



Dear D51 Families and Colleagues,

As we approach the end of the fall semester, our students and staff have been actively involved in various activities, making it another busy week in D51. It brings me joy to witness the enthusiasm and engagement of our students during school events. I've had the pleasure of being present in our schools and attending several wonderful events organized by our dedicated students and staff over the last few weeks, and I want to thank our school administrators, teachers, and staff for staying engaged and committed to creating great places for our kids to learn.

On Monday, the first meeting of my Superintendent Teacher Advisory Group was held. This is a small group of teacher leaders from around the district who have volunteered their time to meet with me and share what's working well and where we need to improve. At our first meeting, we were joined by our COO and the folks at HCM who are facilitating the long range facility planning process in our district. My Superintendent Teacher Advisory Group was able to give thoughts and insight on the facilities master plan that is being developed, and I appreciate having teacher voice as a part of that process. I look forward to meeting with the group again in the spring.

I was also able to attend the D51 Cheer Team Send-off on Monday night! This was an opportunity for our high school cheer teams to perform for friends and family before heading to the state competition this weekend. Shoutout to all of our cheer teams, their coaches, and everyone who supports them. Good luck at state!

On Wednesday, I was able to stop by the Statewide Family Engagement convening that many of our staff and family members attended. Our Department of Access, Opportunity, and Family Partnerships is leading this work, along with four other districts across the state, to find ways to better partner with families and better bring them to the table to help better support our students, together. Thanks to Tracy Gallegos, Estrella Ruiz, and everyone who was able to attend and who are leading this work.

Lastly, I want to briefly mention the discussions that are being had around the plan to reconfigure the secondary grades in the Fruita area. You can read more about this below, but I encourage you to continue to stay engaged in the discussion as we plan for the next steps in the process.

#### All Conference Athletes

I am constantly impressed by the time and effort our students put into their athletic endeavors and extracurricular activities. I love to see these efforts culminate with well-deserved recognition of their hard work. Congratulations to the outstanding athletes who have earned well-deserved spots on the All-Conference teams! Your hard work, skill, and dedication have truly set you apart. Read more [here](#).

#### CHSAA State Spirit Competition

The Colorado High School Activities Association State Cheer Competition began yesterday, and all four D51 High Schools were represented. Teams who advance to the final competition will be performing tonight. Congratulations to all our teams who competed! A lot of hard work is put in throughout the season by these athletes, and we thank you for representing our school district in such a positive way.

Fruita Monument High School will compete in the dance portion of the CHSAA State Competition tomorrow. We wish you all the best of luck and look forward to celebrating your success! Go, Wildcats!

#### Thunder Mountain Highlights the Importance of Community Service

Over the past few months, the Thunder Mountain Kindergarten cohort has embarked on a heartwarming journey centered around community service. These young students, filled with endless enthusiasm, kindness, compassion, and generosity, have embraced what it means to give back to your community without the expectation of anything in return. Read more [here](#).

#### D51 Celebrates Hour of Code During Computer Science Education Week

This week was Computer Science Education Week, and District 51 was excited to once again participate in the largest education event in history: Hour of Code. This event is an international movement that reaches millions of students each year in hundreds of countries worldwide. During "Hour of Code," students in several schools across District 51 spent one hour learning the basics of Computer Science through fun and engaging experiences, including coding activities, tutorials, and games designed to introduce them to coding concepts in a fun and interactive way. Read more [here](#).

#### GJPD Hosts 31st Year of Shop with a Cop

We are so thankful for our Engaged & Supportive Community Partners! Every year, the Grand Junction Police Department collaborates with schools across District 51 for their annual Shop a Cop event. During this event, local law enforcement officers partner with D51 students for a day filled with shopping, food, and holiday spirit! Read more [here](#).

#### Lego League State Competition

In November, we highlighted the F.I.R.S.T Lego League Tournament hosted in Grand Junction, featuring participation from over 45 Robotics Teams across Colorado. Six of those teams were from District 51 and secured a spot at the State Competition: three teams from Mesa View Elementary, one team from Broadway Elementary and New Emerson, and a team from Fruita Middle School. This weekend, these teams will be showcasing their talents during the State Competition at the University of Colorado in Denver.

Shoutout to D51 STEM Coordinator Jessica McDivitt and her team for their outstanding leadership in spearheading this program. And a big thank you to our teacher and parent coaches for going above and beyond to support and guide our STEM students. Your dedication to the program, along with the time and energy you spend outside the four walls of your classroom, is making a huge difference in the lives of these kids. Good luck to all our students as they compete at the state level!

#### Fruita 8/9 School Update

As many of you may already be aware, District 51 is set to propose the closure of Fruita 8/9 School at the end of the 2023-24 school year to the D51 Board of Education. In our commitment to transparency, we want to provide an update to our families and community regarding this matter. Read more [here](#).

#### UPCOMING EVENTS

- Palisade High School Musical "A White Christmas"  
*December 8, 7 p.m. and December 9, 2 p.m. & 7 p.m. at Palisade High School*
- Independence Academy Concert "The Music Man"  
*December 8, 6:30 p.m. and December 9, 6:30 p.m. at The Art Center*
- Lego League State Competition  
*December 9, 8 a.m. - 5 p.m. at the University of Colorado in Denver*
- Central High School Band Concert & Carnival  
*December 12, 7-9 p.m. at Central High School*
- Fruita Monument High School Choir Concert  
*December 12, 7 p.m. at Fruita Monument High School*
- High School Social Studies Curriculum Open House  
*December 13, 4:30 - 7 p.m. at R-5 High School/Harry Butler Board Room*  
We are adopting new resources to support social studies instruction in our high schools. Community members are invited to view the resources under consideration and offer feedback to the selection committee.
- Central High School Choir Concert  
*December 14, 7 p.m. at Central High School Auditorium*
- Grand Junction High School Theatre Presents "Elf the Musical"  
*Dec. 15 at 7 p.m., Dec. 16 at 2 p.m. & 7 p.m., Dec. 17 at 2 p.m. at GJHS Auditorium*
- Warrior Classic Wrestling Tournament  
*December 15-17 at Central High School*  
Central High School will host the 2023 Warrior Classic Wrestling Tournament, the largest Wrestling Tournament in Western Colorado. The tournament will bring over 40 of the top-ranked teams from across Colorado and neighboring states. Good luck to all our wrestling teams; go get 'em!
- Palisade High School "Sounds of the Season" Choral Performance  
*December 16, 2 p.m. & 7 p.m. at First United Methodist Church*

For more events happening across the district, visit:

- [Fall Athletics Schedule](#)
- [District Upcoming Events](#)

If you have good news to share with us, we'd love to highlight your program, event, story, and more. Please share it with our communications department by emailing [communicate@d51schools.org](mailto:communicate@d51schools.org).

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