



COMO PARK

SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL

January 20, 2023 Newsletter

2022-23 ACCESS Test for English Learners

State and federal laws require that all English Learner (EL) students are assessed annually to measure their proficiency and progress in reading, writing, listening and speaking in English.

SPPS uses the ACCESS 2.0 (Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State) test as its annual assessment. EL students who receive special education services and who meet certain guidelines may take the Alternate ACCESS test instead. These tests are used to see if students are meeting the WIDA English Language Development Standards and determine if a student is ready to exit from SPPS's EL program.

All SPPS EL students in grades K-12 will be provided the ACCESS or Alternate ACCESS tests between January 30-March 24, 2023.

If you prefer that your student not participate in the ACCESS or Alternate ACCESS testing, please provide a written note indicating that choice or complete the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) Parent/Guardian Participation Guide and Refusal form and send this communication to your child's principal.

For more information on English language proficiency assessments and the MDE Parent/Guardian Participation Guide and Refusal form, please go to:

- SPPS Family Testing Information website: spps.org/Page/33916
- MDE Family Testing Information website: education.mn.gov/MDE/fam/tests/

For Somali, click [here](#).

For Spanish, click [here](#).

For Karen, click [here](#).

For Hmong, click [here](#).

Any questions regarding ACCESS testing, please contact Jamie Hoffman at 651-744-5529 or email at jamie.hoffman@spps.org.



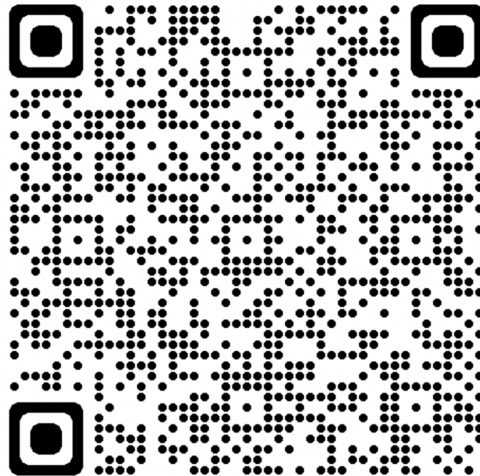
WE NEED YOUR HELP, COMO FAMILIES!

We need your help planning family engagement activities. Please complete this short survey no later than January 26th so we can better serve the families in our school community. Thank you!

bit.ly/comoparentsurvey

or

Scan this QR Code



Surveys are also available in: [Karen](#), [Spanish](#), and [Somali](#) and were available to students in Seminar classes last week to bring home for parents to complete. **Forms may be returned to the main office or to Seminar teachers no later than January 26th.**

Upcoming Dates

- JANUARY 26- End of Quarter 2
- 27- No School (Grading Day)
- 30- First Day of Quarter 3 (2nd Semester)
- February 6- Parent Advisory Council 6:00pm
- 13- National African American Parent Involvement Day (NAAPID)
- 20- No School (President's Day)



PARENT ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING

When: Monday, February 6, 2023

Time: 6:00pm

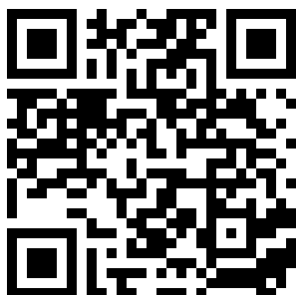
Where: Virtually through Google Meet <https://meet.google.com/caf-dwwh-uro>

We would like to hear from you!! Please email me with suggestions, topics, concerns, or questions to be discussed at the next PAC meeting...jamie.hoffman@spps.org



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STAFF SPOTLIGHT

Please welcome our new business teacher, Cason Hiers



My name is Cason Hiers and I am very excited to be joining the Como community.

I am the new business teacher and will be teaching personal finance management, entrepreneurship, and marketing during the second semester.

This is my first full time teaching position but I have spent time at Como as both a student teacher and during my observation hours while in my teacher preparation program. I am also a Nordic Ski coach here at Como as well as the head boy's tennis coach at Highland Park High School.

I got my undergraduate degree at Catawba College in North Carolina and am in the Urban Education masters program at Metro State here in Saint Paul.

