www.cps.k12.mn.us

OCTOBER 2026

CALEDONIA AREA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

NEWSLETTER



Please Remember to vote on November 3rd.

Scan QR code to get more information regarding the referendum.

November Referendum Information

The November 3 election will soon be upon us. I have appreciated the opportunity to connect with so many of you. The needs this referendum will support are critical to maintaining our schools. When we began this process two years ago, more than $24 million in potential projects were identified. We have spent the time determining what projects are of most importance for providing a safe and effective school environment. Those projects are included in the $9.7 million bond. Our financial situation allows us to complete those projects, should voters approve, with no increase over the current tax rate. Thus, we feel this is the right time to ask for your support.

If you have questions about the proposed projects, please check out the school district's website. You can also call or come visit me. For those who have recently visited our schools, I consistently hear the surprise on the age of the bathrooms and an increased understanding for the need to replace roof sections and HVAC systems. I also hear residents appreciate the plan to repurpose existing high school space to better serve the technical education classes. It's evident this community cares about our schools and youth.

Craig Ihrke

TAX CALCULATOR

Find the tax impact for your property by using the tax calculator. Scan the QR code with your phone or by visiting bit.ly/caltax2026.

Click the blue link to learn about the constitutional amendment regarding the Minnesota Permanent School Fund **on the ballot in November.**

How to contact us

Elementary Office:
511 West Main Street, Caledonia, MN 55921
Phone: (507) 725-5205
Fax: (507) 725-3558
Middle/High School Office:
825 North Warrior Avenue, Caledonia, MN 55921
Phone: (507) 725-3316
Fax: (507) 725-3319
District Office:
511 West Main Street, Caledonia, MN 55921
Phone: (507) 725-3389
Community Ed Office:
825 North Warrior Avenue, Caledonia, MN 55921
Phone: (507) 725-5139
Fax: (507) 725-3319



School Board Members

Mike Peterson, Chair
mike_peterson@cps.k12.mn.us
Phone: (507) 250-1186

Julie Augedahl, Vice Chair
julie_augedahl@cps.k12.mn.us
Phone: (507) 450-3660

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leigh_king@cps.k12.mn.us
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Phone: (612) 743-4610

Whitney Steele, Director
whitney_steele@cps.k12.mn.us
Phone: (507) 458-1903

School Board Recognition

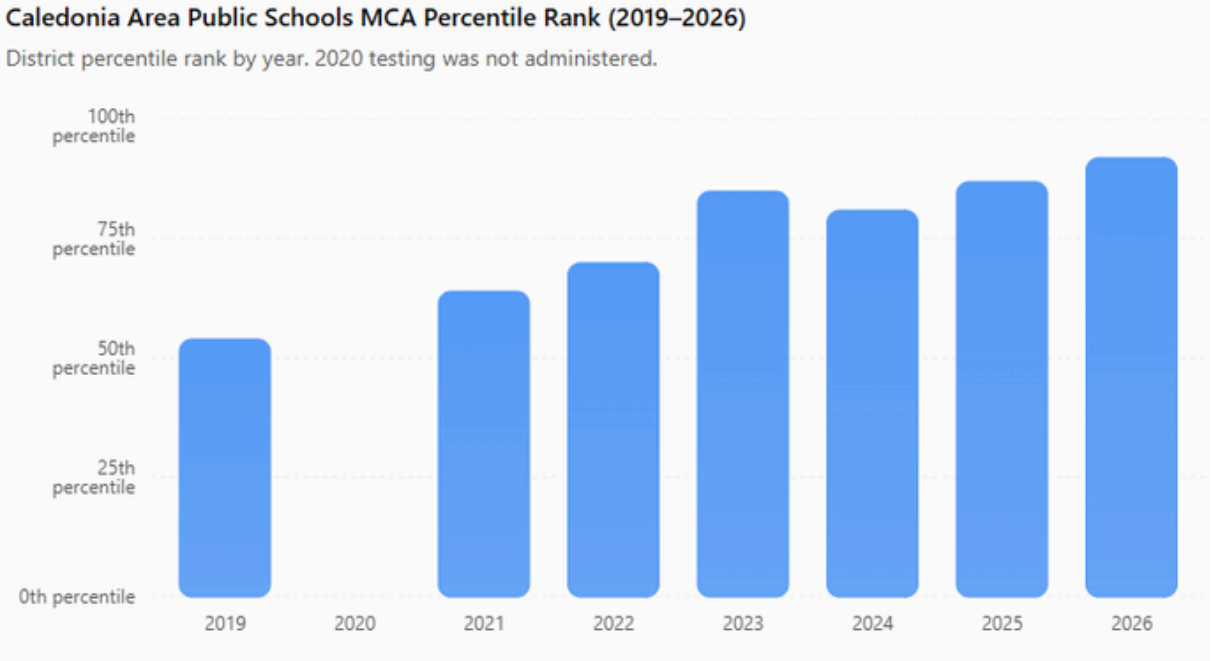
Thank you for the time and care you give to our school district. We appreciate your willingness to serve and the thought you put into the decisions that shape our schools and the opportunities we provide for our students.

