

WINTER 2023

Communicator

CALEDONIA COMMUNITY SCHOOLS NEWSLETTER



DISCOVERING
EXCELLENCE

**Points
of Pride**

**Students
Make Amazing
Accomplishments**

**Learn About
the 2023
Bond**

**Superintendent
awarded for school
communications**



A Letter From the Superintendent

Dear Caledonia Schools Community,

It's an EXCITING time to be a Fighting Scot! We have so much to be proud of this year in Caledonia, and I am confident you will be impressed with the progress and achievements of our students, teachers and staff.

At a time when many schools are reporting a decline in student performance due to disruptions caused by the pandemic, the data in Caledonia tells a different story. CCS has made it a priority to reinvest in curriculum materials, resources and supports during the last five years and academic proficiency results overall show we are stronger than ever. CCS students continue to score above the state and countywide averages on state assessments.

In addition to academic excellence, our district has worked hard to improve our transportation process. During the 2019 community forums on strategic planning, the district shared transportation data indicating that collectively our buses covered nearly 887,000 miles each year and many students reported being on a bus for more than one hour to and from school each day. With our shift to boundaries, we have not only reduced the average ride time to less than one hour, but we have also reduced the overall mileage by nearly 250,000 from the previous year, or about 1,380 miles less per day! We are very proud of this remarkable accomplishment.

Each week I make it a point to get into our buildings and classrooms. Recently I was able to visit Kraft Meadows

Intermediate School and was thrilled to see that the recent changes to our grade reconfiguration have created a calmer atmosphere with a lot of positive energy. The hard work and dedication of everyone involved in the reconfiguration project has truly paid off and our students are thriving because of it.

I'd like to express my deep gratitude to our parents and community for their continued support of our schools. Whether it is cheering on the equestrian team to its third state title or packing Ford Field to support the varsity football program, it is very evident that the entire Caledonia community stands behind our students. We are truly fortunate to have such a supportive community, and we are excited to continue working together to provide our students with the best possible experience at CCS. Thank you for your trust and confidence in us, and for all you do for our schools. Go Scots!

Respectfully,

Dr. Dedrick Martin
Superintendent
Caledonia Community Schools



Remaining 2023 Board of Education Meetings

The Caledonia Community Schools Board of Education meets monthly on the third Monday at 6 p.m. in the administration office located at 8948 Kraft Ave., unless noted differently. Remaining 2023 meetings include:

- Feb. 21, 2023
- March 20, 2023
- April 17, 2023
- May 15, 2023
- June 19, 2023

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 | |

CCS Recognized for Academic Achievement, Excellence

Seven Caledonia schools were recognized by the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) as Reward Schools, meaning they rank in the top 5% in the state for academics.

Reward Schools are determined based on student achievement, academic growth and achievement gaps in standardized scores.

“Caledonia Community Schools is proud of all our faculty and staff who work so hard to provide excellent

learning environments for ALL students,” said Dr. Dedrick Martin, superintendent of Caledonia Community Schools. “These accomplishments are the result of our focus on instructional quality and the strong partnership CCS has created between our families, students, staff, and community. Our staff works tirelessly to support and prepare ALL students to achieve their best while empowering them with 21st Century Skills to compete in a global environment.”

POINTS OF PRIDE: BY THE NUMBERS



In 2022, 110 CHS students received
211 scholarships valued at

\$2,892,559

(4+/- years total value)



over **574** students
make **CALEDONIA**
their school of choice!



Meet New Members of the CCS Family

Dr. Camela Diaz, Director of Secondary Education



My name is Camela Diaz, and I am very excited to be joining the Caledonia Community Schools team as your new Director of Secondary Education. As a dedicated and passionate educator with more than 30 years of experience in both public and private education sectors at a variety of levels, my unwavering focus has been on improving the educational experience for every student, every day. My mission as an educator is to work collectively and collaboratively with teachers and administrators on behalf of children and their families to create learning environments that are welcoming, relevant and engaging.

After completing a bachelor's degree in Special Education at Eastern Michigan University, I began my career in Pasadena, California, working as a special education teacher with emotionally impaired secondary students. I completed a master's degree in Special Education at California State University, Northridge and after returning to Michigan, completed my doctorate in Educational Leadership at Michigan State University. I have spent the past 23 years in the Lansing School District where I served as a special education coordinator, principal and central office administrator. Working alongside other excellent educators in Caledonia is an exciting opportunity for me as we continue to build pathways for students to find their passion and success. They are, after all, the future upon which we all depend.

I have been married to my wonderful husband, Frank, for 23 years, and we have an incredible son Frankie who is engaged to be married next spring. Our family enjoys traveling, entertaining and Chicago Bears football. I also serve on the Board of Directors for the Aphasia Community Friendship Center, a non-profit organization located in Ann Arbor. ACFC was founded by my mother in 2009 and supports persons with aphasia.

