



Dear D51 Families and Colleagues,

I hope y'all had a great week! This week was our last full week with students, and Spring Break is right around the corner. There continues to be a lot happening across the district, and while I know you're all excited for a break, I encourage you to stay engaged as we wrap up the 3rd quarter of the school year.

A highlight of my week is when I am able to get out and witness our D51 students doing great things in person. Shoutout to Orchard Mesa Middle School student Alivia Nicodemus, who was awarded as the winner of the Grand Junction Chamber Young Entrepreneurs Academy contest! It was awesome to see her on stage at the Chamber event last Friday night, and she gave a great speech to a packed house. You can read more about her accomplishments below. Our D51 Dual Immersion Academy students took center stage, as well, this week as they presented at the La Siembra Conference Wednesday night at Bookcliff Middle School. It was great to see the school packed with students, staff, and families as we ate dinner together and students presented on the impact dual language education has had on their lives. You can read more about that below, too.

I was also able to catch our students competing in sports and performing on the stage this week. Last night, our family was able to catch the Central High School Theater production of Mean Girls. The CHS students always shine on stage under the direction of Ms. Meltzer, and I encourage everyone to get out and see one of the theater productions that all four of our comprehensive high schools are putting on tonight and tomorrow. Details are below in the events section. Thanks to all of our theater directors for all that they do, and thanks to our D51 students, staff, and families for showing up to support the arts in our schools. I also had the opportunity to take in many of our spring sports this week. Yesterday, I was able to stop by the Adapted Basketball Tournament at GJHS. It is such a great opportunity for our D51 students, and I appreciate Katie Hummel and everyone who helped put that event on. I was also able to catch some of the GJHS baseball game at Suplizio, and the CHS Varsity girls and GJHS and PHS JV girls soccer teams at Long Family Memorial Park yesterday. And today, I was able to swing by the high school girls tennis matches in the Western Slope Open at CMU, the high school track meet at Stocker Stadium, and the FMHS boys baseball game at Suplizio. It's a great time to get out and support our student athletes in spring sports, and I encourage everyone to take in a competition or two this weekend.

Today, I was also able to sit on a project-based learning panel at STEAM@Tope Elementary School, thanks to an invite from Principal Bollinger and the Tope staff. The 1st-graders were amazing as they presented on the research they conducted about the pika, what is causing them to be in danger, and ways that the students could help out. Shoutout to the students and staff at Tope, and also shoutout to our partners at CMU and Eureka! for helping the students with their research. At Tuesday's Board Meeting, our Robust & Aligned Options team presented on all of the options we currently offer in D51 and how we might be able to expand to offer even more options in the future. You can read about it below and take a survey to help guide our next steps. STEAM@Tope is one of our many great options in D51, and I thank them for allowing me to be a part of the PBL presentations today.

March is National Women's History Month, and today is International Women's Day. This is an opportunity to reflect on, celebrate, and honor the remarkable contributions of women throughout American history. At District 51, we are privileged to have outstanding women serving our schools and facilities, tirelessly driving the success of our district and leading the way to a stronger future for our district. I have the privilege to work alongside empowering women leaders each and every day who greatly benefit our entire educational community and make a significant and positive impact on our students and families. Let's take this opportunity to celebrate the exceptional women leaders in our lives and our district. Thank you for your ongoing dedication and contributions!

Maintenance Appreciation Worker Day

On Monday, we celebrated our unsung heroes throughout our district for Maintenance Appreciation Day. What you might now know is that behind every smoothly running school in our district is a team that works day in and day out to ensure our halls are safe, clean, and welcoming. They repair leaky faucets, maintain our HVAC system, paint our walls, and replace thousands of light bulbs yearly, among countless other duties. They also create strong relationships with our students, staff, and families. Monday served as an important reminder of their work and the positive impact they make in the lives of our students, staff, and buildings - even when we aren't looking. As a district, we wouldn't be able to function as smoothly without this incredible team. Thank y'all for everything you do!

Social Worker Week

I want to take a moment to celebrate our School Social Workers today. These compassionate professionals provide essential support systems and resources, ensuring the well-being and success of our students and families. From emotional support and counseling to connecting our families with needed community resources, they work hard to create a safe and nurturing environment where every student can thrive. They serve as advocates, mentors, and friends, often going above and beyond to ensure every student receives the care and assistance needed to overcome challenges and succeed academically. Social work is more than a job - it's a calling driven by a commitment to making a positive impact in the lives they serve. To each of our District 51 social workers, thank you for everything you do. Your work is truly appreciated and valued.

Concurrent Enrollment Week

Last week, Governor Jared Polis proclaimed March 3-9 Colorado Concurrent Enrollment Week, a celebration and recognition of the opportunities that Concurrent Enrollment offers our D51 students. Read more [here](#).

All Conference Athletes

As winter sports begin to wrap up their seasons, we are excited to acknowledge and celebrate the achievements of our D51 All-Conference athletes who have demonstrated dedication, sportsmanship, commitment, and athletic talent over the last several months. These athletes embody the continued growth and excellence that define our D51 athletic community, and we want to congratulate them on their successful season! Shoutout to all our coaches and athletic directors for supporting these athletes throughout the season, both on and off the field. Read more [here](#).

OMMS Young Entrepreneur

In March of 2023, participants of the Young Entrepreneurs Academy showcased their innovative business plans to a panel of judges. Last weekend, one of those participants, a D51 student, was named Young Entrepreneur of the Year at the Annual Grand Junction Area Chamber of Commerce Banquet. Read more [here](#).

