



Bulldog News

www.universityschools.com
970-506-7000

University Schools

Volume 17, Number 3, December 2011

Dear University Schools Community,

I hope you had an enjoyable Thanksgiving and that parent/teacher conferences provided you helpful information about your student/s.

As you know, funding to K-12 education has been cut drastically the last two years. Based on the Governor's preliminary budget for next year, schools in Colorado could see nearly \$170.00 less per student funding. For University, that could mean nearly a \$215,000 cut to our budget for the 2012/2013 school year.

Recently, University families and alumni received a letter from the University Schools Foundation via email or postal service requesting donations to support our school. The Foundation was originally established in 2001 to help University Schools furnish classrooms with donations from parents and the community. Sending contributions now to the Foundation will allow new donations to be tax deductible and allow our school to use the money for operations.

Please refer to the November Foundation News found in this newsletter and thank you for any contributions you may be able to make. Donating to the Foundation means donating to our students and school.

Our winter break is just around the corner. I wish a wonderful holiday season to you and your family. University Schools has wonderful students who are caring, respectful and focused on academic success.

Sincerely,

Sherry Gerner, Ed.D.
Director, University Schools
506-7001

Lottery Procedures

Though student applications are accepted year-round at University Schools, new applications for kindergarten consideration for the following academic year must be reached at the University Schools office by the third Friday in December to be included in the first round of the lottery drawing.

No School

December 19 – 30 (Winter Break, School Closed)

January 2 (Furlough Day, School Closed)

January 16 (Martin Luther King Holiday, School Closed)

*** There is no Bulldog News printed for the month of January***

From the University Schools Foundation

Our fall fundraising campaign has begun and we are encouraged by the returns. Donors being recognized this month are Barbara Cattles, Bob and Ludy Dickeson, Tom and Shelley Endres, Tarry Harvey, Chris and Stephanie Hughes, Bill and Gloria Shell, Mary Ann Reinert, Santos and Maria Ruiz and Brenda Woodard. We have also received our first earnings from the Frugaloon Deal of the Day initiative. The Foundation is a 501(c)3 organization and your contributions are fully deductible. Your support of the Foundation and University Schools is greatly appreciated.

To donate, please make checks payable to the **University Schools Foundation** and mail to **P.O. Box 336785, Greeley, CO 80633**.

If you prefer, you can make a donation through PayPal using your credit card or bank account. Just click the link below, and then click the PayPal button to become a donor. We look forward to hearing from you.
<http://www.universitieschools.com/about/foundation.htm>

Thai Exchange Program

University Schools is very proud of its relationship with Satit Kaset School in Bangkok, Thailand. For many years Thai students from Satit Kaset have come to University Schools on exchange. Some students stay for five weeks in the spring and some stay for an entire school year.

This spring we will once again be hosting Thai students at University Schools. Twenty Two Thai students in grades six through ten will be here from April to May. Part of making their experience positive is placing them with host families where they can be surrounded by the English language and experience American family culture. Hosting a Thai student involves including them in your daily activities, getting them back and forth to school and acting as a contact with their families in Thailand. A small stipend is provided to help with the cost of hosting a Thai student.

We hope you will consider this valuable opportunity for your family. For more information on the Thai exchange program or to sign up to host a Thai student, please call Karoleigh Lauer-Koonce at University Schools (506-7000 option 2) or email me at klauer@universitieschools.com.

Inclement Weather/School Closing Announcements

Announcements of school closings, delayed opening or early closing due to extenuating circumstances or weather conditions are made on KFKA, TV channels 4, 7, 9 and 13. A message will be placed on the school voice messaging (506-7000 option 3) and the website (www.universitieschools.com) informing of the closure or delayed opening.

From the High School Principal, Holly Sample

As we head into the holiday season, the busy school calendar seems to get even busier. While we enjoy much needed holiday breaks, the days off contribute to a sense that we are squeezing a great deal into a very limited amount of time. It is an exciting, but also a stressful time of year. We are just beginning a new trimester and the Patriot League Honor Choir recently performed a wonderful concert at the Union Colony Civic Center. The Fall sports teams did well, with Cross Country boys finishing second in the state race and Volleyball making it to the state tournament. Clubs are busy with service and fundraising activities and seniors are working on their projects.

