



# The Grizzlies Gazette



## Something Professional

Where are all of the vaccinations??? Yes, that is the question all of us are asking!!! You may have recently read that Detroit and Wayne County's vaccine allocation increased significantly. Washtenaw county vaccine allocation remained flat this week (~3,000 doses), with about half of the doses going to second doses. The state uses a new allocation formula that considers the Social Vulnerability Index. In practice, this brings more vaccines to Detroit, takes some vaccines away from northern counties, and keeps us at about the same level. However, we are being told by the Washtenaw County Health Department (WCHD) that in the next few weeks, we will start to receive more vaccines.



The state has also asked the WCHD to aim to have 3/4 of our vaccine in the 1B population going to seniors. With that in mind, they will continue to vaccinate the 1A special educators, and they have begun offering spots to school staff who are 65+. There are 3,400 people on these lists as of this newsletter, and close to 600 people are 65 and older. **It is expected that the WCHD will send out invitations to all of the 65+ school staff in the next ten days.**

The WCHD is currently operating vaccination clinics every week from Tuesday through Friday at EMU and is ready to scale up and expand to 7 days a week at EMU and add Pierce Lake in Chelsea when they begin receiving more vaccines. These openings are all done through appointments made by the WCHD.

They are still working on scaling up their sign-up systems and have learned that sharing their links does not work well, so **for now, vaccination appointment invitations will come directly from health department staff members.** Please monitor your district emails for invitations from the WCHD.

We realize that not everyone will choose to get vaccinated for many reasons. The district does not require vaccinations. Those staff who have been vaccinated have all shared that they have had very little to no side effects thus far. This is encouraging!

Also, please know that we encourage you to sign up for vaccinations at any other locations you have access to, particularly: your home county if they live outside of Washtenaw county; your doctor's/pharmacy portals; Meijer and Walgreens; and (for any veterans), the VA.

Meanwhile: Because of the UK variant, which at this point is still concentrated in the U-M student areas, the WCHD **is continuing pop-up testing this week, Saturday, February 6, from 12:00-4:00 pm, at Pioneer High School.** Although there are many places to get tested, **any positive tests at this location will also be genetically sequenced** to assess for the variant.

I wish I could provide you with more information, yet we will communicate it with you as we learn more about the process.

Remember, take care of yourself! It is essential during this season of the year! Your family needs you, your students need you, and we need you! Essential

**Alena Zachery-Ross — Superintendent**

Click on the group of photos below to enlarge



**Self-care isn't an of-the-moment trend. In fact, this practice, which varies from person to person, is a way of life.**



## Office of the Assistant Superintendent



As we plan forward and begin to envision what the 2021-22 educational landscape might look like, we must begin by taking stock of all that we have learned from March 15, 2020 to our present day about our students, their lives, our families, their lives, about us, and our lives, what we value, respect, how we learn, how our students learn, etc. As a result of this learning, we must ask ourselves what have we learned about connecting with our students, the strategies that have worked for us, the learning that has been mastered remotely, and the relationships that we have secured with the families of our students. We must also begin to identify those things that we have learned and want to continue to develop as a result of our learning. As we plan forward collectively, we must think about how we will hold true to our priorities, how we will build intentional relationships with our students, how we will partner with the adults and home, how we plan to revise our curriculum units to ensure student engagement, voice and self-regulation, how we will manage time across a day and week, how we will support students' independent practices at home, and the methods and structures we will use to educate our students.

As we venture into a very promising year, we must aim in creating educationally safe learning communities where all students are seen, heard, valued, and respected. We must strive to continue to use all that we have learned this school year to begin creating a new type of learning environment that better serves our diverse student population. We must ensure that we create a sense of belonging where our student's voices are heard and honored. *As a result we must start to rethink how we will begin to teach so that our students can self-regulate their learning, continue to leverage the 21st century technology systems learned, and how we plan on sharing instructional time so that our students can lead their own learning forward. We must also plan on providing a socially just and culturally responsive atmosphere that is inclusive for everyone. These are just some of my thoughts as we begin to rethink education at YCS forward. I look forward to holding discussions with you as we move forward.*

**Carlos Lopez — Assistant Superintendent**

"Wishing you a month filled with love, peace, and joy!"

## Grants



Grants (including Crowdfunding i.e. GoFundMe, Donors Choose, etc.) contribute to a substantial portion of funding for YCS. They secure many needed supports for our students and staff. They also can come with tight rules and regulations. We have put a process in place to:

- ensure grants are aligned with YCS District goals, objectives, priorities, vision, and mission;
- ensure proper compliance with grants, guidelines, accounting rules, and laws;
- comply with School Board Policy and Administrative Guideline [6605 - CROWDFUNDING](#) (search under Policies and Administrative Guidelines for 6605);and
- provide support in securing and implementation of the grant.

