



SEPTEMBER 2020 | ISSUE NO. 2

District Newsletter

Director's Message

TURNING CHALLENGE INTO OPPORTUNITY

Perspective is key to success.

The difference between challenge and opportunity is perception. This new school year brought about situations never before faced. Moments of uncertainty and questions that do not have clear answers are to be expected.

Instead of looking at each unknown as a frustrating challenge, our CMCSS staff has turned each situation into a new opportunity. Teachers and staff found solutions, thought outside the box, and collaborated to solve complex problems. I urge you to continue in this same spirit, even when patience may wear thin.

We are in the year of opportunity. Together, we will navigate through new technology, current events, and the concerns of our stakeholders. At the end of the day, we will find opportunities to remain strong and resilient.

I am grateful for the patience and perseverance of our CMCSS employees. Your determination is a shining example to our students, our parents, and your colleagues. Remember, each of us plays an integral role in this school year.

Thank you for being the Defining Difference.





EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

Technology and Instruction conquer complex problems with strategic thinking

"It's been busy" is easily the understatement of the school year. Ryan Morgan, Desktop Support Technician at Clarksville High School, shrugs and continues confidently, "We just have to keep working."

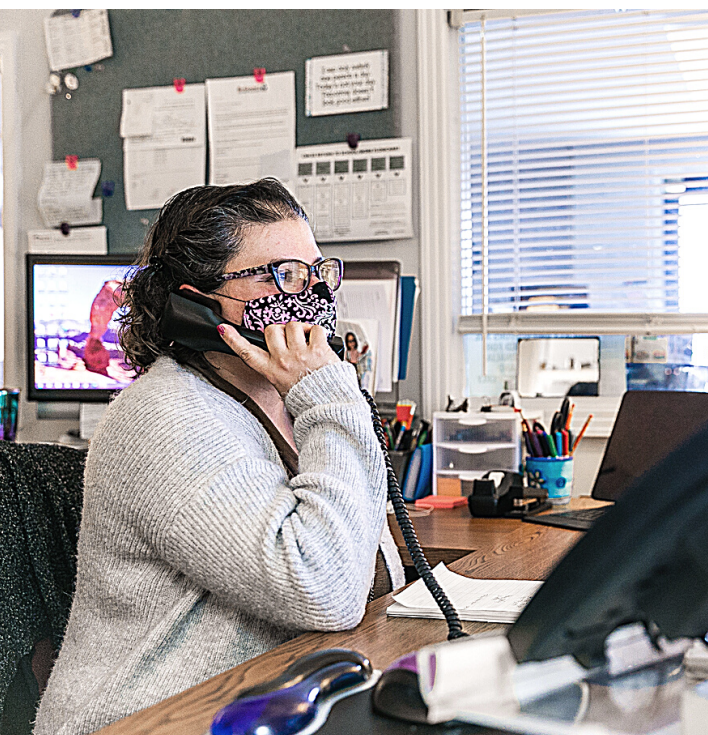
That is exactly what a team of CMCSS employees have done these past two weeks. From the initial distribution of over 36,000 laptops and over one thousand hotspots to the tech support and troubleshooting concerns that followed, the technology staff has not stopped.

It is no secret that the district is working through technology concerns with families. "Parents are frustrated and we understand why," said one support team member. "There are so many phone calls and we are all trying our best." Thousands of work orders, Live Assists calls, and Help Hotline requests have come through since Friday, Aug. 28.

District leaders are realigning resources, developing new processes, and reaching out to other agencies for support. Our teams from the Technology and Instruction departments appreciate the compassion, collaboration, and patience of staff and families. "We're focused on the students," said Erin Hedrick, CMCSS K-12 Virtual administrator. "We want these students to have a successful year."

Teachers who are now part of the virtual team are creating new opportunities and working with students in creative ways. From learning new best practices, methods, and processes to providing technology troubleshooting, CMCSS teachers are boldly conquering the virtual learning space.

As always, the partnership between teachers and CMCSS families is critical in the development of a successful learning environment for students.





Need to Update Your Information?

THE HR BENEFITS TEAM



**AMY
WIGINGTON**
EMAIL
P: 920-7810



**DONNA
MCINTOSH**
EMAIL
P: 920-7929



**FAYE
TRYON**
EMAIL
P: 920-7788

EMPLOYEE BENEFITS FAIR IS Now Virtual

- *Notify Human Resources if you have a change of address, name change, or need to make other updates to your personal information.*
- *Adding a spouse or new baby, or making any changes to your insurance, contact the Benefits Office. Changes to your insurance coverage due to a status must be made within 30 days of the event.*
- *Open enrollment for Colonial Supplemental Insurance and the Medical Flexible Spending Dependent Care plan will be in November.*

In an effort to engage employees but also maintain a safe physical distance, Human Resources has announced a virtual benefits fair.

