

Winter 2024
Communicator
CALEDONIA COMMUNITY SCHOOLS NEWSLETTER



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Welcome, Mr. Weeldreyer!

The Board of Education is thrilled to announce the appointment of Mr. Dirk Weeldreyer as the next Superintendent of Caledonia Community Schools! Mr. Weeldreyer is an outstanding leader who has served the district twice as Interim Superintendent. In addition to his extensive knowledge of our community, he brings a wealth of experience and a passion for education to the permanent position. Please join us in welcoming Mr. Weeldreyer as we build on the success and excellence of Caledonia Community Schools!

A Letter from the Superintendent

Dear Caledonia Schools Community,

It is a tremendous honor and privilege to be able to officially write to you as the next superintendent of Caledonia Community Schools! First and foremost, I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to the Board of Education for their trust and confidence in me. I appreciate the outstanding working relationship we have established and look forward to continuing to work together in service to the students of our community.



I also wish to thank all of you who have been so welcoming and supportive as I have worked in this position over the last several months! Your kind words and encouragement are much appreciated! I look forward to continuing to meet as many of you as possible in the weeks and months ahead.

As this issue of the Cal Communicator illustrates, wonderful things are happening at Caledonia Community Schools! Our district is filled with outstanding educators who go above and beyond every day to create challenging and enriching learning experiences for our students. The community support for our schools is second to none! And the beautiful children who eagerly enter our doors every morning are a testament to the bright future that lies ahead for all of us!

As we move forward, I am eager to build upon the successes of the district and explore new opportunities for growth and improvement. Our mission is to ensure that every student receives the highest-quality education possible that prepares them for a successful future. Working together as an entire community, we will make this a reality! Go Scots!

Sincerely,

Dirk Weeldreyer
Superintendent

Board of Education Regular Meetings

The Caledonia Community Schools Board of Education holds regular board meetings monthly at 6 pm in the Administration Office located at 8948 Kraft Ave.

Remaining 2024 regular meetings include:

- Feb. 26, 2024 • Jun. 17, 2024 • Oct. 21, 2024
- Mar. 18, 2024 • Jul. 15, 2024 • Nov. 18, 2024
- Apr. 15, 2024 • Aug. 12, 2024 • Dec. 16, 2024
- May 20, 2024 • Sep. 16, 2024

Board of Education Members

Marcy White
President

John Brandow
Trustee

Brittany Barber Garcia
Vice President

Tim Morris
Trustee

Jason Saidoo
Treasurer

Jennifer Nichols
Trustee

Katie Isic
Secretary

Bond Update

Refinancing 2014 Bonds

At its January regular meeting, the Board of Education approved a resolution to ratify the refunding of \$18.2 million for the 2014 CCS school bonds. This strategic move led to an anticipated savings of \$2.5 million (12%) for our taxpayers.

This action comes as the bonds reached their callable status after a decade, and showcases the district's commitment to proactive financial decision-making. We would like to thank the Board of Education and our Chief Financial Officer for their dedicated leadership in making this financial achievement possible.



New Dutton Elementary



Check out the exciting changes happening at the New Dutton Elementary site! The first steps are to move a bunch of dirt to bring this vision to life. We would like to thank The Christman Company for their work in getting this exciting construction journey started!

Stay tuned for more updates as we continue to witness the amazing changes unfolding at the New Dutton Elementary site. Together, we are building a foundation for excellence and creating a space that will inspire generations to come.



Dutton Groundbreaking

In September, CCS held an exciting groundbreaking ceremony for the new Dutton Elementary as students, staff, families, and community members gathered along with other local partners! The event marked the start of something special, and we're thrilled that the new school is scheduled to open in the fall of 2025. We would like to thank Amazon for their generous \$40,000 playground donation, helping us create a brighter, more accessible future together!



Cal Community Center

Check out these drone images capturing the progress of the New Cal Community Center! If you haven't had the chance to drive by recently, be sure to check out the translucent PURPLE panels that are beginning to be installed.



We look forward to the Grand Opening later this year!



Points of Pride

Great Start to Quality - Highest Ranking

Exciting news! The Duncan Lake Early Childhood Center preschool program has received the highest possible state ranking from Great Start to Quality, showcasing its commitment to providing top-tier education. We'd like to congratulate our dedicated preschool teachers, administrators, and support staff for their outstanding achievement in creating a nurturing and high-quality learning environment for Caledonia's youngest learners!



