



# CALDWELL-WEST CALDWELL PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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**Christopher Conklin, Ed.D.**, Superintendent of Schools  
**Kaitlin Jones**, Assistant Superintendent

**Brian McCarthy**, School Business Administrator/Board Secretary

September 1, 2022

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Welcome to the 2022-23 school year. The entire staff is eager to meet and greet your children on September 8<sup>th</sup>. The district continues to focus on our **mission** “*to foster, inspire, and champion learning for all*” and uphold our **core values** of *Academic Excellence and Growth Mindset, Wellness and Balance, and Community, Equity, and Inclusion*. The district will continue our work towards the five-year [Strategic Plan](#) and provide support through our [Professional Development Plan](#). As we open the new school year, please review these updates:

**Curriculum and Instruction.** The district designs curriculum, adopts pedagogy, and strives to provide communication that is culturally responsive, equitable, and inclusive. We develop SMART goals within our five-year Strategic Plan that are aligned with our core values and drive our curricular, personnel, operational, and financial decisions. We are continuing the initiatives to support and supplement student learning (e.g. Investigations Math, Phonics First, Guided Reading, etc.) that were introduced over the past few years. The district continues to support staff in successfully meeting these goals and integrates teachers' voice and choice by offering differentiated professional learning experiences. Throughout the 2022-23 school year teachers will engage in cross-school and interdepartmental Teacher Learning Teams. They will employ high impact strategies to increase student voice and growth (e.g. discussion, questioning, and feedback) and differentiate instruction to meet the needs of all students. They will participate in co-planning, co-teaching, and cross-content instructional activities. They will establish culturally responsive practices and provide equitable access to and meaningful integration of technology.

**Technology.** The district continues to improve access to technology for students and staff. The one-to-one initiative from kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade is going into its second year. The district has updated Chromebooks for elementary and middle school students and purchased new iPads for elementary students. We have invested in Promethean boards from kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade and are in the process of adding 30 boards throughout the district. The district has expanded parents' access to student performance information through several online platforms (e.g. [Seesaw](#), [Genesis](#), [Linkit](#), etc.)

**Social and Emotional Learning.** The district continues our strong partnership with [The Bridge](#). They provide counseling to our students at the middle school and districtwide social and emotional supports and services for students. In addition, the district added a school counselor to each of the elementary schools. The school counselors will provide guidance and counseling services, establish constructive counseling relationships, offer school-based counseling both individually and in group sessions, and provide classroom-based positive behavioral support.

**COVID.** Based on the recent guidance from the New Jersey Department of Health (NJDOH), we are excited to share that there are no school-wide or classroom restrictions or limitations for the 2022-23 school year:

[COVID19 Public Health Recommendations for K-12 Schools, Childcare, and Youth Camps Updated July 6, 2022](#). Parents should not send students to school when sick. For school settings, NJDOH recommends that

students with the following symptoms be promptly isolated from others and excluded from school:

- At least two of the following symptoms: fever (measure or subjective), chills, rigors (shivers), myalgia (muscle aches), headache, sore throat, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea, fatigue, congestion, or runny nose; OR
- At least one of the following symptoms: new or worsening cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, new olfactory disorder, new taste disorder.

Please note that regardless of vaccination status, individuals who test positive, individuals with confirmed COVID-19 within the past 90 days who have COVID-19 symptoms and who test positive, and individuals with COVID-19 symptoms who have not been tested and do not have an alternative diagnosis from their healthcare provider should:

- Stay home for at least 5 full days\* after the onset of symptoms or, if asymptomatic, after testing positive (day of symptoms = day 0; if asymptomatic, day 0 is the day of testing);
- If they have no symptoms or symptoms are resolving after 5 days and are fever-free (without the use of fever-reducing medication) for 24 hours, they can leave their home and should:
  - Wear a mask when around others at home and in public (indoors and outdoors) for an additional 5 days. For these additional 5 days, schools should have a plan to ensure adequate distance during those activities (i.e. eating) when mask-wearing is not possible. Time without a mask being worn should be minimized.
  - On days 6-10, limit participation in extracurricular activities to only those activities where masks can be worn consistently and correctly. *Masks should be worn in school on days 6-10. Individuals who are unable or unwilling to mask should stay home for the full 10 days and not return to school until day 11. \*The school will provide asynchronous learning but not synchronous for any students who are out unless they are receiving home instruction.*

**Facilities.** The district updated several classrooms in each school. We have added outdoor lighting to the high school. The blacktop, sidewalks, pathways, and concrete around several buildings were repaired and/or replaced. The interior and exterior of several schools had new paint, new flooring, and general maintenance. Thanks to the generosity of the HSA a new playground was installed at Jefferson Elementary School. The art room at Grover Cleveland Middle School has a new kiln and the greenhouse has new connectivity to both electricity and water. The field house training room and foyer were renovated. A new gym floor was installed at James Caldwell High School.

**Safety and Security.** The district continues to prioritize the safety and security of our staff and students. We are updating the current district-wide [Safety and Security Plan](#) and continue to work closely with the Caldwell and West Caldwell Police Departments to ensure the safety and security of all the schools. The district is making a large investment in updating our soft and hard infrastructure. We are expanding our cyber security safeguards and defenses. We are adding internal and external cameras and repurposing existing cameras to ensure full coverage both internally and externally at each school. We are updating our point of entry systems in each school to ensure safe and secure entrances.

I am privileged to serve as Superintendent of the Caldwell-West Caldwell Schools and look forward to seeing everyone next week. I am confident that working together, we can make this school year a safe and positive experience for all of our students. Enjoy the last few days of summer!

Sincerely,

*Christopher Conklin*

Christopher Conklin, Ed.D., Superintendent

*To foster, inspire, and champion learning for all.*