CMU 26th Annual Math Extravaganza

This week, nearly 200 high school students had the opportunity to explore the world of mathematics in exciting and innovative ways during the 26th Annual Math Extravaganza hosted by the Colorado Mesa University Math Club. Read more [here](#).

Bookcliff Middle School Music Tour

It's always inspiring to see the events that bridge the gap between our older and younger students and witness the connections formed between our D51 schools. The energy brought by this week's Bookcliff Middle School Music Tour perfectly showcased the importance of building these relationships. Read more [here](#).

Dual Immersion Academy La Siembra Conference

The Dual Immersion Academy program at Bookcliff Middle School held its Annual La Siembra Conference this week. Read more [here](#).

D51 Adaptive Basketball Tournament

Grand Junction High School hosted its Annual D51 Adapted Basketball Tournament on Thursday. This amazing event provides D51 students with and without disabilities the opportunity to play a sport on the same team. Read more [here](#).

High Fives Robotics Team Earns Ticket to World Championships

For the third consecutive year, the D51 High Fives Robotics Team has secured a well-earned spot at the World Championships in April. Read more [here](#).

School to Work Alliance Program (SWAP)

It's that time of year again! Job fairs are in full swing, and we've got a great event coming up between D51 and the School to Work Alliance Program (SWAP). Read more [here](#).

Bloom Where You're Planted Grants Now Open

The 10th Round of Bloom Where You Are Planted Grants is now open. In addition to offering grants, the D51 Foundation is also seeking donations to continue funding this grant that positively impacts K-12 students who want to participate in extracurricular activities.

This grant provides K-12 students with financial need support to allow them to pursue extracurricular activities. Since the beginning of 2020, approximately \$25,000 has been granted to 308 children. Students and parents apply for the grant via a portal at the D51 Foundation website. [Click Here](#).

Panorama Survey Reminder

One last reminder that we are gearing up to send out our Panorama Student Perception Survey starting March 25. This survey is a research-backed process for our D51 students, families, teachers, and staff that assists us in better understanding the experiences and social and learning climate of our students, helping us build a positive culture in our schools and throughout the District. We encourage every student to take the survey to help us better gauge our internal environment, but if you wish for your student to refrain from participating, you may fill out the [Opt-Out form](#) instead of the survey. For more information, visit d51schools.org/surveys.

D51 Robust & Aligned Options Survey

As part of our three-year, community-driven Strategic Plan, we are committed to ensuring our students are prepared and supported for college, career, and life. This means offering a wide range of robust options and opportunities for our students to participate in. As a district, we value our families' options on how and where to educate their students. We are excited to introduce a comprehensive Robust and Options Survey for our students, families, and community members. This survey serves as an important tool in helping us understand the factors that attract families to District 51, as well as those that may influence their educational decisions. By gaining insight into the preferences and needs of our community, we can better create our programs and options to meet their expectations. We invite you to share your thoughts and perspectives and help us shape the future of education in District 51. Click [here](#) to take the survey.

State Testing Reminder

As April approaches, we are beginning to gear up for our state assessments. Students in grades 3-11 will take CMAS, PSAT, or SAT exams. This is just a friendly reminder that as testing nears, please ensure your child is well-rested, has a nutritious breakfast, and arrives at school on time. If your student brings their Chromebook home, be sure that it's returned to school and fully charged for testing. We understand coordinating schedules can be difficult, but we ask for your cooperation in avoiding scheduling doctor, dentist, or other appointments during testing hours. For specific testing dates, please refer to your school's schedule. This [short video](#) shares the purpose behind these assessments and some important additional information.

BOE Meeting Recap

On March 5, the Board of Education held a Work Session in the Harry Butler Board Room. For highlights from the meeting, click [here](#). To view a recording of the meeting, click [here](#).

UPCOMING EVENTS

- Grand Junction High School Theatre Presents: Matilda
March 8, 7 p.m., March 9, 1 p.m. & 7 p.m. at Grand Junction High School
[Purchase tickets here](#)
- Central High School Theatre Presents: Mean Girls
March 8, 7 p.m., and March 9, 1 p.m. and 7 p.m., at the Central High School Mariposa Theatre
[Purchase tickets here](#)
- Fruita Monument High School Theatre Presents: Beauty & the Beast
March 8 & 9, 7 p.m., at Fruita Monument High School
[Purchase tickets here](#)
- Palisade High School Theatre Presents: The Hamlet Thrill-Ma-Geddon
March 8 & 9, 7 p.m., at Palisade High School
[Purchase Tickets Here](#)
- National History Day Regional Competition
March 9, 9 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. at Colorado Mesa University
Come learn about "Turning Points in History" and join us in support of our D51 students as they compete for a spot in the National History Day Championships.
- Annual Western Colorado Elementary Science Fair
March 13, 10 - 11 a.m.
Eureka! Science Museum is hosting their Annual Science Fair for all 3rd-5th grade students. Students can display their posters and present their projects to the public during the one-hour public viewing. The awards ceremony will start at 11 a.m.
- SWAP Youth Career & Resource Fair
March 14, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., at Career Center
This career fair is open to all students across the valley. Come ready to meet employers, dress for success, and bring your resume.
- 9th Annual Caesar Chavez Celebration
March 30, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. at the Las Colonias Amphitheatre
This annual celebration and car show brings local organizations around the Grand Valley together to focus on unity, acceptance, wellness, and diversity. The event is open to the public and free to attend. There will be music, vendors, food trucks, performances, and a classic car show. Our D51 Access, Opportunity, and Family Partnership team will be out there, too, so stop by and say hello!

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