I enjoy spending time outdoors, including fishing and hiking. I enjoy spending time with my dogs and family and watching Netflix. I am very passionate about coaching as well as teaching. I am also a very big Minnesota sports fan.

I am very excited about continuing to cultivate relationships here at Como as I have already met so many great people. I believe Como is a truly great place and I am looking forward to beginning my journey here.

This is our [E-Learning Day Schedule](#) for any possible future dates. Como E-Learning Day Meet nicknames are available at spps.org/dlday for students to log on during synchronous times.

Time	Expectation
8:30-8:55	Seminar Synchronous Learning
9:00-9:20	Period 1 Synchronous Learning
9:25-9:45	Period 2 Synchronous Learning
9:50-10:10	Period 3 Synchronous Learning
10:15-10:35	Period 4 Synchronous Learning
10:40-11:45	Office Hours
11:45-12:15	Lunch
12:15-3:00	Asynchronous Learning



Give Kids a **SMILE**



FREE DENTAL CARE FOR KIDS IN NEED

Because every child's smile should be the picture of health, dentists and dental professionals volunteer in select clinics throughout the state to provide free care to low-income children in need. This special program, called Give Kids a Smile, is available on the first Friday and Saturday of February. After January 1, parents can find local participating clinics by visiting mndental.org or by calling United Way 2-1-1 or 1-800-543-7709.

Please note: Every child must be accompanied by a parent or legal guardian and must have an appointment in advance. Sorry, walk-in care is not available.



Give Kids a SMILE

Dear Parents or Guardians:

Minnesota dental professionals are concerned about the growing number of low-income children who face barriers to dental care. That's why thousands of dental professionals come together on the first Friday and Saturday of February to provide free dental care to children in need.

This special event is called "Give Kids a Smile" and is coordinated by the Minnesota Dental Association. The dental care will be available in community-based clinics and private practices in many locations throughout Minnesota. Here is more information:

All patients must have appointments in advance and be accompanied by a parent or legal guardian. After Jan. 1, parents may call United Way 211 (just dial 2-1-1) or 800-543-7709. Operators will have a list of participating dental offices and will be able to direct people to a location in their area. Parents will then call the dental office to schedule an appointment. An online list will also be available at www.mndental.org.

Services will vary from preventive care, which includes cleanings, sealants and fluoride treatment, to restorative care, which includes fillings. Information on specific services that will be provided will be outlined when an appointment is scheduled.

Typically, clinics treat children ranging in age from 3 to 18. When calling for an appointment, parents should ask about any age requirements.



Learn more at mndental.org.

Please photocopy this document and share it with families who could benefit from the "Give Kids a Smile" program. This document is also available in Hmong, Spanish, Vietnamese, Somali and Russian. Please download them from mndental.org.

(ENGLISH)



Updates about College/Career from Get Ready!

Webinars and Trainings

Ready, Set, FAFSA Series - February 2023



Ready, Set, FAFSA!
February 2023

We're hosting another round of Ready, Set, FAFSA to help students and families who weren't quite ready to apply in the fall. Free financial aid events are available to Minnesota students and families via Zoom.

The series, running on Tuesday evenings, Feb. 7-28, 2023, is intended for current high school students and will cover general information about the financial aid process, details on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), the Minnesota Dream Act for undocumented students, and other ways to pay for college.

All sessions will have interpretation in Spanish, Somali, and Hmong. Attendees can ask questions in the chat and have them answered during the event by financial aid experts. Students who attend any of the sessions will be entered into a drawing to win a \$500 scholarship (one entry per session attended). Please share the Ready, Set, FAFSA details among your networks!

Intended Audience:

12th grade students and their families

Sessions, Dates and Topics:

1. Understand & Prepare to Apply for Financial Aid – Feb. 7 @ 7:00 p.m.
2. Apply for Financial Aid: FAFSA – Feb. 14 @ 7:00 p.m.
3. Apply for Financial Aid: Dream Act – Feb. 16 @ 7:00 p.m.
4. Understand Your Offer Letter – Feb. 21 @ 7:00 p.m.
5. Search for Scholarships – Feb. 28 @ 7:00 p.m.

Registration Link:

<https://bit.ly/MNFAFSA>

These sessions are offered by the Minnesota Office of Higher Education, Minnesota Department of Education, ECMC The College Place and Minnesota Goes to College.



