

WINTER 2021

# Communicator

CALEDONIA COMMUNITY SCHOOLS NEWSLETTER



**Letter from the  
Superintendent**

**Bond  
Update**

**Grade  
reconfiguration**

**Elementary  
school zones**



# *A letter from the Superintendent*

**Dear Caledonia Schools Community,**

**W**elcome back to the second half of what has certainly been an unforgettable school year. Yet, even with all the uncertainty, we have found ways to face unfamiliar challenges with resolve and resiliency as we move forward in making a great school system even better.

Given all the exciting changes that are to coming to our district, we have started hosting a Town Hall discussion on a different topic each month and will continue this until the conclusion of this school year. The first discussion was held back in December on the impact that social media has on our students and our school community in general. A link to the video of this discussion can be viewed on the Town Hall page of the district website under the Parent tab. On Jan. 28, we conducted another discussion related to the upcoming Community Center, as well as changes to Duncan Lake, Kraft Meadows, and the Glenmor buildings as we prepare for the transition to 5th/6th and 7th/8th school facilities. This meeting was also held virtually due to COVID-19 restrictions and can be viewed by visiting the 2020 Bond tab on the front page of our website.



In future informational discussions, we will focus on transportation boundaries for our new school zones, the transitioning of our elementary buildings to K-4 facilities, the replacement of Dutton Elementary, the future of online school options, summer learning opportunities, and many other topics. Please continue to be on the lookout for information on the dates, times, and topics of these Town Hall discussions.

In fall 2019, we began our first year of providing STEM education for all students at the middle school level, while our spring STEM festival had to be canceled due to COVID-19 restrictions. We continue to move full speed ahead with providing STEM instructional opportunities for grades 6-8th this year and this will be extended to all fifth-grade students as well.

While COVID-19 has certainly thrown a curveball to students, families and schools across the country, our teachers and staff have done an amazing job with being flexible and moving forward under challenging situations so that we can continue to **Cultivate Agile Learners** who are ready for any challenge that life may bring.

**Dr. Dedrick Martin**  
Superintendent

*All student photos in this edition were taken prior to the implementation of COVID-19 safety protocols.*



## ***Introduction of New Board Members***

### ***Dr. Brittany Barber Garcia***



**M**y name is Brittany Barber Garcia, and I am thrilled and honored to have been elected to the Board of Education for Caledonia Community Schools! It has been a long-time dream of mine to serve as a school board member and give back to this community I've always called home. I am deeply humbled by and grateful for the opportunity to serve you - my friends, neighbors and community.

I decided to run for the CCS Board of Education for two primary reasons, the first of which is because I have a strong passion for supporting children and adolescents. In addition to my undergraduate and master's degrees, I earned a doctoral degree in Counseling Psychology with specialization and expertise in Children and Adolescents. I have worked as a Pediatric Psychologist for almost seven years at Helen DeVos Children's Hospital, and while I am deeply gratified by this work and truly enjoy supporting individual youth, I have always strived to create a larger impact for youth with my service, and I hope that serving on the Board of Education will be one way I can do this. Also, because of my work, I have a pulse on kids' thoughts and feelings about school, and I can offer this unique perspective to the Board to benefit our schools. Second, I hope to serve as a conduit for information between the board, teachers/staff, and the community. I am open to hearing from you and engaging in dialogue with you, and I look forward to working together.

Caledonia has always been close to my heart, as I was born and raised here, and I graduated from Caledonia High School as the class Salutatorian in 2002. After my education and training out of state, my husband, Gabe, and I moved back to Michigan in 2013. We built our home and moved back to Caledonia in 2019 to be near to family and give our kids the opportunity to attend CCS. My husband and I have two children who attend Emmons Lake Elementary. Our daughter, Liliana, is seven years old and in the first grade. She loves dancing, swimming, and using her imagination to create fun art. Our son, Beckett, is six years old and in kindergarten. He is excited about becoming a reader and loves to attend his ninja class.

I look forward to joining the Board of Education and working hard for the success of our district! I commit to you that I will bring my passion, energy, and expertise to every Board of Education matter in order to help CCS bring to life our mission to Cultivate Agile Learners and prepare our students for bright futures.