Mark your calendar for the CMCSS Virtual Benefits Fair on September 22, 2020. Prior to the event, employees will receive an email with a link to the Virtual Benefits Fair site.

Information from benefits vendors will be available on the site for employees to review.

On September 22, accessible on the site, there will be a live Q&A via Zoom with vendors from 4:30 pm to 5:30 pm and again from 6:00 pm to 6:30 pm.

There will be the opportunity to register for great door prizes, too!

**Virtual Employee
Benefits Fair is
Sept. 22.**

**Open enrollment
ends Oct. 1 for
medical, dental,
and vision plans.**

**Last day to enroll
or make changes to
coverage is Oct. 1.**



Employee Return to Work Understanding

AND SELF-SCREENING EXPECTATION

Based on new CDC and Tennessee Department of Health guidance, the Employee Return to Work Understanding and Self-Screening for COVID-19 form has been updated.

Employees are not required to sign the updated form, however they are strongly encouraged to review the new information.

[Access the form here or find it on cmcss.net.](#)

Employees with questions regarding COVID-19, the Return to Work flowchart, or Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) should contact their supervisor or Human Resources.

Self-Screening Checklist for COVID-19

HAVE YOU EXPERIENCED A NEW ONSET OF THE FOLLOWING SYMPTOMS IN THE PAST 72 HOURS? (THIS DOES NOT INCLUDE CHRONIC, PRE-EXISTING CONDITIONS.)

- Fever of 100 degrees or greater
- New onset of a cough
- New onset of shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- New onset of sore throat
- New onset of muscle or body aches
- Diarrhea
- New onset of headache
- New onset of loss of taste or smell
- Nausea or vomiting
- Congestion or runny nose
- Chills
- Fatigue

WITHIN THE PAST 14 DAYS have you been in close physical contact (6-ft for 15 minutes) with a person who is known to have laboratory-confirmed

COVID-19 test result?

[Click here for the Back to Work Flowchart.](#) (Available on cmcss.net)



STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

MCHS students earn national recognition at FCCLA

Four Montgomery Central High School students did not let the conditions of the pandemic limit their pursuit of excellence. During the national Family, Career, and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA) event in July, the students placed in the top three in several categories.

Despite the event moving to a virtual format for both the state level competition in March and nationals in July, the MCHS students pushed on.

The students developed their hard copy portfolios into 100% digital portfolios and presentations. "They were quickly able to master the technology and advance to nationals," said their club sponsor and MCHS teacher, Maggie Tucker.

During the STAR and competitive events, members are recognized for their proficiency and achievement in chapter and individual projects, leadership skills, and career preparation.

There are more than 30 events in which students can choose to compete.

The MCHS students placed in the following events:

Alex Coy competed in Chapter in Review Portfolio and was awarded a bronze medal.

Juliana Santos and Ashley Griffin competed in Event Management and were awarded a silver medal.

Kristy Long competed in the Teach and Train event and was awarded a gold medal and placed first in the nation in her event category.