Michaellita Fortier, Director of Transportation



My name is Michaellita Fortier, and I am so excited to be the new Director of Transportation for Caledonia Community Schools. I come to you with 10 years of experience working in student transportation and more than 25 years in a leadership position. I look forward to learning more about the community here in Caledonia, and I am thrilled to meet all of you. I am an avid sports enthusiast so you may see me at some of the games. I also love spending time on the bus and at the buildings getting to know students. Please say hello if you see me out and about – unless I beat you to it!

My transportation journey began at the end of my driveway in 2006 in the rural area of Bailey, Michigan. Ms. Sharon was the driver for our area and my eldest daughter. She always encouraged me to become a bus driver.

I began my career with Sparta Area Schools and really enjoyed driving. The ability to just get in my car, drive and have moments to clear my head and be on the open road is very satisfying. When the opportunity to drive a bus came along, even though I knew this would be something new, I was up for the challenge. I began seeing a need for more qualified drivers and once I became qualified to train others, I organically began a role in transportation leadership with a “grow your own leaders” mindset.

I have been married for 18 years to my husband, Brian, and I am the mother of three adult children: Whisper, Jacob and Morgan. I'm also the gushy grandmother of an energetic 18-month-old, Aiden. My grandson reminds me of the importance of showing patience and love, and just how special young people are.



Choralaires: Michigan Music Conference finalist!



Robotics: VEX IQ Robotics, two state qualifiers!



Football: State finalists!



Equestrian: Three-time state champions!

Amazing Accomplishments From CCS Students

Last fall, we saw remarkable accomplishments throughout our district! From the athletic field to the classroom and stage, our students and teams have excelled and brought incredible honor and pride to our district.

The following is a list of some notable athletic, academic and arts accomplishments during the fall of 2022.

- Football State Finalist
- WZZM13 MVP Football Player of the Year
- MHSCA Division I Football Coach of the Year
- DECA State Qualifier
- Water Polo State Finalist
- CHS Honors Choir State Qualifier
- Michigan Music Conference Finalist (Choralaires)
- Swimming State Individuals/Relay Qualifiers
- Golf State Qualifier
- Cross Country State Qualifiers
- Equestrian - 3x State Champs
- FFA American Degree Honor
- Academic All-State teams (4)
- Academic All-State Individuals (17)
- VEX IQ Robotics - 2 State Qualifiers
- World Record for Cup Sports Stacking
- Division 1 Marching Band Rating

On May 2, 2023, Caledonia voters will decide on a supplemental bond for Caledonia Community Schools. The following section outlines the specific focus areas of the bond.

Facility Projects

- Replace outdated buses
- Roof repairs
- Technology upgrades
- Band storage
- New safer entry
- Parking lot improvements
- Playground enhancement
- Scotland Yard turf replacement



Calplex - Phase II

- Complete Phase II as envisioned in 2009
- Add baseball and soccer fields
- Improve parking



Stadium Renovation

- Update bleachers/seating and press box
- Renovate and heat team rooms, concessions, and restrooms
- Update track



New Dutton Elementary

- Complete original developed design for students and community
 - 60,000 square feet
 - 2 entrances (Patterson and 76th street)
 - Barrier free playground



ZERO TAX RATE INCREASE BOND ELECTION SET FOR MAY 2, 2023

We know that stronger Caledonia Community Schools means a stronger Caledonia community overall. Many people choose to live in Caledonia because of our schools, and we need to invest in them if we want to continue attracting and retaining families, supporting local businesses, and maintaining our high property values.

On your May 2, 2023, ballot, you'll see a supplemental bond proposal for CCS. This bond will help us make necessary repairs to buildings and facilities, from replacing outdated school buses to upgrading parking lots and replacing roofs, among many other improvements. These improvements will keep our district strong and help keep Caledonia an attractive place to live, raise a family, own a home, retire or start a business. It's important for our community to know **this supplemental bond will NOT raise tax rates for residents.**

Here at CCS, we have a proven track record of success inside and outside the classroom, and this proposal will help us build on our record of achievement. Our continued investment will help CCS stay competitive and enable our students to receive real-world, hands-on experiences to better compete in the global marketplace, including skilled trades jobs.

We're proposing this **fiscally responsible supplemental bond** to continue investing in our schools and facilities. As with past bond proposals, we will track the bond dollars and how they are used on a public website and the funds will be subject to regular independent audits to promote accountability and transparency.

CCS looks forward to providing more information about this important supplemental bond proposal in the coming weeks, and we encourage all eligible voters to get out and vote in the May election.

Facility reinvestment, NO tax rate increase



ESTIMATED IMPACT

How much will the supplemental bond proposal cost homeowners?

