



Columbus Magnet School  
A wonderful place where we all learn and grow.

<http://cms.norwalkps.org>

# THURSDAY NOTICE



HIGHER ORDER THINKING SCHOOLS NETWORK  
strong arts arts integration democratic practice

May 4, 2017

## IMPORTANT DATES

Thursday, May 4: 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> Gr. Concert, 1:30 & 7 pm  
 Monday, May 8: Patricia Polacco, author visit  
 May 11 & 12: YA 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Space Mission  
 Wednesday, May 24: 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade Culture Fair  
 Friday, May 26: Field Day  
**Monday, May 29: Memorial Day, School Holiday**  
 Thursday, June 1: 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Concert, 2 & 7 pm  
 Friday, June 2: 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Showcase, 9:30 am  
 Saturday, June 3: CMS Triathlon, 9:00 am  
**Tuesday, June 13: EARLY DISMISSAL, 1:20 PM**  
**Wednesday, June 14: LAST DAY OF SCHOOL**  
**EARLY DISMISSAL, 1:20 PM**

**Please Note:** You can find a calendar of individual classroom field trips and events on the online CMS school calendar. Go to the CMS website: <http://cms.norwalkps.org>, once on the home page click on the "Full Calendar" link under the monthly calendar on the left side of the page.

## TONIGHT!!

### SPRING CONCERT

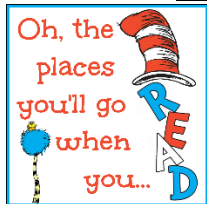
**Thursday, May 4, 1:30 & 7:00**

**pm:** 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade Spring Concert. Our program includes performances by orchestra students.

In addition, we are very excited to present Disney's "Aladdin" performed by 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade chorus students.



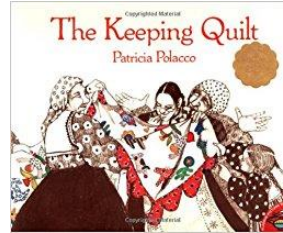
## CMS READ-A-THON 2017



We are excited to be holding our second Read-A-Thon fundraiser. The Read-A-Thon is an opportunity for CMS students to help their school by doing something they do every day . . . READ! Students keep track of their time spent reading (or being read to) in order to earn

certificates, win prizes, and raise money for our school by signing up sponsors. Every student who participates will receive a certificate, pencil, bookmark, and be entered into a school-wide raffle to win prizes! Our prizes will include books by Patricia Polacco and a chance for one lucky reader to have lunch with our visiting author during her visit!! Complete details were sent home to all families last week. For additional information, please contact Kelly Braddock at [braddockk@norwalkps.org](mailto:braddockk@norwalkps.org).

## SAVE THE DATE!!



Mark your calendars! Renowned children's author Patricia Polacco will be visiting Columbus on Monday, May 8. In preparation, Mrs. Joubert has been reading Ms. Polacco's books during library time. Mrs. Polacco will be in the auditorium and will present to 2 grades at a time. (Schedule TBA.) In addition, one lucky CMS Read-a-thon participant will win the opportunity to have lunch with Ms. Polacco. Don't forget to fill out and return the green form that was sent home earlier this week to guarantee your child's entry into this free raffle.



## YOUNG ASTRONAUT UPDATE

### YOUNG ASTRONAUT ROCKET LAUNCH

**Friday, May 5, 2:15 pm**

Weather permitting, join the 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Young Astronauts tomorrow at 2:30 pm in the CMS backyard for the annual payload launch. Help kick off next week's CMS YA Mission with a few outdoor rockets launches to symbolize the 5th Grade's mission efforts to rescue Captain Anaro on the moon and send her back home Far, Far Away. Check out the bulletin board in the library hallway, there is a secret message for CMS, can you decipher the code? If you can you can win a prize

### YA Mission All School Meeting Schedule:

**Thursday, May 11, 9:45 am.** Following the YA Mission parade, all of CMS will gather in the auditorium to view the launch.

**Friday, May 12, 9:30 am:** We will return to the auditorium to watch our astronauts return to earth and hear about their mission experiences.

**Order your YA T-Shirt today!** All Young Astronauts marching in Norwalk's Memorial Day Parade must wear a YA shirt. Order forms are available in the CMS lobby as well as downloadable from the CMS website (For Parents, Parent Forms/Info).

