



Dear D51 Families and Colleagues,

Happy Friday! We hope y'all had a great week. Even though it was a short week for our students and staff, we continue to have a lot going on across the district.

If you haven't made it out to our schools to support spring sports, make sure you do! Our student athletes have been working hard, and I was able to witness an in-district battle between Palisade HS and Grand Junction HS last weekend as their boys and girls basketball teams faced off. I loved seeing the students in action, and I want to say thank you to our coaches, and thank you to the families, staff, and community who showed up to cheer our D51 student athletes on.

On Sunday, our family attended the MLK Community Meal & Award Ceremony at Bookcliff Middle School. This event, put on by Black Citizens and Friends, was an opportunity for members of the community to break bread together while celebrating our D51 students who participated in the MLK artwork competition. Then, on Monday, we had the opportunity to participate in the MLK Day Ceremony and March in Downtown Grand Junction. Shoutout to Black Citizens & Friends for organizing these wonderful events that allowed our community to celebrate the life and legacy of Dr. King. It was great to see so many D51 students, families, and community members in attendance at the celebration. I also want to shout out our Board of Education Vice President, Will Jones, for reading part of a joint MLK Day proclamation at the event, our Palisade High School Choir, directed by Matt Doty, who delivered a captivating performance during the opening ceremony, and thanks to BC&F for allowing me the opportunity to read part of a joint inclusivity proclamation, too.

Last night, we held another meeting with our D51 Facility Masterplan Committee. The committee continued its work to help guide us as we develop a 25-year masterplan for D51 that will help shape how we address critical facility needs throughout the district. Thank you to everyone who has volunteered their time throughout this process. We are looking forward to having a finalized plan later this semester.

I was able to end my week on a couple of fun and positive notes. This morning, I joined Dr. Christensen and members of the D51 Foundation Board at Timberline Bank. The D51 Foundation is the non-profit of the month for Timberline Bank, and we got the chance to say thank you by getting behind the bar and serving up lattes for customers in the Timberline Bank coffee shop. As a former Starbucks barista in college, I tried to put what little barista skills I have to the test (saying I had skills is a stretch), and it was a fun opportunity to celebrate all that the D51 Foundation does for our district, and a way to say thank you to Louise Goodman and everyone at Timberline Bank for being an Engaged & Supportive Community Partner. I also was able to sit on a panel and hear D51 students share their final KPP presentations today. This is one of my favorite events of the year as we get to hear students share about the struggles they have overcome to get to where they are today...D51 graduates. I can't wait to congratulate these students in May as they walk across the graduation stage. You can read more about the KPP program below.

Mt. Garfield Middle School MYP Program

At District 51, we value having options for educational pathways for our students and families. Mt. Garfield Middle School is now accepting applications for their International Baccalaureate (IB) Middle Years Programme (MYP), catering to 6th-8th grade students. Read more [here](#).

Orchard Mesa Middle School Challenge Program

The Challenge Program at Orchard Mesa Middle School is tailored for academically gifted middle school students and is now accepting applications. Read more [here](#).

Key Performance Pathways Exit Presentations

In D51, each high school, including our alternative programs, offers Key Performance Pathways (KPP) tailored to students facing significant credit challenges, putting them at risk of not graduating on time with their peers. Through these specialized pathways, students collaborate independently with a teacher to progress through core subjects at their own pace. Read more [here](#).

Sophomore Tours at CMU Tech

Every year, sophomores from each D51 high school participate in a half-day visit to CMU Tech, exploring the various programs available and dedicating additional time to learning more about a program of their choice. Read more [here](#).

