

The Colorado Springs School
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NEWS

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THE COLORADO SPRINGS SCHOOL STUDENTS CELEBRATE BLACK HISTORY MONTH WITH DRAMATIC ASSEMBLIES FOCUSED ON LITERATURE AND MUSIC.

Colorado Springs, Colo. – On Wednesday, February 18, 2009 at 8:30 a.m. in the Louisa Performing Arts Center, kindergarten through fifth grade students at The Colorado Springs School (CSS) will present their Black History Month Assembly. **At 11:15 a.m., two of Ms. Craig's junior English classes will unite to present a multi-media retrospective on the artists of the Harlem Renaissance in celebration of Black History Month**, and as a fitting conclusion to a unit on Harlem Renaissance poetry. Classes across all grade levels have taken this month to examine the deep and profound influence African Americans have had on American culture. Both assemblies will display the long lasting influences and contributions made especially in literature and music.

Second, third, fourth and fifth grade students will begin the assembly by singing *Follow the Drinking Gourd*, as the students have examined African American music influences from the 1800s to the late 1960s. The Band teacher, Mr. Moorehead will pick up his saxophone, and Vocal Music teacher, Ms. Warner, will dazzle students on piano, as they will entertain the assembly with *Harlem Nocturn* from the Harlem Renaissance (1919-1940) era. Kindergarten and 1st grade students will perform a tap dance in celebration of the great "Bojangles." Other highlights will include poetry readings and performances of Louis Armstrong's *What a Wonderful World* and Duke Ellington's *It Don't Mean A Thing*. A sax ensemble will perform *Satin Doll* and Upper School student, Hannah Shapiro will sing Billie Holiday's *God Bless the Child*. Mike and Latoya Lucas, parents of a CSS second grader, have been instrumental in the planning of this assembly.

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At 11:15 a.m. two junior English classes open the curtain on the Harlem Renaissance. The presentation is an effort to capture the mood, power and importance of this rich cultural period in African American history that burgeoned out of Harlem in New York City (1919-1940). Although lynching and segregation in the South, and inequality in the work place in the North, were sad realities, the members of the Harlem community managed to carve out a respectable niche in society to develop a voice that would carry their artistic influence well into the future. Visual art, literature, and, especially, Jazz and the Blues achieved a unique African-American quality based upon the free spirit of Africa, the old work songs of slaves and chain gangs, and the everyday life of the "New Negro" (phrase coined by Alain Locke) living independently in the big city. The presentation will progress through synchronized movements between song, art, poetry, and dance, making the presentation more of a visit to Harlem than a straightforward recount of information. While many of the juniors will plan and produce the show, others will perform. The presentation, they hope, will evoke the emotive power of these extraordinary artists communicating the burden of a shared, but painful past. We hope you will join us for the presentation in support of the juniors and in recognition of this very important movement in our Modern American History. Middle School English classes will also attend this assembly as they have tied in similar readings this past month.

Media can arrange to attend either assembly to capture photography or video, by contacting Jessica L. James, Director of Communications at (719)434-3506.

For more information on The Colorado Springs School, visit www.css.org.

About the Colorado Springs School (CSS)

CSS offers an experiential educational curriculum for PreKindergarten – 12th graders. Through superior academics and mentoring, The Colorado Springs School prepares students to think independently and to meet the needs of a dynamic world with leadership, ingenuity, problem-solving skills, and personal integrity.

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