The process and application can be found here: [Grant Process - Google Docs](#) and [Grant Application \(including Crowd Funding e.g. GoFundMe\) - Google Forms](#)

For questions or assistance please contact:  
Mark Coscarella ([mcoscarella6@ycschools.us](mailto:mcoscarella6@ycschools.us))

**Mark Coscarella — Director of State and Federal Grant Programs**





## Human Resources



**Happy January!** So many events have occurred in January 2021 including the Presidential inauguration, release of a COVID-19 vaccine, Return to school for F2F students and staff. Now we are looking forward to the phase in of all of our staff and students beginning in March. **These are exciting times!!! We are stronger together.**

**Below are processes that are included in each newsletter, please read carefully:**

### REPORT YOUR ABSENCES IN AESOP.

All absences including personal time off must be reported in **AESOP**. **Absences not reported in AESOP may result in a loss of wages AND RESULT IN DISCIPLINARY ACTION.**

Reporting absences is mandatory and an expectation of each employee. You must report all absences in AESOP including **daily absences and extended medical leaves**. Daily absences must be reported at least **1 hour** before you are scheduled to work. It is a professional courtesy to notify your immediate supervisor as well. Please contact your immediate supervisor for guidance on how to contact him/her. **If you need help with access to AESOP contact Lois Nowling at [Lnowling5@ycschools.us](mailto:Lnowling5@ycschools.us).**

**Medical Leaves short or long term require a doctor's slip to go off from and return to work.** If you need a leave of absence for any reason you must follow this process: 1) Get a doctor's slip to Human Resources. The slip must include your expected leave dates. It is not required to have a diagnosis on the slip at any time; 2) Complete Family Medical Leave Act paperwork; 3) If you believe you will be out for an extended time and you have district insurance - you may need to complete the long term disability paperwork for MESSA.

Once you are able to return to work you must follow this process: 1) Prior to reporting to work you must submit a doctor's release that includes your doctor approved return to work date; 2) Notify your immediate supervisor of your return. It is crucial that you do not report to work prior to providing a release from your doctor. This process is a case-by-case issue as each medical leave is unique to each employee.

**Contact Human Resources for additional information prior to taking a leave or returning to work.**

**Self Care is a Priority!**

**Mandatory Meaningful work assignments have been going fantastic!** These assignments are so beneficial to each location and will continue as we move forward from January to June.

**Communication and EMAIL** - In order for the district to communicate and provide current information to all staff we use the YCS email system. The district has worked hard to develop a system for communication using the Blueprint Protocol to make sure that you have a way to get and return communication. You must do your part as well- check your email at least 2 times per day. This is a district-wide, mandatory expectation for all staff. If you are experiencing difficulties with your email please contact your immediate supervisor or whenever possible contact technology using [techsupport@ycschools.us](mailto:techsupport@ycschools.us) so our team can support you.

**Check Stubs:** Employees receive an electronic check stub every payroll through e-suites. This pay stub also contains your personal time off balances. Attached is the link that will guide you through the setup to activate an account in New World. New World allows you to view your e-suite account.

**Certification Renewal-** It is that time of year when all certified staff should review their teacher/social worker/administrator etc., certifications and note the expiration date. Courtesy notices will be sent out to staff that certification will expire on June 30, but it is the employees' responsibility to renew certification.

*"Ability is what you're capable of doing. Motivation determines what you do. Attitude determines how well you do it."-Lou Holtz*

**Sue McCarty — Human Resources Director**

## Office of the Data Coach



As we adjust to changes and new policies please remember to help families and students stay in the know with Remind. If you need an introduction to the platform you can get started by [clicking here](#). Helping our families and students find an avenue to voice concerns and keep up to date with information will help reduce the isolation and distance we're all feeling from the pandemic. If you run into any technical issues, please email [techsupport@ycschools.us](mailto:techsupport@ycschools.us).

In Seesaw news, priority standards have been uploaded as skills on the platform. Seesaw has built in support for integrating standards into the work being given to students and teachers can evaluate standards directly on the platform. If you want to learn more about what skills are and how to use them in Seesaw you can click [here](#).