School board service takes a great deal of time and commitment, often behind the scenes. Your work helps create a place where our students can learn, grow, and reach their full potential. We are grateful to work alongside people who care so much about our children and the future of our community.

Thank you for all you do for Caledonia Area Public Schools. Your service makes a difference, and it is appreciated.

MCA Test Results

Caledonia Area Public Schools continues to make strong academic progress. Since 2019, the district's MCA percentile rank has increased from the 54th to the 92nd percentile. This progress reflects our continued focus on student achievement, effective instruction, and high expectations for every student.



Note: In 2020, Minnesota did not administer the MCA test.

For more in-depth information click on the following links: SchoolDigger.com and the Minnesota Department of Education's Minnesota Report Card Minnesota Report Card.

We would like to congratulate our staff, students and parents for their outstanding work over the past several years!





OCTOBER 2026

MIDDLE/HIGH SCHOOL



Welcome

Megan Larse

Special Education Teacher

Hometown: Somerset, WI

Alma Mater: Winona State University

Hobbies: Painting, running, & yoga.

Fun Fact: She is currently training for her 3rd half marathon.



School Forest Week: Bringing Education Outdoors



Students in grades K–12 took learning outdoors to explore, discover, and enjoy our school forest during School Forest Weeks from September 29 to October 9!







OCTOBER 2026

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL





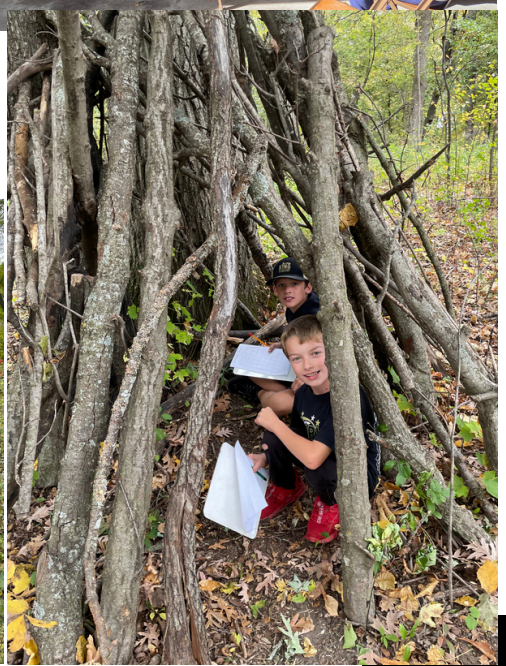
October has brought us fun field trips to the school forest, and the fire station for national fire safety & prevention week. We also had successful conferences, and a relaxing MEA break.











ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

STAFF SPOTLIGHT





Kailee Olerud

What Inspired Kailee to Get into Education:
“For as long as I can remember, I have always wanted to be a teacher! I was also extremely lucky to have some great teachers throughout my academic career who helped make my decision even easier.”



Her Experience in Caledonia:
“My first experience at Caledonia was in 2023 when I completed my student teaching expereince in Stacie Meyer’s kindergarten classroom. I truly had the best experience with Stacie and all of the staff at CAE, that I knew this was the place I wanted to be. After graduation, I began substitute teaching for both Caledonia and Spring Grove, spending most of my time here at the elementary school. During those two years, I had the opportunity to be a short-term, full-time substitute at CAE, and the following year, I was lucky enough to be my sister-in-law’s long-term substitute while she was on maternity leave! In the summer of 2025, I was planning to continue substitute teaching for the upcoming school year when a position opened up here at the end of July. Now, I am the K-5 student services teacher and I am so grateful for that!”



What Kailee Enjoys Most about Caledonia Schools:
“There are so many things I enjoy about my job, but the one thing I love most is that I get to see and connect with every student in the building! I also love that my role allows me to collaborate with staff to ensure we are doing the best we can to support every student. As a school, we have done so many amazing things and I can't wait to see what we continue to accomplish in the years to come!”

NOVEMBER

Growing Together Baby Shower



- **Date:** Nov 7
- **Time:** 9-11 AM
- **Cost:** Free
- **Location:** 231 E Main St, Caledonia
- **Ages:** Prenatal-age 2

Description: A community baby shower hosted by Houston County Public Health featuring door prizes, family resources, and light refreshments.

