



In Pursuit of Excellence...

Caledonia Community Schools

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Caledonia Board of Education - Press Release

The contract between the Caledonia Community Schools Board of Education (BOE) and the Caledonia Education Association (CEA) expired on August 1, 2019. The BOE's representatives have met with the Association's representatives for seven negotiation sessions in April, May and June. On June 25th, the CEA requested that the parties negotiate through a third party mediator appointed by the State of Michigan. Mediation began on August 12.

The BOE has taken action to address several deferred facility and maintenance issues as well as increasing funding support to a number of District initiatives identified in the [Strategic Plan](#). This plan was collaboratively developed with students, parents and staff members through several community forums and surveys. These initiatives include increased staffing and additional support for the arts and athletics.

The BOE is very thankful for the excellent service that our teachers provide and remains committed to maintaining a highly compensated teaching staff. In preparation for contract negotiations, the BOE researched the total teacher compensation packages for K-12 districts across Kent County and the State of Michigan. Through our analysis, the BOE learned that the CEA has continued to maintain one of the highest salary schedules and benefits packages in the county and the State. The BOE is not seeking to decrease the CEA's salary schedule. In reflection of the past eight years, when most Kent county school districts froze teacher salaries in one or more school years, the Caledonia teachers received a wage increase in each school year.

District administrators and BOE members have received several questions from community members regarding the status of negotiations with the CEA. Specifically, the question has been asked if the teachers' will receive a pay "cut". The BOE's current proposal is to maintain the CEA's current salary levels for the 2019-20 school year and provide a monetary stipend for participating in additional professional development, improved teacher attendance, and demonstrated student growth. The BOE is offering step increases for both the 2020-21 and 2021-22 school years. Currently the step salary increase for our District ranges between 1% and

5.2% depending on where the individual is on the salary schedule. Because of the expired contract, the State law requires the District to pay the CEA's wages and the amount that the District contributes to CEA employees health insurance costs at same pre-contract expiration levels from the previous year until a successor contract is in place.

Unfortunately, an outgrowth of the negotiations process may be displayed through various public demonstrations and reduced CEA participation in paid and voluntary non-instructional activities. However, we fully expect and believe that the classroom learning environment for our students will not be negatively impacted. Rest assured that the BOE is committed to providing a safe and quality learning environment while maintaining a regionally [competitive salary and benefits package](#) for the CEA.