YA grades 1-4: All hands on deck!!! Your help is needed to prepare for Mission landing on May 12. Be on the lookout for Sign up Genius for jobs needed in preparation for mission. Also, please note, one more YA session left, mark your calendars for **May 12**. Don't forget, YA's get to march in the Norwalk's Memorial Day Parade!!! **May 29th**.

## **CMS TRIATHLON**

**Saturday, June 3**

**Norwalk High School, 9:00 am**

Join us for the 2017 CMS Triathlon, a family event where children compete in three athletic timed events – swimming, biking, and running. The following skills are required: Swim in deep water (flotation devices are available if needed), ride a two-wheel bicycle (training wheels permitted), run, and have fun. Event distances are determined by age level: Kindergarten and Grade 1: 1 pool length, 6 bike laps, 1 running lap; Grades 2 and 3: 1 pool length, 8 bike laps, 2 running laps; and Grades 4 and 5: 2 pool lengths, 10 bike laps, 3 running laps. Awards will be given to all participants and certificates to the first place finishers (boys and girls) in each grade. The cost is \$20.00 per athlete (fee includes: T-shirt, refreshments, and award). Deadline for registration is Friday, May 12. **NO REGISTRATIONS WILL BE ACCEPTED AFTER MAY 12.** Additional registration forms are available in the CMS office. Please email questions to Mr. Smith at [mowrys@norwalkps.org](mailto:mowrys@norwalkps.org).

### **REMINDERS:**

**Health Form Requests:** *Now is the time to contact school nurse Mrs. O'Reilly if you need a copy of your child's health form for summer camp.*

**A Note on Spinners:** *Parents please note, Spinners are not allowed at school or on the bus. Thank you.*

### **ARTWORKS TOGETHER:**

**Building Community through the Arts**

**Sunday, May 7, 1-5 pm**

**Norwalk High School Gym**

Columbus Magnet School will be exhibiting a mural-size triptych consisting of three canvas works at the ArtWorks Together community event. The canvases, created by Mrs. Baker's second grade, titled "Community Arts: Making the Invisible Visible," were inspired by master artist Kerry James Marshall. The triptych tells a visual story of community, creating a garden in the projects, and making the invisible visible. CMS fifth graders added the title using creative lettering. The day's festivities include art exhibits, a square dance, interactive activities, food, gifts, games, and more. A suggested donation of \$10 per person at the door will help expand ArtWorks Together in Norwalk next year.

## **5<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL PONY RIDES FOR A PURPOSE**

The 5th Annual Pony Rides for Jessica Rekos event will take place on Sunday, May 7 from 11am-4pm at the 2nd Company Governor's Horse Guard (4 Wildlife Drive, Newtown, CT). This fundraiser, started by Columbus alumnus Montana Calloway, is in honor of Jessica Rekos, a Sandy Hook angel. The day's activities include pony rides, arts & crafts, silent auction, raffle, face painting, hair braiding and much, much more. All proceeds will go directly to the Jessica Rekos Foundation. To learn more about this event at [www.ponyridesforjessica.org](http://www.ponyridesforjessica.org).

### **MUSIC FOR ANGELS**

**Sunday, June 4, 2-5 pm**

**O'Neill's Restaurant**

This year all proceeds from Music for Angels will be going to help research DIPG. This rare form of brain cancer is affecting a family with close ties to Columbus, the Blake's. Sweet Brooke (granddaughter of former CMS secretary Patty Blake) is 8 years old and is fighting this battle. All are invited to attend Music for Angles and enjoy fabulous music by The Third Rail, raffles, and fun for the whole family. \$30 admission includes 1 drink. *Children under 12 are free.* At this time, donations of raffle prizes such as gift certificates and vacation homes are needed. If you would like to make a donation, please contact Janine Testa at [testaj@norwalkps.org](mailto:testaj@norwalkps.org). To learn more about DIPG and Brooke's story please find "Believe in Brooke" on Facebook.