# Introduction of New Board Members

**Katie Isic**



**M**y name is Katie Isic, and I am honored to join the Caledonia Community School board. I want to thank the many families and community members for reaching out to me during my campaign. It gave me a better understanding of the questions and concerns we have in the community. I chose to run for the board to make transparency and communication a top priority in our school district. I'm excited for the opportunity to bring my skills to our board and to be part of a growing district that is known for its excellence.

I moved to Caledonia about five years ago with my husband and daughter. She will be entering the CCS system this upcoming fall. We chose to make Caledonia our home because we felt it would be a great place to raise our daughter and saw a community we could be part of. I grew up in Wisconsin and graduated from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee with a bachelor's degree in accounting and worked in the accounting field prior to having my daughter. I shifted gears and began working as a realtor four years ago.

I look forward to serving my community on the board and continuing to be a listening ear, relaying what I'm hearing to the board as we make decisions for our district.

# Introduction of New Assistant Principals

**Angie Stauffer, Duncan Lake Middle School**



**M**y name is Angie Stauffer, and I am thrilled to introduce myself as the new Assistant Principal at Duncan Lake Middle School and Athletic Director for both Kraft Meadows and Duncan Lake. I began my educational career in 2002, and I have been teaching at Caledonia High School for the last 16 years. As a teacher, I have found a passion for serving our district at a leadership level for many years. Most recently, I have led the Project-Based Learning program at Caledonia High School as the department chair. I have been on various committees at Caledonia High School and within the district, including the Return to Learn Committee, a member of the district STEM committee, and a Google Master during the spring 2020 closure caused by COVID-19.

Outside of academics, I have coached both boys and girls basketball for our Fighting Scots. My expertise and passion for the game have brought many coaching opportunities ranging from 7th grade to varsity basketball. Athletics has been a foundation in my life and sharing that with our Cal students has always been something I strive to do well. I am honored to serve our community as our middle school athletic director.

Through the years, I have rooted myself and my family in this great community. My husband and I live in Caledonia, and our two daughters attend Caledonia Community Schools. As Caledonia transitions to a 5th/6th grade building and a 7th/8th grade building, I am looking forward to this opportunity to be a part of the realignment process. As I begin to partner with staff, students and parents, I am confident Duncan Lake Middle School will be something we can all be proud of now and in the future.

I recognize 2020 has presented many hurdles as a community and school system, but we are Cal strong, and I feel confident we can rise to the challenges.

## **Patrick Stecco, Kraft Meadows Middle School**



It is with great pleasure that I introduce myself as Assistant Principal of Kraft Meadows Middle School. I am honored to join the Caledonia Community Schools family, and I am excited to get to know the students, staff and families of Kraft Meadows and the greater Cal community.

In my 13 years as an educator, I have served as a middle school Spanish Immersion Social Studies teacher, Instructional Coach, Coordinator of Immersion and Language Learning, and most recently as a K-4 Principal at Ada Vista Elementary in Forest Hills. During this time, I have built positive relationships with students, families and colleagues. I pride myself on being a life-long learner, embracing servant leadership and nurturing a collaborative, team-oriented environment focused on student success.

In addition to my passion for education, I love spending time with my family and friends. I live in Ada with my wife of 17 years, Jennifer. Jennifer is a School Social Worker with Kent Intermediate School District, so education is a core family value for us. I have two amazing stepchildren. Nick is 26 years old, attended Davenport University, and now lives in Grand Rapids. Katie is 24 years old, attended Ole Miss, and now lives in Tennessee. Outside of work, I enjoy playing hockey, trying my hand as an amateur chef, traveling, improving my Spanish, reading and spending summer days at my mother's house on Gun Lake with our extended family.

## **Introduction of Student Support Coordinator**

### **Katie Dorband, all buildings district-wide**



I am honored and excited to take on the role of Student Support Coordinator for Caledonia Community Schools. My family and I moved to this area in 2018 and it has been a joy to be part of this community. We have three boys who thrive in Caledonia schools and I look forward to many years of living and working here to promote wellness for all our students across the district.

