



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: March 30, 2022

Caledonia Community Schools facilitates discussion about issues impacting students, from cyberbullying to social media

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. – Caledonia Community Schools students and families learned about real-life issues facing children during a virtual, facilitated discussion hosted by the school district on March 29.

The discussion centered around “Childhood 2.0,” a documentary released in 2020 about issues that impact the lives of children, including cyberbullying, online predators, suicidal ideation, and more.

“Because we spend so much of our lives online, it’s important for students to better understand how social media works and how it can negatively impact us, from our thinking and emotions to our relationships with others,” said Dr. Dedrick Martin, superintendent of CCS. “Our hope in having these important discussions is for students and parents to better understand the pressures of online exposure and to learn strategies for caring for themselves in this digital age and feel more open to talking about these issues.”

Data show that even before COVID-19, mental health challenges were the leading cause of poor life outcomes for young people, with up to 1 in 5 children ages 3 to 17 nationwide having a mental, emotional, developmental, or behavioral disorder, according to the U.S. Surgeon General. The pandemic added to these challenges for our nation’s youth.

Families were encouraged to watch the documentary together during midwinter break, and during the panel discussion were given the opportunity to ask questions about the documentary.

Chris McKenna, founder of Protect Young Eyes, encouraged parents to “build bridges of digital trust” with their children. “Start with one short talk, one online game played together, one video watched together, one shoulder-to-shoulder car ride asking a curious question about YouTube. It doesn’t have to be perfect.”

The panelists included Catherine Schmidt from Yoga Zen, Katey McPherson from Bark, Dr. Mark Steenwyk from Pine Rest, Mr. Chris McKenna, Founder of Protect Young Eyes, and Stephanie Wrogg. The discussion comes after Caledonia Community Schools hosted a discussion last year on “[The Social Dilemma](#)”, a film about how social media companies capture users’ attention.

If you were unable to join us for the Childhood 2.0 Facilitated Discussion, you can find a link to the [recording](#) and [FAQ document](#) on our [website](#).

Dr. Dedrick Martin, Superintendent
Wendy Dubuisson, Director of Special Programs
Katie Dorband, Student Support Coordinator