***ATTACHED PLEASE FIND A LETTER FROM MR. THOMAS ON THE CLASSROOM PLACEMENT PROCESS.***

*Dear CMS PTA,*

*Thank you, thank you for the wonderful Staff Appreciation Luncheon on Tuesday, May 2<sup>nd</sup>. The food was simply amazing! Also, thank you for the "enlightening" gifts and raffle drawings. We are soooooo lucky to have you!*

*Sincerely, the CMS Staff*



## Columbus Magnet School

A wonderful place where we all learn and grow...

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Medard Thomas, Principal  
thomasm@norwalkps.org

Jennifer Scanlan, Curriculum Site Director  
scanlanj@norwalkps.org

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### COLUMBUS MAGNET SCHOOL'S CLASSROOM PLACEMENT PROCESS

May 4, 2017

Dearest Parents/Guardians:

Recently, our teachers embarked on what is considered one of the most important tasks of the school year: creating class lists for the 2017-2018. This is a process that is more complicated and challenging than most people comprehend. Creating class lists are a labor intensive process filled with care, consideration, emotion and equations.

At Columbus Magnet School, we strive to provide a solid academic and social emotional program. All classroom teachers and assistants understand the importance of servicing children of various needs. We promise to continue providing our adults with the training needed to meet the needs of a diverse student body.

#### **FAIR AND BALANCED: NOT JUST A FOX NEWS SLOGAN**

How do we work to balance our classes? I am fond of analogies, so allow me to use one. Every classroom should resemble a rush hour crowd at Grand Central Station in New York City. At any given moment, you will hear people speaking a variety of languages, wearing different clothing, coming from different jobs; running, walking, travelling by wheelchair, navigating the space with assistance; some singing and dancing, others taking their time, no rush in getting to their destination, some are frantic travelers, some are relaxed, without a care in the world. What is the takeaway? Everyone marches to the beat of their own drum. My goal is to populate classes evenly, consisting of an eclectic mixture of children who are unique, different and special. We will have equal parts of everyone in every room.

#### **PARENT REQUESTS: TELL US HOW YOU REALLY FEEL, MR. T?**

Then there is the age old question of parent requests. Please, allow me to be extremely honest and clear.

**I respectfully ask that you not approach me with personal teacher requests. Because I am unable to fulfill every single personal promise, I will leave the class lists to the experts: our teachers. Also, please do not approach the teachers about personal requests.** I welcome emails from you if you would like to share something about your child's learning style that will aid us in placement, or share a past experience that will assist in the process. What should a letter entail? Pretend I am a teacher in the school.

#### **You can send this:**

*Dear Mr. T:*

*My child loves reading, is very inquisitive, and loves to travel. I hope next year's teacher can appreciate her curiosity and encourage her to explore.*

*Thanks,*

#### **Try not to send this:**

*Dear Principal:*

*My child loves reading, is very inquisitive, loves to travel, and he would do well in a room in which his teacher is a dark skinned male with 3 children living in Norwalk with an unusual fondness for Coach Man bags. I am not making a teacher request, but I thought you would like to know my child's learning style since you asked.*

*Thanks,*

Our teachers will do everything in their power to ensure your child is with a student with whom they have a positive relationship. Class placements are complex, but your input will be strongly considered with the teacher's observations to provide the best learning environment for your child. **That information should be given to your child's teacher.**

**NOTE:**

**The only time I will consider a teacher request is if you have had a previous child with a particular teacher. If the relationship between you and the teacher was very unproductive, be sure to mention this to me.**

Teachers will work on creating a balanced list. Once these lists are completed, they are reviewed by our mental health team, our essentialists and me. After all input has been given, new students have been added and all staffing is complete, I will assign a teacher's name to each list. Just like last year, I will release the entire list to the Columbus Magnet Community **the 2<sup>nd</sup> week of August**. I would send it earlier; however, there is an unwritten rule amongst schools stating class lists are released at the same time.

**WHAT ABOUT CHANGES IN PLACEMENT?**

Given the amount of scrutiny the lists are given, once you receive your teacher assignment, the likelihood I will answer your appeal for another teacher is minimal. Moving one child will upset a carefully crafted choreography of children. Please recognize we try hard to ensure the optimal condition for learning exists for every child in our school.

I hope this letter explains the great effort that we take in placing your child (ren) for next year. Please trust our process, but more important, trust us. We have the best intentions for every student's continued success here at Columbus Magnet School.

I wish you happy thoughts, love and appreciation,

Mr. T