**Have a student success story?
Share it with us here.**

Employee Annual Giving Campaign

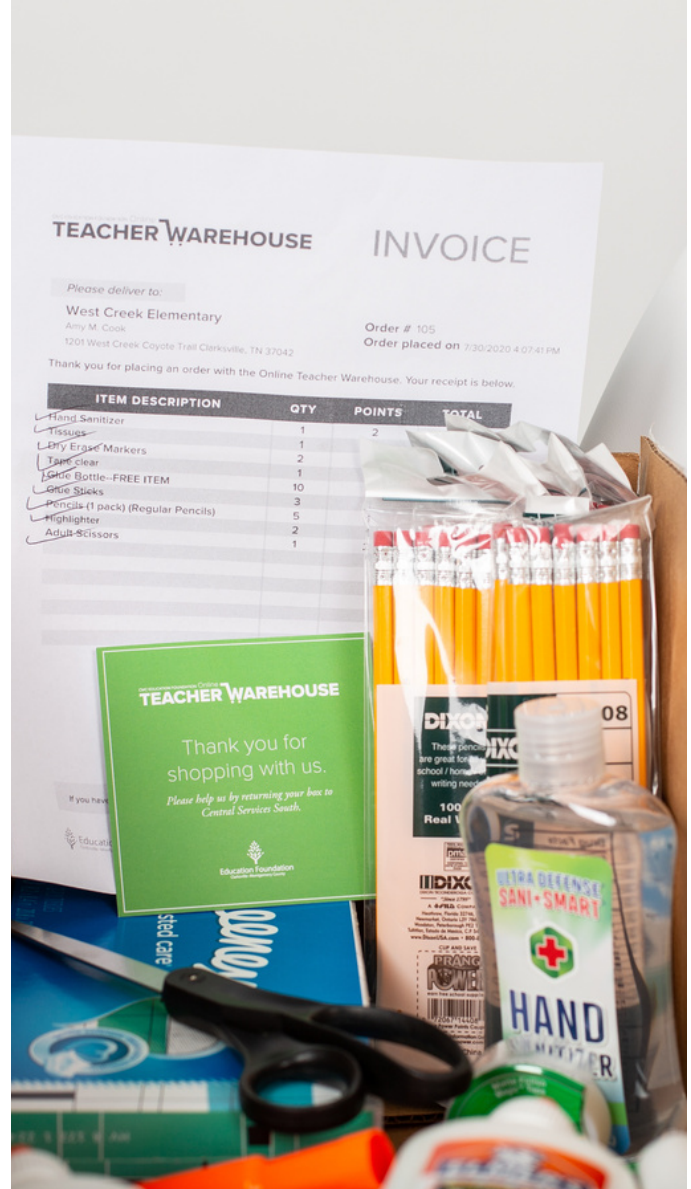
2020 CAMPAIGN BEGINS SEPTEMBER 23

**ROBIN BURTON, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
CMC EDUCATION FOUNDATION**

The Annual Employee Giving Campaign is coming up soon, and the Foundation hopes you will support us this year!

Because of your generous contributions, the Foundation had a successful year supporting our students and teachers, even amid COVID-19. Moving forward into 2020 and 2021, the Foundation will grow its programs to support each of you better.

From offering the new Teacher Warehouse Online and creating more significant grant opportunities to aligning the Teacher Warehouse to meet your needs more effectively, your support is crucial to these initiatives. Keep an eye out for the forms soon, and thank you in advance for your support.



CMC EDUCATION FOUNDATION IN THE SCHOOLS

Since August 2020, the Clarksville-Montgomery County Education Foundation has collaborated with schools in the following ways:

- Employee Back-to-School Breakfast sponsored by Cornerstone Financial
- Bottled water for CMCSS schools while water fountains are taped off
- Technology grant by Google to help with mobile hotspots
- Publix gift cards for student & classroom needs
- Kroger gift cards for student & classroom needs
- COVID-19 response and support for students, teachers and departments
- Teacher Warehouse Online launch



2020 Annual Employee Campaign

WHAT'S THE Difference?



THE DIFFERENCE YOU MAKE

Teacher Warehouse | Teacher Warehouse Online | COVID-19 Response
Great Idea Grants | Individual Grants | Academic Awards | Teacher of the Year | Pass & GO
Vision to Reality | Partners In Education | Leadership CMCSS | Community Outreach



Education Foundation
Clarksville-Montgomery County



WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT

Federal Income Tax Withholding

There have been enough surprises in 2020, do not let your tax return be another one. The Business Affairs office encourages all employees to understand their Federal Income Tax withholding.

Think the information you put on your W-4 is not important? Think again. This information drives the calculation of the Federal income taxes withheld from your pay. It is all based on the tax tables provided by the IRS.

HOW MUCH IS BEING WITHHELD?

Look at your pay advice and under deductions, find the FIT. That stands for Federal Income Tax. Missing your FIT? You may not have Federal Income Taxes withheld from your check.

WHAT IS DIFFERENT IN 2020?

Effective January 1, 2020, the IRS revised the W-4 and the format. The new W-4 involves a five-step process, with only steps one and five being required. On the new W-4, employees also have updated designations:

- single
- married filing separately
- married filing jointly
- head of household

"Based on inquiries by employees we are seeing there are situations with how the 2020 W-4 is being filled out. Not as much tax is being withheld as the employee would have anticipated," said Marcia Demorest, Chief Financial Officer.

There is no need to complete a new form if you are satisfied with the amount of Federal Income Taxes withheld.

