



To: Members, Board of Directors
From: *EW* Eric Williams, Ed.D., CEO & President
Date: 12/03/2025
Subject: Confidential Board Update

Notes

1. Want to connect with our student programs alumni? Then you'll want to attend the Alumni Council's holiday social on December 18 from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. at The Cove at Paradise Coast, Naples! The Alumni Council invites Board members to attend. Please RSVP to Danielle at DViensPayne@championsforlearning.org if you'd like to attend.
2. We continue to screen and interview candidates for our Chief Financial & Administrative Officer. Approximately nine candidates have received an initial screening interview. After today, Stephanie Viviano and I will have conducted second interviews with two candidates. We initially posted the position for approximately six weeks without engaging the assistance of any search firms. Approximately one month ago we engaged the services of two search firms, including the firm that identified Stephanie as a candidate when she applied several years ago. Each firm only earns a fee if they bring a candidate to us that we hire. We are interviewing a mix of direct applicants and applicants identified by a search firm.
3. Congratulations to Stephanie Lucarelli on her selection as Chair of the School Board of Collier County at the Board's organizational meeting last month. A related article is posted in the *Communications* section of this memo.
4. We will be serving, along with Grace Place for Children and Families, as an action lead for Future Ready Collier's work in the area of college and career preparation. This aligns with our emerging reemphasis on college access support activities for the broad student population in addition to students enrolled in our programs. A shout-out to Kristin Carolan (Senior Director, Student Programs) and Tracy Jones (College & Career Readiness Coach) for organizing in-person college access workshops for parents and students at individual high schools, Grace Place for Children and Families, and Champions For Learning, in addition to virtual workshops. We appreciate Collier County Public Schools and Collier Community Foundation for collaborating with us in providing these opportunities.

Emails and Other Documents

1. *Community Engagement & Volunteers*; email from Anne Stavely; December 1, 2025; p.3
2. *Development Team Update*; email from Nancy Mireles; December 1, 2025; pps.4-5
3. *Student Programs*; email from Kristin Carolan; December 1, 2025; p.6
4. *News + Notes: Connecting Families + Community with CCPS*; November 19, 2025; pps.7-10 (The last page of the newsletter gives a shout out to Champions For Learning for the awarding of classroom grants.)

Communication

1. November 19th, *Naples Daily News Ad – Night For Champions [Half Page]*, Image Attached; p.11
2. November 24, 2025, [New Collier school board chair counts recent system successes, concern over state mandates](#), WGPU.
3. November 26th, *Naples Daily News Ad – Impact Report [Full Page]*, Image Attached; p.12

Key Dates

1. Alumni Council Social – December 18, 2025, 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.; The Cove at Paradise Coast, Naples; RSVP to Danielle at DViensPayne@championsforlearning.org if you'd like to attend.
2. Board of Directors Meeting – January 20, 2026, 3:30 p.m.
3. Night for Champions Gala – February 21, 2026, 6 p.m. to 11 p.m.; The Ritz-Carlton, Naples
4. Take Stock in Children Induction Ceremony – April 11, 2026; the Bower Chapel in Moorings Park
5. Golden Apple Celebration of Teachers – April 17, 2026; the Hyatt Regency, Coconut Point

Eric Williams

From: Anne Stavely
Sent: Monday, December 1, 2025 9:39 AM
To: Eric Williams
Subject: Community Engagement & Volunteers Board Update

Take Stock in Children

- Mentor recruitment for the next class is progressing well. Nicole is actively vetting potential mentors and working with them to complete applications.
- I will host a Mentor Learning Session January 8 on student Summer Enrichment opportunities.

Entrepreneurship

- A mentor meet up is being held Dec. 1 at Moorings Park (hosted by Tom Hornbuckle). The meetup will give an opportunity for mentors to share best practices and offer feedback. Thanks to Kevin Barry for assisting with coordination.
- I am finalizing judges for MVP Pitches which begin Dec. 11. Thank you to Gary Personette and Jerry Brown for providing assistance securing judges.
- Laura Boyd Smidt, Regional Specialist for Uncharted Learning (creators of INCubatoredu®), will host a mentor learning session (virtually) January 8 at 3 pm.
- Nicole hosted a Drop-In Zoom Session for mentors on how to log volunteer hours.