This is the time of year for both appreciation and reflection. A voluntary learning engagement survey was recently completed by 91 high school students, 72 parents and 64% of the staff. Clearly this does not represent all voices for these three constituent groups, but it is a large enough sample to give us some valuable insight and feedback.

All three groups agreed that our school provides challenging academic curriculum. Students set goals and teachers encourage them to do their best work. Adults think students are smart and capable. Students believe a high school diploma is important. Student and staff interactions are consistently reported as positive across all groups. A very high percentage of the students who responded feel safe, feel they belong in our school and report the school culture is inviting.

The survey results also highlighted some areas we need to reflect upon and improve. While 88% of the teachers responding to the survey said they know how students learn best and teach them that way, only 56% of the responding students agreed! There was a similar, but opposite disconnect in the view of students and staff regarding student work ethic. Students report overwhelmingly that they think coming to school on time is important, they spend the time required to do their work well and they review the work before submitting it. Only half of the teachers believe students agree with those statements.

As the school year progresses, faculty will continue to support students' efforts to set challenging academic goals and will strive to meet individual student needs. They will also work to help students recognize quality academic work and to develop the habits and skills needed to consistently produce it. The results of this survey reinforce and highlight what I already believed: we have much to be grateful for, not the least of which is the safe and supportive University Schools learning community.

From the High School/Middle School Band/Choir Teacher, Angela Shaffer

December has come upon us and it is once again time for the annual Winter Concerts. The High School Music Department concert will be on Monday, December 12, at 7:00 pm in the auditorium. The Middle School Music Department will be having their concert on the following evening, Tuesday, December 13, at 7:00 pm. In total, we have over 250 students participating in this year's Winter Concert. Come on out and show your support for these amazing students.

From the FCCLA Coordinator, Nancy Velazquez

Family, Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA) is doing our annual Presents for Foster Kids project. Please help us get these kids sponsored for Christmas. Call or email Nancy Velazquez at 506-7061 or nvelazquez@universityschools.com to get the name of a child and their wish list.

From the High School Yearbook Sponsor, Laura Kavanaugh

The **Final** window to buy a high school yearbook is January 9 through 20 for \$65. For any yearbook orders received after January 20, 2012 (including on-line orders), we cannot guarantee a book, and the price increases to \$70. Also, book personalization will no longer be available after the January window.

From the Middle School Principal, Paul Kirkpatrick

It is time to start polishing up on all the rules... "i before e except after c," "drop the y and add ing," etc. We remember those sayings from elementary school and now is the time for the students to put them to use. In January, University Schools will host a school spelling bee for students in grades 5-8. The winner of our school spelling bee automatically qualifies for the state spelling bee in March. An additional bonus for our University Schools winner is a free one-year subscription to the Britannica Online for Kids (a \$69.95 value).

The top 10 spellers from the University Schools' Bee will participate in the Northern Plains League Spelling Bee at Eaton Middle School in February. Dates and times for our school, league and state spelling bees will be available soon and will be posted on our school website.

Preparing for a spelling bee is much like doing drills for football, baseball, volleyball or music. It is repetition of word lists, going over rules, studying roots of words and other skills. However, the way students practice is quite unique and different for each person. Some students just read everything they can get their hands on; pausing to look up unknown words. Others will go to www.spellingbee.com and click on the "Students and Parents" icon, then click on the line for additional information. At this website, you get study guides, sample word lists, grade level word lists and countless other spelling aids. Whatever the preferred method of practice, any practice at all becomes beneficial.

The spelling bee is a great way for students to be involved in school activities beyond athletics. Please encourage your child to start preparing and get ready to have fun with his/her peers in an academic setting.

From the Middle School Yearbook Sponsor, Maggie Miles

Attention University Middle School Parents:

We have an amazing year ahead of us at University Middle School, and our yearbook will capture all the big events of the school year. Don't let your student miss out on this one-of-a-kind keepsake. You will have limited-time opportunities to order the yearbook and capture the memories. The next dates to purchase this year are:

- January 17 through January 27 for \$40

Order today and save! We have a full color hardback book and we only order a limited number. We ran out of books last year and don't want your student to miss out this year. Please contact Maggie Miles at mmiles@universityschools.com or (970) 506-7025 if you have any questions.

