



Dimon Magnet Academy's Back-to-School Bash (BTSB) Summary Report

Date: Tuesday, July 29, 2025

Time: 4:00 PM – 6:30 PM

Location: Dimon Magnet Academy

Purpose of the Event

The 2025 Back-to-School Bash at Dimon Magnet Academy served as a joyful welcome to the 2025-26 academic year and the official launch of Columbus State University's Professional Development Lab School (PDLS). This flagship initiative, developed in partnership with Muscogee County School District (MCSD) and Columbus Technical College (CTC), reflects a shared commitment to create opportunities for every student to thrive while serving, equipping, and empowering the community through research-based practices.

Event Highlights & Key Aspects

- **Dimon Magnet Academy:** All staff contributed to the event by welcoming families and community members; preparing and serving food; and managing interactive games and inflatables.
- **Registration and Verification:** The registration and verification process for students enrolling in the 2025-26 academic year was made available to families at a convenient evening time as a way to accommodate for a variety of parent schedules. Dimon staff assisted families in completing all required paperwork, expediting the verification process while also being able to enjoy the festivities of the night together.
- **Dimon's Parent Teacher Association (PTA) Table:** Dimon's PTA played an important role in welcoming families, sharing information about how to join and get involved, and encouraging stronger school-family partnerships.

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- **School Supplies & Giveaways:** Students received free backpacks and school supplies generously donated and distributed by Georgia Power staff and valuable door prizes provided by Columbus State University (theatre production tickets, season passes for all sporting events, Coca-Cola Space Science Center bags and resources), Columbus Technical College (Leapfrog tablets, book sets, \$50 gas gift cards), Country's Barbeque (2, \$25 gift cards), Valley Healthcare (4, \$25 Amazon gift cards), The Icey Girl (gift cards); Lizzy's Sweet Shop (gift cards), Graffiti Food Truck (gift cards), Dimon Magnet Academy (2 adult bicycles and 1 children's bicycle).
- **Community Resource Tents:** Families visited over 20 booths hosted by local organizations providing information, services, and giveaways.
- **CSU Tent:** Faculty, staff, and students from Columbus State University welcomed families, answered questions, and introduced the PDLS initiative. And of course, everyone's favorite mascot, Cody, made a crowd-pleasing appearance!
- **Columbus Technical College Tent:** CTC staff provided information about adult education and technical training programs while also donating door prizes and supplies.
- **Health & Wellness:** Valley Healthcare and The Food Mill offered information and support around family health, prevention, and community wellness.
- **Columbus Public Library Tent & Bookmobile:** Library staff engaged families with free books, library card signups, and interactive literacy activities.
- **Columbus Sheriff's Department Mobile Gaming Unit:** Students and families enjoyed a fun, tech-forward experience while engaging with local law enforcement in a positive and community-centered way.
- **Columbus Fire Department:** Columbus' local fire department brought a fire engine and several fire fighters for students and families to explore the fire engine, learn about fire safety, and connect with first responders in a friendly, educational setting.
- **Games & Activities:** Tim Jones, Director of Columbus' Baptist Association, and his team (e.g., Overcome Ministries) generously donated tents and games and helped lead planning and setup for the event, creating a vibrant and interactive experience for students and families.
- **DJ & Entertainment:** A live DJ provided music and shout-outs throughout the event to keep the crowd engaged and energized.
- **Food & Refreshments:** Families enjoyed free hot dogs, popcorn, snow cones, water stations, and food trucks throughout the event, with volunteers helping to ensure a warm experience.

Quick Stats from the Bash

Listed below are some of the key findings from the BTSB.

- **Dimon Family Members:** More than 150 of Dimon's families attended and participated in the event, many of whom have several children attending Dimon Magnet Academy and/or other schools in Muscogee County School District.
- **Community Members:** More than 100 community members joined and supported the event. **Approximately 30 of the community members represented MCSD's School Board and MCSD, CSU, and CTC's Leadership Teams.*

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- **Free Food:** More than 300 hot dogs and 600 bottles of water were served.
- **Backpack & School Supply Give-Away:** Close to 200 backpacks and school supplies were given away to Dimon's students.
- **Community Assessment Survey (CAS):** About 60 of Dimon's family members, each representing one family, completed the survey. The survey is designed to help the PDLS partners better understand the needs, strengths, and priorities of Dimon and its community. Families' feedback will play an important role in shaping programs, services, and partnerships that equip and empower Dimon's students, families, and community.
NOTE: CSU's Health Science faculty and students, in partnership with Valley Healthcare and Dimon Magnet Academy's staff, will administer the survey in September 2025 across Dimon's broader community.
 - Survey data collected from families at the Bash indicated the following:
 - 97% are interested in mental health support (e.g., in-person counseling, peer support groups, self-help resources, visual therapy);
 - 82% would like to have access to a school-based clinic at Dimon that offers services such as well-child check-ups, immunizations, minor illness/injury treatment, and sports physicals;
 - 100% are interested in their child/children participating in after-school and summer programs that include support with homework, particularly in the areas of literacy and mathematics; sports/fitness activities; STEM/STEAM projects; and art, music or performance opportunities; and
 - 98% indicated an interest in becoming more involved in the school (e.g., volunteering at events; attending family workshops; serving in the classroom).
- **Voices from the Bash:** The overwhelming consensus, across all stakeholder groups (e.g., staff, students, families, community members), was how entertaining the event was.
 - A Dimon family member shared, "I am so impressed by the community participation and turnout! The networking must have taken so much time and effort to put together. It was great to see all of the families having a blast!"
 - A Dimon staff member noted, "This is incredible! I've been in education for more than 20 years, and I've never been a part of something like this."

Looking Ahead

Dimon's Back-to-School Bash marked the official launch of Columbus State University's Professional Development Lab School at Dimon Magnet Academy. The event provided a strong foundation rooted in community partnership to increase student engagement and achievement, family and community engagement, experiential learning opportunities, and academic inquiry - a momentum that will yield positive outcomes for all students!

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