Educator Programs

- We will assist Marilyn with the TOD Presentation Nights Dec. 8 - 11.

General Updates

- Nicole and I will visit Owen Ames Kimball Dec. 2. This is a follow-up to our Champions 101 presentation in October.
- Marilyn and I served as judges for the CCPS Arts for Democracy Competition.
- I met with Elizabeth Strong and Martha Rozman to discuss Entrepreneurship volunteer opportunities. Elizabeth will join us as a judge and future coach (Spring 2026).
- A mid-year survey will go out Dec. 5 to all volunteers.
- Monthly volunteer emails will go out Dec. 5.

Anne Stavely
Director of Community Engagement

Eric Williams

From: Nancy Mireles
Sent: Monday, December 1, 2025 9:20 AM
To: Eric Williams
Subject: Development Dept. Board Update

The Development Dept. is focused on year-end giving opportunities, meeting with donors and planning for the second half of the fiscal year. Thank you to everyone who attended the Luminary Luncheon, what an inspiring room it was to be in! I am working closely with the department to identify opportunities for year-end giving and creating strategies for fiscal year success.

Major Gifts (Danielle Viens-Payne)

- Alumni Council meets again December 4 to finalize preparation for their December social
 - **They would like to invite the Board to their December social on December 18th from 6-8pm at The Cove at Paradise Coast. Please RSVP with Danielle at DViensPayne@championsforlearning.org if you'd like to attend.**
- Luminary Circle Luncheon thank you notes went out to all attendees
- Exploring potential hosts for 1-2 more parlor meetings in the Spring
- Working with Wyatt, Anne, and key Board members on cultivating and stewarding corporations
- Working with Mary on updating the donor walls
- Leading the volunteer and networking opportunity for CFL staff to volunteer at Farm City BBQ on 11/26 (10:30am-12:30pm shift)
- Starting work with development consultant December 1st
- Setting up donor and prospect meetings to introduce Eric and Nancy
- Reassigned major donor/key stakeholder portfolios between Nancy and I
- Continuing personalizing major gift stewardship plans for each donor
- Continuing cultivating end of year gifts

Events (Wyatt Blatt, Director of Special Events)

- Luminary Circle Luncheon - Wonderful turnout and engagement with board, donors & programs. Thank you to all who attended!
- Night for Champions Gala
 - Currently focused on sponsor engagement and invitations
 - **Board Members**, please let us know how you'd like to be involved this year – if you will be attending or sponsoring a table. We are happy to visit with you as well to talk about opportunities.

Annual Giving and Grants (Rebekah Telfer)

- Grant Applications and Reports Submitted
 - Publix – requested \$10,000 to support a Night for Champions event sponsorship
 - CFEF mid-year report for the FPL STEM educator peer-learning grant
- Grant Applications Awarded
 - ACH payment from the CLA Foundation should be received in early December
- December Grants/Reports in Process
 - EverBank – will be requesting \$10,000 to support Student Programs

- Impact Report 2025
 - All Impact Report mailings have dropped! Sydney worked to set up the page on the CFL website with the digital version embedded, along with a pop up for the homepage directing people to read it.
- Year End Appeal
 - Letters and mailing lists are with Prestige for mail merging and printing
- General
 - Working to update Champions For Learning's Nonprofit Directory with Collier Community Foundation
 - I have finalized a three-year history of grant applications submitted and awards received (FY24, FY25, and FY26) to better help us project anticipated funding to be received. Nancy I will review together in early December and begin thinking about a more structured and strategic grant-seeking process

Digital Fundraising & Marketing (Sydney Fahrenbruch)

