

JANUARY 2021 | ISSUE NO. 6

District Newsletter

Cast a Vision

"Where there is no vision, there is no hope." George Washington Carver

The beginning of a new year is often spent making resolutions. Promises to improve upon our circumstances, or possibly break old habits. As we begin 2021, let us remember the importance of our shared vision. We are all committed to the success and well-being of our students.

What a difference casting a vision makes in our daily lives. Each day, your actions and reactions can be measured by your purpose. In moments of doubt or uncertainty, rely on the foundation that has been built, finding strength in our shared goal.

It is our mission to celebrate and encourage students to reach their potential. We can each do our part to ensure that our students feel supported, heard, and valued no matter the circumstances.

We must remain committed to our community. When we focus on the shared vision of maintaining a safe environment for students, we learn to respect each other's opinions and celebrate our differences. There is still work to be done, but together we have achieved so much more than anyone thought possible.

There is still so much we can accomplish.

As we cast our shared vision this year, we hope you remain inspired. A shared vision is not one person's set expectations but instead a collaborative effort. Encourage each other to voice ideas.

The new year brings so much opportunity. We are grateful to share this vision with each of you.



Save the Date

ENGAGE²¹

CMCSS PROFESSIONAL LEARNING CONFERENCE

July 12-15 and 19-22

Now Accepting: Request for Proposals

PROPOSALS WILL BE ACCEPTED UNTIL FEBRUARY 8

The ENGAGE 2021 Request for Proposals is now OPEN! Do you have an innovative strategy or practice that you would like to share with your colleagues? Click on the link below to submit to present at the ENGAGE conference in 2021!

[SUBMIT YOUR PROPOSAL HERE - Thank you!](#)



CMCSS-FOCUSED PODCAST
HOSTED BY:
BRIAN HAMPTON & AMANDA NICKS



Episode 3: Where Preparation Meets Opportunity

In this episode, hosts Amanda Nicks and Brian Hampton speak with Brandy Walker and Jason Green. Both are assistant principals at Northwest High School. They discuss the journey from classroom teachers to school administrators.

Brandi and Jason will share their experiences from CMCSS Leadership Academies as well as the great opportunities they have as administrators to affect change in the students and teachers they serve.

If you have an idea for a story, send an email to PLSurge@cmcss.net.

[CLICK HERE TO LISTEN NOW](#)



Alive & Well: Virtual Fitness

JANUARY FEATURES: PIYO, BARRE, PLYOGA

PIYO

PiYo is a blend of pilates and yoga.

January 26 at 4:30 pm

[Join Zoom Meeting](#)

PLYOGA

Plyoga utilizes the centered and balanced principles of yoga as a recovery for plyometric fitness.

January 21 at 4:45 pm

[Join Zoom Meeting](#)

BARRE/CORE

Barre combines ballet-inspired moves with pilates, dance, yoga, and strength training.

January 28 at 4:45 pm

[Join Zoom Meeting](#)



TEACHER RESIDENTS

MAKE AN IMPACT

The Teacher Residency Programs provide a non-traditional pathway to teaching. While working as a full-time educational assistant, earn your certification, licensure, and degree with no tuition or textbook expenses.

Applications are now open with a submission deadline of February 10, 2021.

[LEARN MORE AT CMCSS.NET/TRP](https://cmcss.net/trp)



NWHS Students Spend Time with Dr. Alex Jahangir

HEALTH SCIENCE ACADEMY STUDENTS SPEAK WITH CHIEF OF NASHVILLE'S CORONAVIRUS TASK FORCE

Northwest High AP Chemistry students did not need to travel far to receive the field trip of a lifetime. In December, the students, who are members of the Health Science Academy, had the chance to speak with Dr. Alex Jahangir, MD, MMHC.

Dr. Alex Jahangir is the chief of Nashville's Coronavirus Task Force, Director of Orthopedic Trauma at Vanderbilt Medical Center, a professor at Vanderbilt University, and chairman of Nashville Metro's Board of Health.