Your Core Retirement Decisions

Date: Nov 16
Time: 5 PM
Cost: $5
Location: Caledonia High School Media Center
Description: Navigating retirement requires a solid foundation. This workshop provides a comprehensive overview of the key pillars for a secure and fulfilling future, including retirement income strategies, long-term care planning, healthcare in retirement, and estate planning essentials. Participants will build a stronger retirement plan and gain confidence and peace of mind for the future.

Early Childhood Screening

Screening is a quick, no-cost, check to identify possible health or developmental concerns in young children who may need a health assessment, mental health assessment or educational evaluation. Early childhood screening is required for entrance into MN public schools. During screening, we check your child's: Vision and Hearing, Health Review, Thinking and Communication Skills, Large and Small Motor Skills.Children who are at least 3 years and 3 months old are eligible for screening.

Caledonia Area Public Schools next screening dates are **November 5th and 6th** To make an appointment, please call Monica at 507-725-5205.

TO REGISTER FOR CLASSES, CONTACT
COMMUNITY_ED@CPS.K12.MN.US
507-725-5139

ONGOING CLASSES

SAIL

- **Dates:** Tuesdays/Thursdays
- **Time:** 9-10 AM
- **Cost:** Free
- **Location:** City Auditorium
- **Ages:** 55+

Description: An exercise class emphasizing strength, balance, and overall fitness to help adults remain active and independent.

Concealed Carry

Dates:

- Sept 6 or 12
- Oct 11 or 17
- Nov 8 or 14
- Dec 6 or 12
- **Time:** Full Course 10 AM-4 PM, Refresher 12-4 PM
- **Cost:** $80 (teachers/military $20)
- **Location:** Winona High School Community Annex

Description: Basic firearms course that fulfills Minnesota Permit to Carry training requirements. Covers basic handgun skills and is appropriate for beginners or experienced shooters. Handguns and ammunition are provided.

Hall Walking

Hours: High School 6:30-7:30 AM & 3:30-9 PM
Note: No Friday evenings
Location: CHS
Description: Indoor walking opportunity using the Caledonia Middle/High School building.

Memory Cafe

When: 2nd Wednesday monthly
Time: 10-11:15 AM
Cost: Free
Location: 611 Vista Drive Suite 1
Registration: No registration required
Description: A safe, welcoming space for people living with mild to moderate dementia and their caregivers. Activities focus on education, community resources, dementia awareness, and connecting families, friends, and neighbors.

Basic Life Support CPR

Dates:
Oct 22 (5:30 PM)
Jan 16 (9 AM)
Apr 13 (5:30 PM)

- **Cost:** $95
- **Location:** Caledonia Ambulance Station
- **Description:** Basic Life Support certification course.

CPR & First Aid

  - **Dates:** Sept 17, Nov 4, Dec 21, Feb 10, Mar 13 (all at 9 AM)
  - May 10 (5:30 PM unless noted)
  - **Cost:** $95
  - **Location:** Caledonia Ambulance Station
- **Description:** CPR and First Aid certification course. Pediatric certification also available.



Is your child ready for more but preschool feels like a

BIG STEP?



Little Learners Preschool Readiness Program

(Proudly and formerly known as Surround Care)

Little Learners Preschool Readiness Program is designed to help your child transition into preschool with confidence and ease.

For children ages 33 months to preschool eligible.

WE HELP BUILD:

Social Skills
Making friends & learning to share

Confidence in the Classroom
Feeling safe and ready to try new things

Early Learning Routines
Stories, songs, play & hands-on learning

All in a no-pressure, nurturing, play-based environment.

Hours run from 7:30 AM – 3:00 PM.

Free breakfast and lunch.

We have limited spots available for the '26–'27 school year.



If you have any questions, please contact:
Gretchen_juan@cps.k12.mn.us

Located in
Caledonia MN Area
Public elementary school

ENROLL NOW – LIMITED SPOTS!

Give your child a confident start and a love for learning!

WE ARE LOOKING FOR

COMMUNITY ED INSTRUCTORS

CLASSES WE ARE HOPING TO OFFER FOR ADULTS AND/OR KIDS:

- ART
- CODING
- COMPUTER/PHONE/EMAIL HELP FOR SENIORS
- COOKING CLASSES
- DANCE CLASSES
- KNITTING/SEWING
- INSTRUMENT LESSONS
- OPEN TO ALL OTHER SUGGESTIONS

ANYONE 16+

CREATE YOUR OWN SCHEDULE

CONTACT

COMMUNITY_ED@CPS.K12.MN.US

507-725-5139

JOIN US