D51 Foundation Timberlink Bank Nonprofit of the Month

We want to shout out our *"Engaged & Supportive Community Partners"* at Timberline Bank for hosting a community coffee hour with the D51 Foundation this morning in their lobby. Baristas included Superintendent Dr. Hill, D51 Foundation Director Dr. Christensen, and D51 Foundation Board Member Aracely De Villegas-Decker. The D51 Foundation is Timberline Bank's NonProfit of the Month for January. All month long, they will match tips from their coffee bar to donate to the D51 Foundation. We hope you will come out and support our staff and students by grabbing yourself a cup of joe and donating to the District 51 Foundation. Thank you, Timberline Bank, for being engaged & supportive community partners!

D51 Trades Program

In collaboration with Construction Trades and North America's Building Trades Union (NABTU), District 51 offers a dynamic Pre-Apprentice Training Program tailored to students nearing high school graduation. Read more [here](#).

White Iced Celebration

Join the D51 Foundation at the 12th Annual White Iced Celebration on February 3 from 7 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. at the CMU Ballroom. It's an elegant event to celebrate Outstanding Academic Growth Schools and White Iced Award Recipients. There will be a Silent Auction, 360 Photo Booth, S'mores Bar, Appetizers, Signature Drinks, and so much more! Click [here](#) to purchase tickets. Be sure to purchase your tickets before 5 p.m. on January 29, as ticket prices will increase at the door to \$75.

School of Choice Window Still Open

School District 51 is dedicated to offering a diverse range of educational options that align with our mission of empowering families to choose the educational setting that best suits their unique preferences and aspirations. All of our schools offer students strong academic and extracurricular opportunities, but we know that every student is unique, and what works well for one child may not work well for another child. School of Choice applications will be accepted until 4:00 p.m. on January 26. For more information on our School of Choice process, click [here](#).

D51 Communications Survey

District 51 has released its 2024 Annual Communications Survey. This survey is a valuable opportunity to provide feedback on our communication processes in the district and strengthen our connection with our students, families, and school community. The survey is anonymous and is open to families, staff, and community members. To complete the survey, click [here](#).

Housing Survey

REMINDER: In conjunction with The Colorado Department of Housing, District 51 is conducting a survey of all its employees to better understand the housing needs and preferences of our staff. As an incentive to fill out the survey by January 22, Housing Resources of Western Colorado will have a drawing to provide three respondents with a \$100 American Express gift card. While the survey is anonymous, you do need to provide your email address to be eligible, but this will not be tied to your survey response. The survey should take less than 10 minutes to complete. [Click here](#) to fill out the survey now.

Upcoming

- **GJHS Athletics Annual Community Connections Series**
January 20, 5 p.m. at Grand Junction High School Auditorium
Join GJHS Athletics for their second Annual Community Connection Series. This year's event is *Strength and Conditioning for the High School Athlete*. Through various presentations and speakers, your student-athlete will learn how to train better, how to prepare better, and how to be bigger, stronger, faster, and healthier as a high school student-athlete.
- **Broadway Choir State Conference Performance Preview**
January 22, 6 p.m. at Colorado Mesa University's Moss Performing Arts Building
Broadway/Scenic Elementary Choir was selected to perform at this state conference, a highly esteemed opportunity, and one of only three elementary choirs chosen from the entire state to perform. To celebrate their achievement, they will host a performance preview and invite the community to join in congratulating their group for this prestigious opportunity.
- **College & Money Night at CMU**
January 23, 6 - 8 p.m. at Escalante Hall at CMU
Learn more about financial aid opportunities available for Higher Ed. There will be information on FAFSA, Career Advance Colorado, scholarships, and more.
- **Curriculum Open Houses**
January 22 & 24, 4:30 p.m. to 8 p.m. at the Harry Butler Board Room (R-5 High School)
The D51 middle school instructional resource selection team is currently evaluating high-quality English Language Arts textbook options for adoption in grades 6-8. Please join us for our Curriculum Open House, where community members will have a chance to review the final three options and offer input.

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.

Brian Hill

Dr. Brian Hill
Superintendent of Schools
Mesa County Valley School District 51
brian.hill@d51schools.org
970.254.5193



2115 Grand Ave.
Grand Junction, CO 81501
(970) 254-5100