I started my journey in the educational world as a special education paraprofessional while obtaining my master's degree in School Counseling. I worked as a school counselor and eventually a Student Support Coordinator for multiple schools in the Detroit-Metro area for nearly a decade. There I was part of delivering a comprehensive school counseling program for students in kindergarten through 12th grade. Following a move to Colorado, I took on the role of suicide and substance abuse prevention counselor for Douglas County Schools, which was an incredible journey to discover what a true prevention model looks like when it comes to mental health and substance abuse. In my work there, I implemented several evidence-based programs including a Marijuana Education Initiative and Restorative Practices.

I look forward to serving our community through a comprehensive and collaborative approach to mental health in our district. My desire is that every student in our care is seen and understood. I will champion for the best system of support we can offer all students and families.

# Bond Update

Thanks to the voters of Caledonia, in May 2020 our community approved an \$88 million school bond that will fund school facility improvement projects over the next five years. CCS made a promise to voters that we would be transparent and accountable for every penny of this bond, and we aim to keep that promise. On our district website, we have developed a dashboard designed to help people more easily track project deliverables and completion dates.

**We have identified four priority areas for the bond to make it easier for our community to track progress and stay informed.**

First, we are going through our buildings and facilities to make the necessary safety and security upgrades and repairs. This includes everything from playground repair to improving traffic flow and drop-off areas where possible so students can safely get to school.

Second, we are moving forward on making necessary improvements so we can realign grades for our elementary and middle schools, including the construction of a new Dutton Elementary School. There are several moving parts as we coordinate the various realignment projects and that is taking top

priority with work beginning as early as spring break.

Third, a new athletic community center complex - with a high school competition and community pool, community meeting spaces and resource center, and multi-use gym - is still on track to **OPEN** in late 2023. This includes our exciting partnership with the YMCA and the opportunity to make CCS a gathering place and resource for the whole community.

Fourth, we are making technology, equipment and furniture upgrades across the district. CCS is committed to preparing students for college and careers after graduation and these upgrades put our students in the best position to succeed. As we continue to face the challenges associated with COVID-19, we are truly blessed to be in a position where we can make the necessary technology upgrades and adjustments to ensure students are safe and can continue to learn in-person or online.

We will continue to post bond updates on the website and encourage people to look for opportunities to contribute their thoughts and perspectives. If you have bond-related questions, please email [Bond2020@CalSchools.org](mailto:Bond2020@CalSchools.org).

*Proposed Administration Building*



*Proposed Kraft Meadows Middle School*



*Proposed Community Center*





# WE'RE HIRING!

## Caledonia Community Schools has open part-time positions:

Positions offer regionally competitive wages



- **Bus Transportation**  
- *Regular route*
- **Custodial Aides**  
- *2<sup>nd</sup> shift; part time*

## TO APPLY:

- ✓ To start the application process online, visit [www.calschools.org/employment/](http://www.calschools.org/employment/)

## Want to know more?

Please contact **Brenda Witteveen** at 616-891-0224 or email [witteveenb@calschools.org](mailto:witteveenb@calschools.org) for more information about transportation opportunities.

Please contact **Gary Delger** at 616-891-0225 or email [delgerg@calschools.org](mailto:delgerg@calschools.org) for more information concerning custodial opportunities.





# Cal CARES

powered by: Caledonia Education Foundation

**W**e'd like to thank the Caledonia Education Association for all its continued work during the COVID-19 pandemic with the Caledonia Cares campaign. This has been a challenging time for everyone and has led to \$1.3 million in additional operating expenses for CCS.

Cal Cares brings together organizations like PTOs, athletic teams, local businesses, families, alumni and others to raise \$300,000 for Caledonia Community Schools. We thank everyone who has generously donated so far.

There are still opportunities to donate! Text CALCARES to 77948 to contribute. Visit [caledoniacef.org](http://caledoniacef.org) for more information.