CHS Veterans Memorial Wall Project

Caledonia High School Senior Brody Woodwyk took a spotlight moment at the Honoring Our Heroes basketball games to share his fundraising efforts for a Veterans Memorial Wall at Caledonia High School. His dedication to honoring veterans is commendable, as highlighted in his powerful interview with WZZM13. Alongside the CHS Athletic Boosters, Brody is actively raising funds for this project. To contribute to this important cause, please reach out to the Caledonia High School PSTO at caledoniahighschoolpsto@gmail.com. Your support will help create a lasting tribute to acknowledge and commemorate our veterans' service and sacrifice.



Blue Ribbon Celebration

In November, students from Caledonia Elementary School watched proudly as their school received the 2023 National Blue Ribbon award for exemplary high performance. Faculty representatives Becky Foster and Jennifer Harmens joined Principal Brent Huck at the awards ceremony in Washington DC. At the December Board of Education meeting, the school was honored with a special plaque from the Board of Education to recognize their outstanding achievement. The community celebrated this honor as well at the Blue Ribbon basketball game, that was held on Tuesday, February 13th. Congratulations to the students, staff, and families of Caledonia Elementary on this well-deserved honor!



New Assistant Director Aimee Studders

My name is Aimee Studders and I am beyond excited to begin my journey with Caledonia Community Schools as the Assistant Director of Special Programs! My family and I have recently relocated to West Michigan after having only ever lived in Massachusetts. We are looking forward to the mild Michigan winters!

I have worked in education since 2002, beginning my career as a paraeducator in a self-contained classroom and absolutely falling in love with the process of teaching and learning. My first 5 years were spent in the classroom before transitioning to administration. My overarching goal throughout my career has always been to do what's best for the child, regardless of the barriers. I have extensive experience working in urban districts that, while challenging, has provided me with amazing opportunities for growth. I thrive when working as a part of a team to ensure that students have equitable access to high quality instruction that meets their individual needs.

Our family, including my husband and two children, has recently settled in the area along with our goldendoodle, Bennett, for whom I am an emotional support human. In my spare time I am an Uber driver for my two teenagers. I also enjoy traveling and love the ocean (and really big lakes). I am looking forward to working with all of you and can't wait to get started!



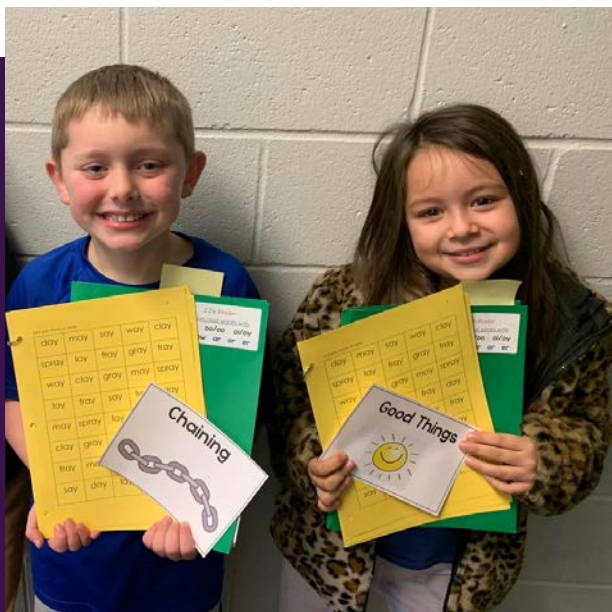
Duncan Lake Early Childhood Center

Exciting update from Duncan Lake Early Childhood Center! In January, Ashley Johnson's preschoolers joyfully built Freezy the snowman during their construction unit, merging indoor lessons with outdoor fun. It's a delightful way to embrace the winter snow and witness little hands and big imaginations at play!



Caledonia Elementary

Kindergarten students at Caledonia Elementary are diligently mastering their numbers up to ten in preparation for their upcoming unit on comparing numbers. They've been practicing putting numbers in order from 0 to 10, laying the foundation for understanding greater than, less than, and equal to concepts.



Dutton Elementary

Dutton Elementary teachers are transforming small group reading interventions for our youngest learners, using engaging tools like sand trays and pop-its to make letter sound mastery hands-on. Additionally, meticulous planning of small group instruction along with the implementation of visual schedules and learning routines have proven successful in fostering the growth of reading skills among 1st and 2nd graders at Dutton Elementary.

Emmons Lake Elementary

We're very grateful to the Steve Volkers Group for their incredible Twelve Days of Giving! They kicked off the holiday break by treating Mr. Huene's class at Emmons Lake to a Pizza Party, courtesy of Cassie Schlaf and her fantastic team at Jets Pizza Caledonia. Our staff and students couldn't have been more thrilled. It's moments like these that remind us of the incredible community we have here in Caledonia. Thank you!



Kettle Lake Elementary

Throughout January, Kettle Lake's second graders have been cultivating positivity by constructing an affirmation snowman. Every day, they've written affirmations on snowballs, celebrating the positive qualities of their classmates and contributing to the snowman's impressive growth. This activity has not only enhanced their awareness of each other's positive characteristics but has also fostered a supportive classroom environment.