**Solomon Zheng — Data Coach**

## Technology



Hello YCS, here are your quick updates from Technology. We have received a limited supply of hotspots. We are currently working through a list of eligible families; and if you are aware of a family that is in need; please have them first contact [YPSIL-IVE@YCSCHOOLS.US](mailto:YPSIL-IVE@YCSCHOOLS.US). We will attempt to get them hooked up with Comcast Internet first. Hotspots are a great substitute but we need to ensure that everyone is aware of several caveats. First, they are not as fast as a cable Internet connection, so they are only ideal for one or two connections; not an entire family. Second, the hotspots are limited to work with YCS only devices. Families that receive a hotspot can only use a Chromebook or iPad from YCS as that is intended and how we program them. Third, these devices are limited to families that are in unique situations (some of those include transitory families, temporary housing families, etc), because we have a limited number of devices, we must carefully scrutinize them for families that really do need them.

Next, during each newsletter, I'm going to post a security tip to help ensure you conduct safe and diligent computing to protect yourselves. First tip; You are a target to hackers. Remember this as it is a fact no matter who you are. And considering we're in tax return season hackers become really active during this time period. Don't ever think, "that it won't happen to me." Everyone who uses a digital device is at risk, and the stakes are often really high for both your personal and financial well-being. Tip #1 = Practice good password management. I know that we often view passwords as inconvenient or having too many to manage often leads to short-cuts. But reusing the same password for everything is dangerous at best, and never changing them is bad. Using a password manager can help you maintain strong and unique passwords, that you can change often. There are tons of solutions, but one I like to use is LastPass (<https://www.lastpass.com>). Do some research and you'll see these are really good solutions.

**Nik Jackson — Technology Director**

## February Bucketlist

1. Celebrate birthday with family
2. Drink more water
3. Walk outside at least once a week
4. Discover a new photo spot
5. Try a new type of workout class
6. Clean out closet
7. Finish podcast
8. Send Valentines for friends
9. Try a new sweets recipe
10. Interact more on Twitter & Tumblr
11. Find more people on Instagram

## Transportation



### Welcome Back Transportation Staff!!

So many of you have commented how good it feels to see your students and to be back on a bus, out in the community.

Thank you for your patience-some of the routes were modified and/or changed to fit the student attending Face-2-Face. Please check in with the office regarding your punch times and meaningful work assignments. Most assignments have or will be adjusted to work in-conjunction with your bus route during your downtime.

*REMINDER to drivers you must have your valid CDL [COMMERCIAL DRIVERS' LICENSE], your DOT [DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION] medical card and CEC [CONTINUING EDUCATION CARD] on your person when operating a Michigan School Bus.*

Take care and stay safe,

**Kim Searcy — Director of Transportation**

## Food Service



### Welcome Back!!!!

The foodservice department has been busy planning for the return of our students. We are serving meals in person at Erickson, Estabrook, Perry and YCMS. To ensure equity between our virtual and in-person students, we are sending additional food bags home with our in-person students.

Our meal distribution schedule has changed due to students returning to in-person learning. Please see the schedule below.....

- Ypsilanti Community High School- Wednesday's 9-2pm
- ACCE High School-Friday's 9-2pm
- Erickson Elementary School- Friday's 9-2pm
- Holmes Elementary School- Friday's 9-2pm
- Perry Elementary School-Friday's 9-2pm
- Grab and Go Bus Service will continue on Friday's

Food service is partnering with Food Gatherers to distribute knit hats at our sites. Our hope is that we can begin passing out hats during our distribution the week of February 1.

**Tiffany Houston — Food Services Direc-**



## Instructional Technology

We just received the approval from WISD to provide three after school classes. The 3 will be: Spinning Web Designs, Google Classroom (This is not how to create, but applications to use with it to assist students) and HyperDocs - Digital Lesson Plans. More information will be forthcoming.

We are here to assist if you need help:  
Our office hours to assist staff:  
Mondays 1:00-2:00 pm / Tuesdays 3:00-4:00 pm / Wednesdays 7:30-8:30 am  
Link to Office Hours:  
[meet.google.com/uex-ajdz-wst](https://meet.google.com/uex-ajdz-wst)

NAAPID: The NAAPID poster information has been shared with Washtenaw County schools.

[Link to Save the Date Information](#)  
[Link to Poster Contest Information](#)

**Ypsilanti Community Schools Foundation Mini-Grants will be sent out on February 15. Application Deadline March 7, 2021 - (We cannot accept late applications). Watch your email for the application!!!** The project/program must have a direct impact on raising student achievement, safety and SEL (**Social and Emotional Learning**).

## Business Office



**Happy January!** Can't believe the month is almost over.

Business office has mailed the W-2's to our staff members. W-2 is also available in each staff member's eSuite portal. If you have any questions and/or concerns regarding W-2, please reach out to Judi Wills, Barbara Boone or Priya Nayak in the Business Office.

We are looking forward to the phase in of all of our staff and students beginning in March. We are stronger together than ever. We will continue to work together to make this year successful.

If you have Payroll related questions, please reach out to Judi Wills, any Purchase Order related questions, please reach out to Barbara Boone. The Business Office is here to help during these challenging times.