- **This proposal will not raise tax rates.** The Caledonia Community Schools Supplemental Bond Proposal is a fiscally responsible proposal that will allow CCS to complete the vision of the 2020 bond without increasing existing property tax rates.

How can the supplemental bond truly be a zero increase to homeowners?

- The supplemental bond proposal would simply extend the school debt repayment from 2050 to 2055, without raising tax rates for residents. Currently, the 2020 Bond is set to be entirely paid off during the 2050 fiscal year.

WHAT OUR COMMUNITY IS SAYING

“ This bond will positively affect every school in our district, enhance athletics from youth to high school, and brings the community together to build a better Caledonia, all without raising taxes. ”

Mallory Walsh, Parent

“ A new elementary school will better serve the needs of our Dutton Elementary students and the community, helping continue our track record of success inside and outside the classroom. ”

Shawn Veitch, Dutton Principal

Facility Reinvestment

FACILITY PROJECTS

- **Replacement of outdated buses**
 - \$1.6 Million
- **DLMS/Early Childhood Center roof**
 - \$1.5 Million
- **Technology upgrades**
 - \$3.6 Million
- **Band storage**
 - \$0.3 Million
- **DLMS 7W entry/cafeteria**
 - \$1.2 Million
- **Kettle Lake parking lot**
 - \$0.75 Million
- **Paris Ridge playground**
 - \$0.4 Million
- **Demolition of old DE**
 - \$0.75 Million
- **Scotland Yard turf replacement**
 - \$1.4 Million

Complete the Vision

NEW DUTTON ELEMENTARY

- \$40 Million

STADIUM RENOVATION

- \$6.5 MILLION

CALPLEX (PHASE II)

- \$3 MILLION

***All cost estimates are based on May 2023 Election**



**ABSENTEE BALLOTS
AVAILABLE FOR
ISSUANCE MARCH 23**

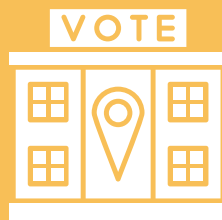


**ELECTION DAY POLLS
OPEN 7 A.M. - 8 P.M.
GO VOTE MAY 2!**

**LAST DAY TO REGISTER
IN ANY MANNER
OTHER THAN IN
PERSON APRIL 17**



**ABSENTEE BALLOTS
AVAILABLE IN
PERSON MAY 1**



***A list of polling locations can be found on our website**

Here is how the bond will appear on the May 2, 2023 ballot:

CALEDONIA COMMUNITY SCHOOLS - BOND PROPOSAL
Shall Caledonia Community Schools, Kent, Allegan and Barry Counties, Michigan, borrow the sum of not to exceed Sixty-One Million Dollars (\$61,000,000) and issue its general obligation unlimited tax bonds therefor, in one or more series, for the purpose of:

erecting, furnishing and equipping an elementary school building; erecting and equipping an addition to the high school building; remodeling, furnishing and refurbishing and equipping and re-equipping school buildings; acquiring, installing, equipping and re-equipping school buildings for instructional technology; erecting storage structures; purchasing school buses; and acquiring, erecting, preparing, developing, improving and equipping playgrounds, playfields, athletic fields, athletic facilities, and sites?

The following is for informational purposes only: (Pursuant to State law, expenditure of bond proceeds must be audited and the proceeds cannot be used for repair or maintenance costs, teacher, administrator or employee salaries, or other operating expenses.)

The estimated millage that will be levied for the proposed bonds in 2023, under current law, is 0 mill (\$0.00 on each \$1,000 of taxable valuation), for a 0 mill increase from the prior year's levy. The maximum number of years the bonds of any series may be outstanding, exclusive of any refunding, is thirty (30) years. The estimated simple average annual millage anticipated to be required to retire this bond debt is 0.99 mill (\$0.99 on each \$1,000 of taxable valuation).

The school district expects to borrow from the State School Bond Qualification and Loan Program to pay debt service on these bonds. The estimated total principal amount of that borrowing is \$6,419,557 and the estimated total interest to be paid thereon is \$2,387,046. The estimated duration of the millage levy associated with that borrowing is 7 years and the estimated computed millage rate for such levy is 7.00 mills. The estimated computed millage rate may change based on changes in certain circumstances.

The total amount of qualified bonds currently outstanding is estimated to be \$148,335,000. The total amount of qualified loans currently outstanding is approximately \$12,132,957.

MORE INFORMATION

Community Dialogue with Doc Sessions

- Feb. 22 - 7 A.M. (Sprinkles Donuts)
- Feb. 27 - 6 P.M. (Caledonia Administration)
- March 14 - 6 P.M. (Caledonia Administration)
- March 23 - Noon (Caledonia Administration)
- April 12 - 6 P.M. (Caledonia Administration)

Visit www.calschools.org for more details.