# Grade Reconfiguration

**E**ven during these unprecedented times, planning for the reorganization of Caledonia Community Schools is ongoing and we are excited to share some of the changes you can expect for the 2021-22 school year. Starting this fall, all 5th and 6th grade students will attend Kraft Meadows Intermediate School and all 7th and 8th grade students will attend Duncan Lake Middle School. More information will be available this spring as additional decisions are finalized. Here is what we know currently:

## Timeline of Important Dates\*:

### March

- *Students select fall elective classes*

### April/May

- *Building tours will be available for students attending in fall*

### May

- *Informational parent meeting*

*\*Dates and format of these events are subject to change based on COVID-19 restrictions. Specific information will be released as we get closer to these events.*



## Schoolwide Schedule

**B**eginning this fall, Kraft Meadows Middle School will now be known as Kraft Meadows Intermediate School and will follow the secondary start and end times. The specific start and end times have not been finalized but will be shared later this spring. Kraft Meadows Intermediate School will unite all 5th and 6th grade students from the five elementary schools throughout the Caledonia Community School District. Duncan Lake Middle School will combine all seventh and eighth grade students in the Caledonia Community Schools district. Both schools will foster and encourage personal growth in all students while ensuring a safe and orderly environment that promotes academic achievement. The daily schedules for the two schools will include the following components:

- **KMIS** - blend of an elementary/middle school schedule
- **DLMS** - a more traditional middle school schedule
- **Teachers working in teams in the core content areas**

**The planned building reconfiguration as part of the Strategic Plan is well underway with the transition to be operational for fall 2021. Some of the construction updates in progress include:**

### **Kraft Meadows Building Construction Updates**

- Classroom additions
- Cafeteria remodel and expansion
- Redesign of the parking lot and reconfiguration of student drop off

### **Future Information on Transition**

Look for more information in the coming months from building principals via emails, website, and building Facebook pages.

### **Duncan Lake Building Construction Updates**

- New secure main office to be built on the west side of the building to also help with traffic congestion
- New science classrooms
- New media center to better serve our students and staff and to make room for the science department
- Some classroom renovations to better serve students description of these classes developed by department in the near future



## Elementary school zones

**D**uring the 2020-21 academic year, the district began transitioning to a building placement system based on geographic boundaries for each elementary school. Each home address in the district was assigned an attendance zone with a designated elementary building serving those residences. We are now entering year two of this transition. Please read the below information as there are important changes taking effect in August 2021.

### **IMPORTANT: Beginning August 2021**

**Transportation boundaries will be implemented.** Transportation will only be provided to and from your zoned school.

**Current elementary students will not be forced to move to a different building.**

They will be “grandfathered” in at their current school. *However, if the building is located outside the family’s attendance zone, parents will be responsible for transportation to and from school.* Parents must apply for an In-District Transfer if they want to transfer their student.

**The Internal District Transfer process will open for requests on Feb. 1, and close on March 15, 2021.** Parents should submit requests through their PowerSchool account. Parents/guardians will be notified via email by April 1 of the status of their request. Approved transfers will take effect in August. A map of Elementary Attendance Zones, a FAQ document, as well as instructions on filling out a transfer request can be found at [www.calschools.org/enrollment/](http://www.calschools.org/enrollment/).

**Placement will occur on a first-come-first-served basis, dependent on seat availability and priority order listed below.**

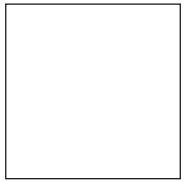
**Priority 1:** Siblings who are attending separate buildings and wish to be reunited.

**Priority 2:** Families who are attending a building outside of their home boundary and are seeking a transfer into their home boundary zone

**Priority 3:** Families seeking an internal transfer for any other reason.



Paid for by Caledonia Community Schools  
9753 Duncan Lake Ave. SE  
Caledonia, MI 49316



# Enrollment Now Open!

Preschool, Young Fives, Kindergarten and new school-age students

## Preschool

*For 3- and 4-year-old preschool enrollment and questions, contact Duncan Lake Early Childhood Center at 616.891.6220*

*For all other enrollment questions, contact the Enrollment Department at 616.891.8185*

**Enroll online at [www.calschools.org](http://www.calschools.org)**



***Enrolling now helps us better plan for a successful 2021-22 school year!***



[www.calschools.org](http://www.calschools.org)



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