- Impact Report: In conjunction with the Luminary Circle Luncheon and Impact Report mailing drop, we rolled out the digital components of the Impact Report. This includes a dedicated page on our website with the digital version of the Impact Report embedded, and a giving form landing page. We also have a popup on our homepage that drives users to this page. In addition to our website, we shared a post on our social media pages to share that our Impact Report has launched and will have a full page Naples Daily News ad that will run Wednesday 11/26.
- Video Production: Nancy, Eric, and I had a meeting with Chad Oliver at Collier County Public Schools to tour their new video studio and discuss collaboration ideas. Upon completion of the studio in January, we are planning on utilizing the space to shoot video testimonials with students, educators, and volunteers; and potentially use the space for video for the Golden Apple Celebration of Teachers broadcast.

Nancy Mireles, CNP

Chief Development Officer

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Championsforlearning.org



**CHAMPIONS FOR
LEARNING**

Eric Williams

From: Kristin Carolan
Sent: Monday, December 1, 2025 9:12 AM
To: Eric Williams
Subject: Board Update

Student Programs:

On November 18th the Student Programs team went to Barron Collier High School to help students and parents with FASFA completion. That same evening one of our Seniors Maria Ines Landivar won the Outstanding Philanthropic Youth. She has completed over 290 service hours at various organizations in our community, while maintaining a 3.5 GPA. Champions students attended our workshop on Resume Building. Students were given a presentation on why resumes are important, what to include, then shown both positive and negative examples. Eliza provided students with templates for resumes varying from scholarships to applying for jobs. Students were given time to work on their resumes in lab and receive feedback. There were also 5 mentors in attendance who were able to work with the students. For those that did not complete it in time, they can submit it to staff for review. On the 20th staff attended the Luminary Luncheon. Student Programs staff were present at the Take Stock in Children table and College and Career Preparations table with students to answer any questions. Student one-on-one meetings are ongoing. Students will be off from school starting November 24th through November 30th. CFL will not be hosting labs or Zoom mentor sessions during this time. Mentors and students can still meet over the TSIC app if they wish. On December 1st the team will be at Naples High School to help with FASFA. So far, our Seniors have completed 381 college applications and have gotten 2 acceptances. 89% of mentor sessions are averaging 2 sessions per month.

Kristin Carolan

Sr. Director of Student Programs
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To serve as a catalyst for educational success by investing in Collier's students and educators.

Eric Williams

From: Collier County Public Schools <do-not-reply@collierschools.com>
Sent: Wednesday, November 19, 2025 5:00 PM
To: Eric Williams
Subject: News + Notes November 2025

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A NOTE FROM

Dr. Leslie C. Ricciardelli

Superintendent of Schools

Congratulations to Mrs. Stephanie Lucarelli and Mr. Erick Carter for being selected as Board Chair and Vice Chair at our annual Organizational Meeting. I am certain their leadership will continue to inspire students to achieve academic excellence.

This week, I had the honor of presenting to the Senate Education PreK-12 Committee regarding Collier County's initiatives and success in addressing chronic absenteeism. The most recent reports show CCPS leads the state in attendance with the lowest percentage of chronically absent students. The impact of attendance begins early, so the district remains steadfast in proving that being "On Time, All Day, Every Day" is more than a slogan; it's a commitment.

As we near Fall Break (November 24-November 28), I want to wish everyone a Happy Thanksgiving! Take time to relax and recharge as you make memories with family and friends.

~ Dr. Leslie C. Ricciardelli

UPCOMING DATES TO NOTE

November 24-28

No School (Fall Break)

December 10

Regular School Board Meeting at 8:30am

December 22-January 2

No School (Winter Break)

January 5

No School for Students (Teacher Planning Day)

January 6

Students Return from Winter Break

[DISTRICT CALENDAR](#)



2026 CCPS LEGISLATIVE PLATFORM



[CLICK HERE FOR OPEN POSITIONS](#)

CODE OF STUDENT CONDUCT



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MEMORANDUMS FROM COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION



A NOTE FROM THE SCHOOL BOARD

Mr. Erick Carter, Vice Chair

Keeping Learning Alive Over the Holidays

As we approach the holiday season, it's a perfect time to pause, reflect, and celebrate — but also to keep curiosity and creativity alive. Learning doesn't have to stop when school doors close for winter break. In fact, the holidays offer rich opportunities for families to explore new ways of learning together.