Attention 8th grade parents:

Don't miss your chance to put your student's baby picture in the yearbook. Please submit pictures to Mrs. Miles at mmiles@universityschools.com or in room 2035. Please make sure your student's name and advisor is on the picture so we can return the picture to you. The deadline to submit pictures is December 16, 2011. All pictures will be returned to you at the end of the year. If you have any questions, please contact Mrs. Miles at mmiles@universityschools.com or (970) 506-7025.

From the Washington D.C. Trip Coordinator, Tonya Vanbeber

The 2013 Washington D.C. Summer Trip informational meeting will be January 24, 2012 at 6:30 pm in room 2039. All incoming sixth graders through exiting eighth graders(the summer of 2013) are welcome to attend.

From the Elementary Master Teacher, Carol Riggs

The Elementary staff would like to thank all the parents for their attendance at your student/s conference. If you have not met with your student/s and their teacher you can expect to hear from the teacher to set up another date and time. One of the cornerstones of University Schools is our philosophy of the parent/teacher/child team and one aspect is our conference times.

We are also getting closer to the holiday season which can be a wonderful time of year, but also presents its own set of challenges. Keeping students focused on learning and working hard is difficult. Families can help with keeping home routines normal, homework times a priority and school expectations high. For younger students who do not understand time, the wait can seem endless. Also, some of our families are struggling financially and children will internalize this stress as they hear of other families' lavish plans. Helping children to come to school ready to work and learn and leave the celebrations at home will help everyone have a more enjoyable holiday season.

A few updates of things taking place in the Elementary School. The staff has been using the early release time to review the new grade level Colorado State Standards, the Common Core Standards and our curriculum to make sure we are up to date and challenging all students. Also both grades 1-2 and 3-4 Literacy Groups are into their second rotation and will be rotating again in the upcoming weeks.

In closing, I would like to take this opportunity on behalf of the Elementary School Staff to wish all of our families a happy and safe winter break. Enjoy this time with your children and thank you for sharing them.

From the Fifth Grade Classes

Pizza Pals are back. For an \$11.00 investment, you can purchase any Old Chicago pizza with a value up to \$22.00. A Pizza Pal makes a great stocking stuffer or a quick meal idea for the busy holiday season. Contact any of the fifth grade teachers or one of their busy little fifth grade elves.

From the University Schools Librarian, Rachel Budzynski

Our library is a lively, busy place where students learn, investigate, and find that perfect book to read. Since the start of the school year, preK-12 grade students and staff have checked out more than 18,184 books!

RESEARCH TOOLS (Grades K-12)

If your child needs expert, reliable, verifiable research articles for papers and projects and you have Internet at home, you can access our two online databases:

World Book Online Encyclopedia and the EBSCO Magazine & Newspaper Database.

To use either site, go to <http://libraryuniversitieschools.blogspot.com/> and click on the links on the right hand side of the page under the header RESEARCH. For citing sources, students are encouraged to use the ***EasyBib*** tool, found on the library web site.

ACCELERATED READER (Grades 1-6)

As of mid-November, students have read more than 29,327,086 words and have taken over AR 3,245 quizzes! To see if a book is one of over 145,000 books that have an AR quiz available, check <http://www.arbookfind.com/>.

With Internet access (home, public library) sign up for AR Home Connect by visiting the library web site at <http://libraryuniversitieschools.blogspot.com/> and by clicking on the AR Home Connect link. AR Home Connect lets you track your child's AR progress and will email you each time your child takes a quiz.