*"Challenges are what make life interesting and overcoming them is what makes life meaningful."*

◇ **Joshua J. Marine**

**Priya Nayak — Director of Business and Finance**



## Facilities



Welcome to 2021 and the return to Face to Face instruction for some students and staff. As we work together to educate our students, we are nearing the next phase in our return to school plan. As you are already aware, some students will be returning to face to face instruction on Monday, January 25th. We also have remote staff returning to buildings on Monday, February 15th with a projected phase in return of remote students to face to face instruction starting on March 1st.

As a part of planning and working together for a successful return to school, the YCS Facilities Department is scheduling time on your building staff meeting agenda to share and collaborate. Your building administrator will communicate this opportunity soon. Please be prepared to ask questions, seek clarity and place your wonderings out to the group.

Our department would like to express our appreciation to all teaching and support staff and the work you continue to do to educate our students in these uncertain times. Your commitment to our community is felt, recognized and appreciated!

**Aaron Rose — Director of District Operations**

## Student Support Services



The Student Support Services Department welcomed FIVE new staff members this month! The following new staff started with us after winter break.

- Ms. Alyssa Wadlow, School Social Worker, YIES
- Ms. Taylor Bennett, School Social Worker, Henry Ford Early Learning Center
- Ms. Ilena Garrett, Paraeducator, Estabrook
- Ms. Aliyah Ali, Paraeducator, Ypsilanti Community Middle School
- Ms. Davon K. Smith, Paraeducator, Holmes

We are very excited to have them as a part of our SSS family.

We were thrilled to attend the virtual celebration of our junior and senior honor students. The honors ceremony was great and we are so very proud of our students!

**Ruth Jordan Student Support Services Director**



**Self-Care is not Selfish!**



<b>DAY 1</b> Put towels in dryer before your bath	<b>DAY 2</b> Buy or make a good lotion or moisturizer	<b>DAY 3</b> Find a new hobby for the winter	<b>DAY 4</b> Watch a fireplace or ASMR video
<b>DAY 5</b> Make your home smell more festive	<b>DAY 6</b> Embrace the concept of hibernation	<b>DAY 7</b> Slippers, socks, sweaters, gloves scarves!	<b>DAY 8</b> Go on a nature walk
<b>DAY 9</b> Give yourself a massage	<b>DAY 10</b> Do a comfy yoga routine	<b>DAY 11</b> Read a new book in bed	<b>DAY 12</b> Drink hot chocolate
<b>DAY 13</b> Make a playlist of holiday tunes	<b>DAY 14</b> Have a lazy day	<b>DAY 15</b> Bake cookies or fudge	<b>DAY 16</b> Make a cozy nest
<b>DAY 17</b> Look at Christmas lights	<b>DAY 18</b> Face an inner shadow	<b>DAY 19</b> Get more sleep	<b>DAY 20</b> Make peace with your body
<b>DAY 21</b> Change your scenery	<b>DAY 22</b> Make a get-well kit	<b>DAY 23</b> Start a blog or write a new post	<b>DAY 24</b> Watch your overwhelm levels
<b>DAY 25</b> Feed the birds and see how many you can identify.	<b>DAY 26</b> Write your own holiday story	<b>DAY 27</b> Tap into your inner child	<b>DAY 28</b> Get a heated blanket

Get even more ideas on [BlessingManifesting.com](https://www.blessingmanifesting.com)

## Statewide Field Team (SWFT): Blueprint Installation



Michigan has launched a new approach to continuous improvement through MICIP. The Michigan Integrated Continuous Improvement Process (MICIP) is a pathway for districts to improve student outcomes by assessing whole child needs to develop plans and coordinate funding.

This month we began our initial work, as learners, with MICIP as a District Network. This is important as MICIP begins at the district level. The role of the district to support that instruction at the systems level, whether that be with systems that have a more direct impact on student learning such as curriculum/instruction/assessment, data, student support, or technology, or those that support education more generally, including leadership, communication, human resources, finance, transportation, or food service. It is also ultimately the responsibility of the district to ensure that the plan is funded. We will continue to dive deeper as learners into Mindset,

Process and the Platform. As we move forward we will be looking at district wide data and then looking at the same data at the school level. Throughout the next several months we will be engaging school leaders, teacher leaders, parents and community in our work through surveys, focus groups and small work groups.

[Link to MICIP Overview](#)

[Link to MDE MICIP Website](#)

**Sarah Scott, SWFT Coordinator of Professional Learning (Ypsilanti Community Schools)**  
[sscott6@ycschools.us](mailto:sscott6@ycschools.us)

Happy Groundhog Day