Ms. Ginna Winstead, a Chemistry teacher at NWHS, said, "When I announced this opportunity to my class, they were in disbelief that they would be able to speak to someone they see in the news daily. As one student put it, 'He's a local medical celebrity.'"

Ms. Winstead and Dr. Jahangir are alumni of the same high school, and she seized the opportunity to request 15-20 minutes of his time for her students. Dr. Jahangir spent nearly 45 minutes listening to students and answering their questions.

During the call, they learned about the vaccine roll out to the public and misconceptions about COVID-19. Dr. Jahangir spoke candidly to the students about handling a high-stress career in the public eye and how to use your career to give back to the community.

Many of these students are considering careers in Health Science. Dr. Jahangir's first-hand knowledge was invaluable.

As members of the Health Science Academy, they appreciated the opportunity to inquire about the always-changing and advancing field of medicine from a physician who has become pivotal in our region during the pandemic.

Since the conversation, other health science classes have shared the Zoom recording with more students.

Dr. Jahangir later tweeted out that he hopes "to call them colleagues in the future".

Human Resources



RETIREMENT INFORMATION MEETING

Three retirement meetings are scheduled for 2021. These meetings are very informative and open to all employees. We urge anyone who is considering retirement to attend one of the meetings. The content is the same for all of the meetings. Information concerning the Zoom meeting links is below.

Thursday, Jan. 21 at 5:00 pm
via Zoom ([click here for link](#))

Tuesday, Jan. 26 at 4:30 pm
via Zoom ([click here for link](#))

Tuesday, Feb. 2 at 4:30 pm
via Zoom ([click here for link](#))

Need to Update Your Information?

THE HR BENEFITS TEAM



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IMPORTANT PHARMACY INFORMATION

Effective January 1, 2021 there were changes to the formulary. The formulary is a drug list and contains important information about drug coverage. Members that will be impacted by the changes should have received a letter from EpiphanyRx.

Members that may have questions are encouraged to contact EpiphanyRx member services at 844-820-3260. The 2021 formulary document is available at [here](#).

2021 CONTRIBUTION MAXIMUM FOR 401(K) AND 403(B) RETIREMENT ACCOUNTS

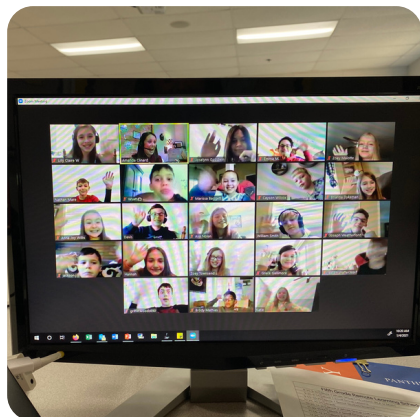
The Internal Revenue Code limits the amount you can contribute each calendar year to 401(k) and 403(b) retirement accounts.

The 2021 limits will remain the same as they were for 2020.

The federal general limit for 2021 will be \$19,500. If you are age 50 or older, the general limit contribution amount may be increased by an additional contribution of \$6,500.

SHARE YOUR BRIGHT SPOTS

CMCSS employees share their amazing stories from this remote learning period.



REMEMBER THE WHY

It's easy to get lost in the worry, but the resiliency and strength of our students is often the best motivator. Ms. Clinard, at Sango Elementary, said, "These kids are working hard to make the best of this new normal for them! Their bright smiles, positivity, and patience with me learning all the technology tricks are what keeps me going every day as their teacher. I am so proud of them!"



ART IS EVERYWHERE

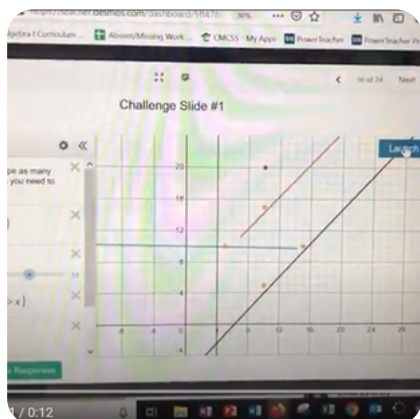
Kara Kindall and the Art teachers have been collaborating various ways to keep students creating while they are virtual or remote.