Caledonia Superintendent Named 2022 Michigan Superintendent Communicator of the Year

Superintendent Dr. Dedrick Martin is the Michigan School Public Relations Association's (MSPRA) 2022 Superintendent Communicator of the Year. The award recognizes a practicing superintendent for outstanding leadership in school public relations and communications.

Dr. Martin received the surprise honor during the CCS Board of Education meeting on January 16.

"This award is a testament to the collective effort of talented administrators, teachers, and staff who are focused on building a positive climate and culture at CCS and creating an open-minded environment where change can take place," he said. "I am honored to receive this award and am fortunate to work alongside dedicated colleagues who successfully build and foster safe, quality learning environments for ALL students to thrive."

In presenting the award, MSPRA Awards & Recognition Committee Member Katie McClintic said, "It was clear to MSPRA's expert panel of judges that Dr. Martin:

- Understands the value of a year-round, ongoing communication program;
- Invests in communication tools;
- Strategically works with the district's communication professional;

- Practices communication management techniques; and
- Demonstrates excellent personal communication skills such as ethics, honesty, openness and active listening."

Dr. Martin joined Caledonia Community Schools in 2018 during a period of rapid community growth and changing demographics. He immediately recognized the need to build trust with all stakeholders to help collaboratively establish the district's new direction and launched multiple initiatives that centered on purposeful communication. Under his leadership, Caledonia Community Schools has developed new branding standards, added a position solely focused on communications, and invested in a new app to better connect students, staff, and families.

"Dr. Martin is a thoughtful and ethical leader who understands and demonstrates the crucial role that an effective communications strategy plays in the success of a school district," said Dirk Weeldreyer, former Interim Superintendent at Caledonia Community Schools. "He has transformed the effectiveness of Caledonia's interactions with its core constituencies, moving the district in an exciting and positive new direction."



2020 Bond Work Continues

No article about the 2020 bond could begin without saying “THANK YOU” to everyone who has supported this effort and everyone who has come on board to offer their time and expertise to continue the success of the bond.

In October, Caledonia Community Schools shifted our focus toward strategically completing projects in several key areas. With the help of the board of education, the district administration has identified 15 areas of focus, including High School Complex connector, furniture, fixtures, equipment and more. Bond projects are being contracted directly by the district, when possible, to maximize the value of the bond resources.

Since October, we have completed projects in several areas, and we have additional projects underway for the spring. We are also working with our architects on multiple larger projects that are in the design phase.

Construction of the Cal Community Center is underway. Foundations and footing are being worked on by an expert team of masons, plumbers and electricians as the building is constructed.

Any questions related to the 2020 bond can be sent to bond2020@calschools.org. We are happy to answer any questions related to the bond and work involved in making these projects a reality.

We appreciate the opportunity to serve our community through these important projects and look forward to the improvements all around the school district, helping ensure our facilities and programs are ready to meet the needs and challenges of our students, staff and community.



Construction of the Cal Community Center continues.



Success Starts at CCS

PreK-12th grade enrollment now open for new students

✓ **Preschool** ✓ **Young Fives** ✓ **Kindergarten** ✓ **All school-age students**



School Age Students

(Young fives – 12th grade)

- Online enrollment now open
- For school-age questions, please contact Ginnie VanPolen at 616-891-8185

Preschool Students

(3- and 4-year-olds)

- Jan. 9 – Fall 2023: For current/past DLECC families
- Enrollment open now-fall 2023: For all NEW families
- For preschool enrollment questions, please contact Catey Reed at 616-891-6220

Enrolling now helps us better plan for a successful 2023-24 school year!



Enroll **ONLINE** at www.calschools.org



facebook.com/CALSCHOOLS

We're Hiring!

Caledonia Community Schools are a great place to work. Below is a list of our current vacancies. If you have any questions feel free to contact our Human Resources Department.

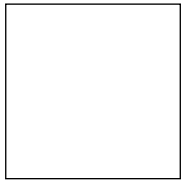
- Part-time custodian - \$15.15/hour
- Lead or full-time custodian - \$15.86/hour
- Bus drivers
 - Paid CDL training - \$15.25/hour
 - Driver pay starts at \$20.27/hour
 - Single subscriber insurance or Cash in Lieu of Benefits
 - Earn 10 sick days, 12 vacation days, 8 holidays, 1.5 personal days*
- Part-time paraprofessional - \$15.12/hour
 - * Per CTA contract guidelines



Apply online at www.calschools.org/employment



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



Join the fun at CCS!

ENROLLMENT IS NOW OPEN!

Keep up with us at:

 www.calschools.org

 facebook.com/CALSCHOOLS

 @CALEDONIA_COMMUNITY_SCHOOLS