Free UMN Extension Family-Focused Webinars

The University of MN Extension program is hosting many family-focused webinars throughout January- April 2023 that aim to support greater health, resilience and well-being for all Minnesotans. Extension webinars are offered via Zoom. See below for sessions in January and early February- Follow links for each series to learn more about webinar topics, dates, times and registration. You may also [click here for the full list of UMN Extension webinars](#).



Jan. 18, 3:00 p.m. - [Home sweet home: Addressing hoarding](#)

Jan. 24, 11:30 a.m. - [Re-writing the rural narrative](#)

Jan. 25, 2:00 p.m. - [Double estate planning for caregivers](#)

Jan. 26, 12:00 p.m. - [Trees and shrubs for a changing climate](#)

Feb. 1, 12:00 p.m. - [Grant writing for beginners](#)

Feb. 2, 12:15 p.m. - [Thrifty Thursday: Building credit with a credit card](#)

Feb. 8, 12:00 p.m. - [Energy for renters: What you need to know](#)



You and your family are invited to attend the first on-campus Family of Future Educators Event, hosted by the College of Education at Minnesota State University, Mankato, on Tuesday, January 31. If you are unable to attend that evening, a virtual opportunity will happen on Thursday evening, March 2. The details about each event are listed below. Please join MSU Mankato for whichever option works best for your family. Please reach out to Deb Klinnert, ICAP Liaison at deborah.klinnert.2@mnsu.edu with any questions or concerns you may have.

Tuesday, January 31st

The in-person event will take place in the MNSU, Mankato Centennial Student Union Ballroom. Dinner will be served at 6:30pm and our program will run from 7pm to 8pm. The program will center around students of color and their families and include information about the College of Education and resources for students before and after attending. Parking will be available at no cost beginning at 6:30pm in the visitors parking lot (lot number 4).

Thursday, March 2nd

This virtual event will take place via Zoom. The program will run from 6pm to 7pm. A zoom link will be sent after the RSVP has been received.

RSVP is required for these events and must be received by Tuesday, January 24th. Please email Deb Klinnert at deborah.klinnert.2@mnsu.edu and include the name of the student, the school they currently attend, and how many people will attend.



2023 PSEO FEATURE WEEK

Interested in earning college credit as a high school sophomore, junior, and/or senior? Join us each day of the week to hear from Post-Secondary Enrollment Option (PSEO) institutions about their program, courses offerings, admission process, and more!

Our Presenters:



SAINT PAUL COLLEGE

Monday, February 13, 2023
Seminar, 1:05 - 1:40
Alyssa Mettler
PSEO Coordinator



CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY

Tuesday, February 14, 2023
Seminar, 1:05 - 1:40
Victoria Thao
Undergraduate Admissions Counselor



MINNEAPOLIS COLLEGE

Wednesday, February 15, 2023
Seminar, 1:05 - 1:40
Alyson Gagner
PSEO Coordinator



CENTURY COLLEGE

Thursday, February 16, 2023
Seminar, 1:05 - 1:40
Katy Olson
PSEO Coordinator/Admissions Advisor



UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA, TWIN CITIES

Friday, February 17, 2023
Seminar, 1:05 - 1:40
Andrew Kopelman
Academic Advisor / PSEO Coordinator



FEBRUARY 13-17

CAREER PATHWAY
CENTER
ROOM 1304



bit.ly/PSEOfeature

REGISTER HERE!

You must get permission to attend the PSEO Feature sessions. You will receive a pass from your teacher the day of the event by registering.

Contact Info:

Ms. Aisha
amohamed.ach@spps.org
or
Ms. Mai Chue
mmoua.getr@spps.org

Career Pathway Center
www.spps.org/domain/15743





Salvation Army Resources and main support line: 651-776-8169

Several [locations](#) in the Twin Cities (services differ at each location)

[Payne Ave Salvation Army](#) serves East and North St. Paul and 12 surrounding suburbs. Services include:

Food resources

- o Hot lunch meal (Mon/Tues/Thurs/Fri, 11:45am to 12:45pm.)
- o Food shelf for adults families (Tue/Thurs 9 to 11am and 1 to 3pm)
- o Hygiene supplies, formula and diapers (Tues/Thurs 9 to 11am and 1 to 3pm)
- o Food Rescue Distribution (Fridays 10 to 11:00am)

