



In the pursuit of excellence...

Caledonia Community Schools

Administrative Offices: 9753 Duncan Lake Ave., Caledonia, MI 49316

Telephone (616) 891-8185 - Fax (616) 891-9253 - www.calschools.org

August 20, 2020

Dear Caledonia Schools Community,

We are excited to welcome our CCS students back on August 25th for the start of the school year. Whether you made the decision for your student to come back to school in-person or to learn fully online, this is going to be an exceptional year of learning, growth and development for the CCS community.

The COVID-19 pandemic has certainly changed how “back to school” will look. The health and safety of our students, staff and entire community are the most important factors guiding our decision-making as students start school. There are several important updates and resources we want to share to keep you informed and ensure we are all working together to get the school year off to a strong and safe start.

First, just as we did last spring, we are following the advice and guidance of the Kent County Health Department (KCHD) and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) to ensure a safe school environment, including social distancing, masks for all staff and students, increased cleaning and regular symptom checking, all designed to reduce the spread of COVID-19. These guidelines are spelled out in detail in our *Return to Learn Playbook* available on the district website.

In compliance with the Governor’s Executive Order (EO), we are requiring all students (Y5-12) and staff to wear masks at all times except when eating or under special circumstances directed by a teacher. This decision was also based on KCHD and CDC recommendations and is the most important thing we can do to keep our students, staff and community safe. Our teachers and staff are committed to providing a safe face-to-face learning environment, and we respectfully ask that everyone do their part and wear a mask as a sign of support and appreciation of all CCS students and staff.

Second, we want to provide face-to-face learning all year and work toward getting all of our students back into the classroom. The only way we will do that is if we can stay on top of any changes and avoid an outbreak. To do that, CCS has brought several health professionals on board to help guide our decision-making, serve our students’ unique health needs and keep our buildings safe, clean and healthy. We have hired a licensed medical doctor in a consultant role who will serve as a liaison and connection point between the KCHD and the CDC and our school district. The doctor will not be seeing students directly but will work with district officials to monitor and adapt to continually changing guidance related to COVID-19.

We have also hired two full-time registered nurses who will support the medical needs of our students and direct the work of the newly hired health and safety paraprofessionals in each building. This new professional medical team has been put in place to help us stay on top of the latest information and monitor our schools so we can make sound and timely decisions to reduce the spread of COVID-19 and try to keep our students and staff safe.

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Third, through the generosity of the Caledonia Education Foundation (CEF), the district received a \$75,000 donation to help offset the expenses of the new K-8 math curriculum. The donation will allow CCS to reallocate funds to reinstate the Student Supports Coordinator position that helps with the coordination of mental, social and emotional services to meet the needs of students at a time when it's so desperately needed. CCS is working with the CEF to develop a new Cal Cares initiative to help bridge the anticipated \$3.2 million budget shortfall due to state per-pupil budget cuts as the result of the pandemic. More information will be coming soon about how you can contribute and be part of Cal Cares.

Thank you for your continued patience, support, feedback and encouragement as we start our school year. We will need everyone working together to promote a healthy learning environment for our students and keep all of us safe. Please join me in working together as one Caledonia Community Schools **FAMILY** to make the return to school a success. I truly believe we will emerge from these challenging times stronger and more united than ever.

Sincerely,

Dr. Dedrick Martin
Superintendent
Caledonia Community Schools