NEW EMPLOYEES (SINCE DECEMBER 31, 2019)

If you were hired after 12/31/19 or you've made a change to your W-4 after 12/31/19 then the new W-4 form is in use.

CAN I STILL MAKE A CHANGE?

If you don't think you have enough taxes withheld, then you can fill out another W-4 and submit to payroll.

Each individual's tax situation is unique and the payroll officers do not specialize in taxes. "We cannot offer assistance in HOW to fill out your W-4," says Demorest, "But we are happy to process any new forms that are submitted."



Federal Income Tax (Cont.)

COMPARING THE PREVIOUS W-4 TO THE NEW 2020 W-4

Assume an employee earns \$1,500 on a bi-weekly basis and works year round. This equates to 26 pay periods, or checks, a year. Their annual salary would be \$39,000 a year.

If based on the 2019 W-4, the employee claimed single and zero exemptions, the Federal taxes withheld would be \$154.97.

If based on a 2020 W-4, the employee claimed single and one job (see Step 2), no dependents (see Step 3), no other income, deductions, or extra withholding (see Step 4) then the Federal taxes withheld would be \$115.17.

You can change your choices on the form or you can designate to have extra withholding (in addition to the tax calculation) from each pay period (Step 4 (c) on the 2020 W-4). Keep in mind that this is a dollar amount and that the same extra dollar amount will come out of every check even if the paycheck is less in some pay periods.

WHERE TO LEARN MORE

2020 W-4 (IRS WEBSITE)

FAQS ON THE 2020 FORM

**TAX WITHHOLDING
ESTIMATOR (IRS WEBSITE)**

**CALCULATOR, TIPS, & MORE
(NERD WALLET)**

	Previous W-4	2020 W-4
Taxable Wages	\$39,000	\$39,000
Adjustments	\$0	\$8,600
Adjusted Annual Wage Amount	\$39,000	\$30,400
Tax Based on Adjusted Annual Wage Amount	\$154.87	\$115.17

In the IRS calculation based on the 2020 W-4, an \$8,600 adjustment is made based on the check box in Step 2 not being checked.

2020 W-4 FORMAT

STEP 1: Filing status as single or married filing separately, married filing jointly, or head of household

STEP 2: If you hold more than one job at a time or if you are (OPTIONAL) married filing jointly and your spouse also works (and both individuals earn about the same amount)

STEP 3: If you claim dependents (children under 17) or others (OPTIONAL)

STEP 4: a) other income (not from jobs)
(OPTIONAL) b) deductions if you expect to claim other than standard
c) extra withholding

STEP 5: Sign and date

ENROLL NOW
2020-2021

BE ALIVE POINTS PROGRAM

IF YOU'VE ENROLLED IN PAST SESSIONS, JUST
SIMPLY LOG-IN AT
[HTTPS://BEALIVE.CMCSS.NET](https://bealive.cmcss.net) TO ENROLL.
IF THIS IS YOUR FIRST SESSION, JUST CLICK
ENROLL NOW AND SUBMIT THE FORM.

PROGRAM OFFICIALLY BEGINS
SEPTEMBER 1ST!



Be Alive Points Program

2020-21 PROGRAM BEGINS SEPTEMBER 1

The 2020-21 Be Alive Points Program begins September 1 and is
NOW OPEN for enrollment online.

ENROLL NOW 

(Can't access the link? Visit <https://bealive.cmcss.net>)

All CMCSS employees may participate. Learn more about the
program on the Alive and Well page.

ALIVE & WELL 

(Can't access the link? Visit <https://aliveandwell.cmcss.net>)

WHAT IS ALIVE & WELL?

Alive & Well is an employee wellness program that provides
opportunities that encourage people of all health statuses to
participate in improving their nutrition and physical activity habits.

Share the Positive

THANK YOU TO THE CMCSS STAFF WHO SHARED THEIR POSITIVE PERSPECTIVE ON THE START OF SCHOOL



Socialize with Us

CONNECT WITH THE DISTRICT ON FACEBOOK, INSTAGRAM, AND YOUTUBE

We are always looking to share positive and encouraging messages.

1. Tag @CMCSSINFO in your photos on Facebook or Instagram. Or email socialmedia@cmcss.net to have your picture featured on our page!
2. We're always looking for great stories about our amazing people! Share your story with us and you could be featured in an upcoming newsletter. Or if you know someone who should be featured, let us know!
3. Follow @CMCSSINFO on Facebook and Instagram. Follow us on YouTube @CMCSSFocus.