Financial support

- o Rent and deposit assistance
- o Utility assistance
- o Vouchers for clothing, household items and discount furniture
- o Emergency Financial Assistance
- o Money management counseling

Youth services

- o Summer Day Camp for youth (July thru August; Mon – Thurs; ages 8-12)

Spiritual guidance

- o Sunday Family Worship (11am Sunday Morning - Everyone is Welcome)
- o Men's and women's ministry groups



GREAT THINGS HAPPENING AT COMO



Orienteering#1. Nine (9) Como Park cadets endured a beautiful sunny day on Sunday, 17 January 2023 at the Lake Elmo State Park Reserve by conducting their first of many Orienteering competitions this school year. As members of the Minnesota Orienteering Club, our MCJROTC cadets seek out new adventures which mix the great outdoors with a bit of a scavenger hunt. Orienteering is a sport they enjoy and show passion to attend each and every time. They love hiking, biking, skiing, snow shoeing, trail running, geocaching, or just leisurely walking in the woods and trails. The team is led by Cadet Sergeant Cooper Westrum. OOH RAH!



Some Como Park Juniors during their 3rd Hour (3A) conducting a routine Armed Uniform Inspection during class. 98% present today. Consisted of inspection arms and three challenging questions.

The Como Park all female Color Guard team performed honors for the Girls Basketball Team on Saturday, 14 January 2023. It was led by Cadet Corporal Sumalee Reh. OOH RAH!



OUR LIBRARY COULD USE YOUR SUPPORT

Hello Como Families!

In order to provide current, relevant, and inclusive books for our students, for the last three years I've been using Donors Choose. There isn't enough money in the budget to give kids the books they deserve.

Donors Choose is an amazing company that pairs community members and businesses who wish to support students with educators who are seeking resources for those students.

As a donor, you can pick a project and make a donation of any amount. When the project is fully funded, Donors Choose will purchase the items selected by the teacher *or in this case, your child's librarian*, and ship them to the school directly.

To provide students with quality books our library has had 21 projects funded totaling over \$16,000 in the last 3 years!

With inflation and challenging times, 5 of my last 6 campaigns this school year have expired without funding.

I'm hoping you can help support our library and student literacy by donating at the link below. I currently have two projects posted:

**Book Clubs as an Alternative to Discipline
and
Urban Teens in Need of Modern Poetry**

[Donors Choose](#)





You're invited to our 2023 NAAPID celebration!

Come support Como and our students for National African American Parent Involvement Day

All Parents are invited to attend



When: Monday February 13th

Time: 9:00am-11:30am

Where: Como Park Auditorium



Continental breakfast is provided

Our student led program includes: dancers, choir ensemble, spoken word, educational presentation, and more!

Please RSVP to jamie.hoffman@spps.org by February 3rd

Transportation is available. Please email jamie.hoffman@spps.org or call 651-744-5529



RIGHT TRACK APPLICATION IS OPEN

JANUARY 17TH - FEBRUARY 28TH

Right Track provides paid summer internships for young people from Saint Paul. Join us at Right Track to develop your employment skills, build your network, and earn money.

CONTACT US

RIGHTTRACK.STPAUL.GOV

651-266-6363

 @RightTrackSP

 RightTrackSP



Apply Here



SCAN HERE
TO APPLY





What: 2nd Annual Family Fun Night

When: Friday, May 19, 2023

Time: 5:00-8:00pm

Relax. Reflect. Recharge.

Mindfulness can start at any age, and Change to Chill has the right tools and activities to help anyone take a moment for themselves, whether that means hitting the gym or taking out a box of colored pencils. Our [mental health resources](#) are designed for teens and their mentors to help them get better sleep, develop a support system, practice gratitude, and ultimately, adopt better daily habits.

By increasing awareness and [balancing school and life](#), teens can gain a sense of calm amidst the chaos of school deadlines, family pressures, part-time jobs, extracurricular activities, and more. So, whether you're a teen looking for relaxing activities, or a mentor seeking chill out activities for your teens, find all of the Change to Chill DIY activities in one place.

Click [here](#) for some activities and tools for teens and mentors.

