



Columbus Magnet School

A place where we all learn and grow

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FOLLOW YOUR HEART AND YOUR DREAMS...

Dearest Columbus Family,

I hope the summer treated you well. Last year, we experienced many “first time” opportunities that has helped our school evolve. We added band to our schedule. We became the 1st school that was not a dual language school, to offer a 2nd language FOR ALL CHILDREN. We added a new 6th grade class to accompany our 7th grade, and we were given a full-time site director to continue our path to academic excellence. Of course, we love our school, and I promise we will not change our core beliefs and many of its practices. As we embark on our **ROAD TO 40**, (40 years of Columbus Magnet) we will continue to evolve, because every organization, evolves. When in doubt, look at your places of work. You are not performing tasks the same way you have in the past. Meaningful change is synonymous with progress. As I talk about change and evolution, I would like to share some change with staff and their responsibilities. You all know how I like to personalize what we do, therefore, this section will be accompanied by actual quotes.

First of all, WE HAVE NEW START AND END TIMES FOR SCHOOL: 8:50 AM- 3:40 PM

We welcome **MRS. DEBORAH BELL-JOHNSON as our new assistant principal**. Ms. Bell, as she is known, spent many years as the assistant principal at Nathan Hale Middle School. We will rely on her middle school expertise as we navigate this new piece to our program. Ms Bell told me, “From what I know about this school, I cannot wait to experience it firsthand.”

We welcome **CHRIS MCGEE, as our new 8th grade teacher**. His concentration is mathematics. Not only is he a teacher, but he is also a former CMS student. “Wait, did you say Chris McGee? I was his 5th grade math teacher,” exclaimed Mrs. Liberatore, upon hearing about our new hire.

We welcome **MRS. ELISA CAMPISI, who will serve as our new school social worker**. Mrs. CAMPISI is a veteran social worker from Jefferson School, and already, she has worked with newly retired Ms. Nancy, to transition important information. “You have nothing to worry about. I promise, you are in great hands,” says Ms. Nancy. Our 4th Grade teacher, Ms. B. adds, “She is amazing at what she does!”

We welcome **MRS. NANCY BRADLEY, our new reading interventionist**. Mrs. Bradley, a certified reading teacher, will be working to provide targeted instruction to children needing additional support. As members of her interviewing committee said of Mrs. Bradley after her interview, “Oh my goodness. We just hit a home run!”

We welcome **MS. LEAH ZILICH who will serve as our PBIS/SRBI/DATA TEAM facilitator**. She will help teachers track student progress as well as work with those kids needing an extra push. Also, she will lead our Positive Behavior Intervention Systems to continue motivating our children to do their best work. “Doing this work at Columbus will be exciting and challenging. There are already so many positive vibes in this school!”

We welcome **MS. ALEXIS POLLINA, who will serve as our new ESL teacher**. Her previous supervisor has told me she is extremely dedicated to her ESL students.

We welcome **MS. MEGHAN SANTAGATA, who will serve as our new GT teacher.** Meghan holds a gifted endorsement in CT and Florida. I interviewed her and found Meghan to be by far, the best candidate out of all strong candidates for the position.

We have hired one special education teacher **CHAD DAVIS** and are looking to hire one more.

SUSAN KELLY joins us as a long-term substitute in 5th grade.

Finally, we are so very pleased to welcome our new security guard **SUNNY FLEURIMOND.**

FAMILIAR FACES, NEW RESPONSIBILITIES....

MRS. HOFER has become our new media and integration/learning coach. She will continue building our Junior Media Lab, and that work will enhance and revolutionize the way our students present their work in the age of digital media. "You're pulling me out of the classroom to do this? I am excited, but if you don't like my work, can I get my old job back?"

MR. CINGARI will replace Mrs. Hofer as the new 6th grade teacher. "A second teaching assignment in the second year of teaching is terrifying, but doing it in a place like Columbus is a gift," said Mr. Cingari.

MRS. NUNEZ-SMITH (better known as Mariana's mom) will be our Parent and Community Outreach Coordinator en ESPANOL. She will continue coordinating educational and social events geared to our Hispanic families, as well as providing translation support to staff members. "Nosotros haremos un gran trabajo."

MS. CHRISSY (better known as Drew's mom) will be our STEAM COACH. She will help us tie Science, Technology, Engineering, ART, and Math. Additionally, she will continue helping teachers roll out our science curriculum. "Look at it any way you want, we are ahead of the curve," says Ms. Chrissy of our school, with much confidence.

MRS. BLANCO moved up to 4th Grade.

As I mentioned, there is change, but rest assured, everyone interviewed has come prepared about our school's philosophy and agree that they will work within our culture. Everyone has something new to offer, but we will never lose who we are as a community.

This summer, as I sat on the steps of Fordham University, where I graduated 25 years ago. (It's also the place I got married 20 years ago!) There and then, I decided to become an educator. My journey has taken me from the classroom to being the principal of an amazing school. The chance to build upon something great is not lost on me, and as I enter my 5th year as principal, I will do my best to continue adding a chapter to the great Columbus Magnet story.

WE WILL FOLLOW THAT RAINBOW WHEREVER IT GOES.

With love,

MrT (better known as Alyna and Riley's dad)