BATTLE OF THE BOOKS TEAMS (Grades 3-8)

We are excited to begin our second season of Battle of the Books. If you signed up to coach a team, please plan to be at a meeting for all coaches on **Wednesday, December 7 from 3:30-4:00 in the library.** Battle participants should start reading battle books. Regular team meetings will begin in January. For more information visit our BOB web site at <http://www.bobuniversitieschools.blogspot.com/>

**From the USPTO
Celebrate...Change...Contribute**

Mark your Calendars: USPTO invites University Families to our Winter Fun Movie Night on Friday, December 16, at 6:00 pm. We will be showing a Christmas Movie (PG rating) in the Auditorium. We will have some drawings and you can also come get some Christmas shopping done with FrugaLoon.com (Stacey Smith will have a booth set up). All USPTO profits and donations from the night will go to the University Foundation. If you have any questions, please call Wendy Jorgensen at (970) 396-2657.

As we get closer to the holidays, we wanted to remind you about the Teacher Wish Lists. Once again, this year, we have compiled a list of the teachers' wishes for their classrooms. You can find the list on the school's website under USPTO.

Sports News From the Junior Bulldogs

Junior Bulldog Volleyball: Two Teams in championships!

Great to see Junior Bulldog volleyball teams once again in the championships for both "A" and "B" brackets for the end of season 5th-6th grade NVAA tournament. Jr. Dog teams are making a tradition of being present in the championships over the past two seasons!

In the "A" bracket, Coach Dana Jones/Lori Hughes team was 2nd overall, battling against 17 teams. Team members included Kourtney Cox, Baylee Hughes, Katie Jones, Jordan Loper, Madelyn Malm, Abbi Moser, and Danya Schuessler. These girls did a great job of consistently setting the ball up and playing some good volleyball.

Coach Tanya Thaden's team also did a great job of qualifying for the "A" bracket and improved throughout the season. Great effort girls!

In the "B" bracket, Coach Doug Whyrick's squad came away with 2nd place honors in the 16 team bracket. Great improvement throughout the season and strong finish to the season!

Congratulations to all and a huge thank you to the coaches and parents for the support.

Soccer Update: Forming competitive U11 girls spring soccer team

Find out more at www.UniversityJuniorBulldogs.com/Soccer.html

Basketball: Hitting the hardwood

Junior Bulldogs are fielding at least TEN teams (pre-K-6 grade) for the winter season through the Evans Rec league. A 7th grade competitive boys team is also in the works for winter play. Plan to see the Jr. Dog teams playing at halftime of upcoming HS basketball games this year. More at <http://universityjuniorbulldogs.com/Basketball.html>

Shop Big 5 and give back to Junior Bulldogs

Thinking of ways to help your young athlete improve with his/her favorite sport? Needing Christmas ideas? Buy equipment at Big 5 Sports anytime from November 25 - December 4 and Big 5 will donate 5% of all purchases back to Junior Bulldogs. You **MUST** present coupon at time of purchase in order for Junior Bulldogs to get credit. Coupons will be available on our website (www.UniversityJuniorBulldogs.com). Print coupon and share with all your friends!

Cool Sports Cups for Sale

Show your spirit for both the Junior Bulldogs and your favorite NFL, MLB or college teams by purchasing very cool 18 oz. dishwasher safe cups. Cups are sold in packs of 4 and make great holiday gifts! Please contact any Junior Bulldog athlete or Dana Jones (970-978-0303) or fundraising@universityjuniorbulldogs.com to order your cups today!

We need you! Get involved with an enthusiastic organization that's making a difference for youth sports at University Schools!

Board meetings are open to all – second Monday of each month at 7 pm at the school.

Subscribe to our monthly email newsletter from our web page <http://universityjuniorbulldogs.com/index.html>.

Be sure to "Like" us on Facebook (Junior Bulldogs).

We'd love to get feedback or hear your questions – contacts available at <http://universityjuniorbulldogs.com/Contact.html>

Thank you to UH athletics, administration and parents for the incredible support to our organization!

Bulldog Homework Help Club

Homework help is offered in our school library while school is in session. We meet on Tuesdays and Thursdays until 4:00 p.m. The library is reserved for these sessions and the computers are reserved for homework only. All students are welcome. Our high school National Honor Society students will be volunteering their time to assist our students. This is a great opportunity for students to get help and allow them to complete their school assignments. Thank you to Kenny's Steakhouse for their financial support to purchase supplies and snacks this year. If you have any questions, please contact Theresa Bardos via: tbardos@universitieschools.com.