"We have received a great amount of quality artwork back from not only students, but siblings, and even parents who are all learning together," said Ms. French at SBES.

SHARE YOUR STORY

You can submit your own Bright Spot using the link below. Has your class done something special? Are you or a co-worker taking it to the next level? We want to share your stories.

[SUBMIT](#)



STUDENTS THRIVE DURING INTERACTIVE ZOOM LESSON

Creating unique ways to engage in hands-on activities has been a challenge for teachers, during remote learning. Clarksville High Algebra teachers, Jessica Johnson and Emarus Shay have found an interactive way to connect students.

Through Zoom challenges, students had to solve complex problems with a Desmos activity called Marble Slides. It involved slope-intercept equations where students had to 'catch stars.'

Students were able to "collaborate, share ideas, and help each other," said Ms. Shay. Both teachers were able to navigate remote learning and balance attendance and at-home distractions. "These interactive lessons promote student engagement and encourage students to participate during Zoom calls," said Ms. Johnson.

COVID-19 Emotional Support for Educators

PHONE LINE TO PROVIDE
MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT FOR
FRONT-LINE WORKERS
EXTENDED TO EDUCATORS



The Tennessee Department of Education and the Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (TDMHSAS), in partnership with several statewide organizations, announced the COVID-19 Emotional Support Line is now available for all Tennessee educators.

The emotional support line provides free and confidential support from specially trained volunteer mental health professionals to callers experiencing increased anxiety and stress due to the national pandemic. The COVID-19 Emotional Support Line is available to call at 888-642-7886 from 6 a.m.- 10 p.m. CT/ 7 a.m.- 11 p.m. ET daily.

"The COVID-19 pandemic has brought about significant challenges, anxiety, and stressors for many, including those doing the work of educating our kids," said Commissioner Penny Schwinn. "We are grateful to our partners at TDMHSAS for extending access to this resource to all Tennessee educators, who now can get critical supports from trained mental health professionals in a confidential setting."

Specially trained mental health professionals answer incoming calls from the line and provide emotional support through active listening, helping callers identify and address basic needs, and informing callers about tools for managing stress and strategies for self-care.

In May, the COVID-19 Emotional Support Line was created by the Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services, along with the Mental Health Active Response Team (MHART), the Tennessee Association of Alcohol, Drug, and other Addictions Services (TAADAS), National Association of Social Workers-TN Chapter (NASW-TN), for healthcare workers and first responders who are on the front lines of the COVID-19 pandemic response.

"When we created this Emotional Support Line with our partners back in May, it was intended for those working on the front lines of the pandemic working in health care and as first responders. Due to the outpouring of support as well as capacity, we are grateful to be able to announce this expansion to offer needed support to educators across the state of Tennessee," said TDMHSAS Commissioner Marie Williams, LCSW.

"We at MHART are so thankful to be able to be a part of facilitating the expansion of this Emotional Support Line to all teachers and educators across the state of Tennessee. The fact that 5 statewide organizations have come together in the span of just a few weeks to support this expansion is a testament to the goodwill of Tennesseans and to the desperate need for a service like this for educators who have been struggling during this pandemic now more than ever. We are committed to being there for our teachers because they are committed to being there for our kids in one of the noblest and oldest professions. The future of our state depends on their success," said T.J. Stone, Executive Coordinator, MHART.

The COVID-19 Emotional Support Line does not offer mental health treatment and is not intended to replace mental health crisis or suicide prevention services. [Learn more about the COVID-19 Emotional Support Line here.](#) Also available: [CMCSS Ability Assist through The Hartford Read: The Hartford Brochure](#)