1. Explore Holiday Traditions as Learning Moments

Cooking a family recipe can become a lesson in math and science. Decorating can spark discussions about art, culture, and history. Take time to share stories about family traditions or explore how other cultures celebrate this season.

2. Give the Gift of Curiosity

Instead of more screen time, try puzzles, Legos, or art supplies that inspire creativity. These kinds of hands-on activities strengthen problem-solving skills and imagination.

3. Reflect and Set Goals Together

As the year ends, talk with your child about what they're proud of and what they hope to learn in the new year. Setting goals together builds confidence and motivation when school resumes.

The holidays are a special time to rest and recharge — but they're also a chance to nurture curiosity and family connections. With a little creativity, learning can continue in joyful, meaningful ways all season long.

Wishing all our students, families, and staff a peaceful and inspiring holiday season!
Erick Carter, School Board Member

Board member notes are submitted directly by a school board member without edits from district staff.



SCHOOL BOARD MEETING RECAP

Click here for a high-level overview of some of the important topics from the last Regular School Board Meeting.

CCPS FAMILY NEWS



CHAMPIONS FOR LEARNING SURPRISES TEACHERS WITH CLASSROOM GRANTS

Big THANK YOU to Champions For Learning! So far this school year, they have awarded more than 200 Collier County educators with classroom grants totaling \$200,000! From basic classroom needs to innovative projects, this added support is invaluable!

Watch to see the excitement as teachers received surprise visits.

CCPS FAMILY NEWS



PALMETTO RIDGE FIELD NAMED FOR ROY TERRY

A lasting legacy at Palmetto Ridge High School! The Bears proudly dedicated their football field as Terry Field in honor of the school's first principal, Mr. Roy M. Terry, III. Mr. Terry dedicated 44 years of service to Collier County Public Schools—as a teacher, coach, administrator, and school board member—always leading with heart and integrity.

Watch highlights from the dedication.

Celebrate

EDUCATION IN COLLIER COUNTY



SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 21, 2026

6 PM

at THE RITZ-CARLTON, NAPLES

280 Vanderbilt Beach Road | Naples, FL 34108

Entertainment Provided By BLONDE AMBITION BAND

Please join us for our signature fundraising event in support of our mission to serve as a catalyst for educational success by investing in Collier's students and educators. The evening features sunset cocktails and hors d'oeuvres, followed by dinner, live music, and dancing in The Ritz-Carlton, Naples' Vanderbilt Ballroom. Inspirational speakers and a live and fund-a-need auction highlight the community's commitment to investing in students and educators, showcasing the **transformative power of education.**

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Sponsors as of November 14, 2025

NIGHT FOR CHAMPIONS GALA

EVENT CHAIR

Anne Girard

EVENT COMMITTEE

Jerry Brown	Julie Diermeier	Brenda O'Connor
Ann Cohn	Debra Ezzell	Toni Mueller
Helena Dabrowski	Rafael Feliciano	Kat Zagel



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We Are The Education Foundation of Collier County

35 Years of Empowering Students and Educators

Our Mission: To serve as a catalyst for educational success by investing in Collier's students and educators.



Our 2025 Impact

100% Graduation Rate	\$252,212 Awarded in Educator Grants
100% College Enrollment	286 Grants Awarded at 57 Schools
3.45 Average GPA	54 Teachers of Distinction Recognized
\$2.1m Awarded in Scholarships	4 Golden Apple Educators Honored



We invite you to view our 2025 Impact Report to learn more about our work and read stories featuring our students and educators. Scan the QR Code or visit www.championsforlearning.org