Paris Ridge Elementary

The Paris Ridge Panthers had an amazing time at the Super U Challenge assembly, thanks to their PTO sponsorship! Modeled after a "Double Dare" game show, the lively event highlighted the importance of making positive choices to transform into superheroes. Students across all grades gained valuable insights on teamwork, kindness, and helping others.

Kraft Meadows Intermediate School



Before the break, sixth graders at Kraft Meadows Intermediate School had an exciting day with a guest speaker from Joyful Wildcrafting and the support of dedicated parent volunteers. Together, they planted winter seedlings that would later find their home in the class's "pollinator garden" come springtime. It's a hands-on learning experience that promises to bring beauty to their school environment!



Duncan Lake Middle School

Duncan Lake Choir students had a special visit from the lead cast members of Broadway Grand Rapids' Aladdin. The actors answered questions, shared a captivating "sneak peek" into the show, and shared valuable insights and experiences from their time on the Broadway stage. It was an enriching and inspiring afternoon for our staff and students!

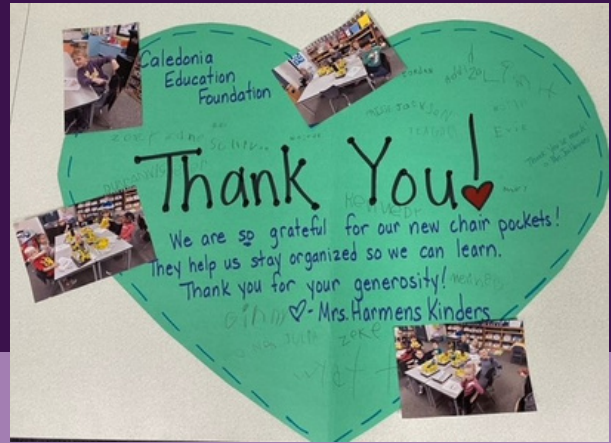


Caledonia High School

Seniors at Caledonia High School enjoyed another fantastic Senior Perk Day, providing a refreshing burst of joy and energy as they prepared for exams. This delightful experience, made possible by the support of our senior parents, is another way to celebrate our seniors throughout the year. It's moments like these that make the journey toward graduation even more memorable!

Caledonia Education Foundation Grants

The Caledonia Education Foundation (CEF) has been hard at work this year, and we are thrilled to announce that eight grants totaling over \$6,400 were awarded this fall to Caledonia staff members. These funds directly impact our district's educational initiatives, and are made possible thanks to the unwavering support and dedication of the incredible Caledonia community. Together, we are shaping a brighter future for our students, and enhancing their educational opportunities. You can learn more at www.caledoniacef.org. Thank you for being an integral part of Caledonia's educational journey!



SUMMER *sports camps* Enrollment begins March 8th!



www.inspiremenow.org
Caledonia Resource Center
616-891-8117

Kent ISD Bright Beginnings

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- ☀ Personalized home visits
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Inspiring your family to be the very best you can be so you can grow and learn together!

Two playgroups each month!
Next up – March 11 and 28
bb.kentisd.org | 616.365.2276



SAVE THE DATE

Join us for two exciting nights designed for our Kindergarten and Young Fives families! Come connect with our dedicated staff, explore our classrooms filled with engaging activities, and discover the essence of our Kindergarten and Young Fives programs here in Caledonia.

We're eager to meet the Future Fighting Scots and introduce your little ones to the educational adventure that awaits them at Caledonia Community Schools (CCS). Don't miss this chance to experience the warmth of our community and envision the growth and joy in your child's learning journey. Let's embark on this exciting adventure together at CCS!



03.12.24

5:30 - 6:30 PM at your
Zoned* Elementary Building

Caledonia, Dutton, Emmons Lake, Kettle Lake
and Paris Ridge Elementary

For families interested in learning more
about Kindergarten at CCS!

*Kinder
Connect*

LITTLE SCOTS *Launch*

03.19.24

6:00 - 7:00 PM at the
Duncan Lake Early Childhood
Center

For families interested in learning more
about our Young Fives program!



*Elementary School Zones

Visit our website to view Elementary Boundary Lines
calschools.org/enrollment/elementary-zones



Questions?

Contact our Enrollment
Department at 616-891-8185

Paid for by Caledonia Community Schools
8948 Kraft Ave SE
Caledonia, MI 49316



Success starts at CCS!

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#calpride

- ✓ Preschool
- ✓ Young Fives
- ✓ Kindergarten
- ✓ All School-Age Students

Caledonia Administration Office

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616-891-8185



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