Initially the limited supply of the vaccine will only be available to those determined to be most at risk for exposure to COVID-19. As the vaccine supply increases, more people will be added to those prioritized until it is available to the adult population at large. Click [here](#) to access Frequently Asked Questions regarding the vaccine from the Illinois Department of Public Health.



Warm greetings!

We have much to be grateful for during this time. I am grateful to our Board of Education, administrators, teachers, support staff, and our community that made it possible for us to offer in-person and remote learning since August 31st. Our district positivity numbers remain low and Central 301 did not experience a post-Thanksgiving surge, and I believe that is due, in part, to everyone's diligence to personal responsibility for their own safety and the safety of others. I hope that this holiday season provides some time to relax, safely spend time with family, and rejuvenate your spirit. We look forward to welcoming everyone back to school on January 4th. Have a happy New Year!

Dr. Todd Stirn, Superintendent