Gear up for career choices
Gain marketable job skills with community partnerships and new classroom programs

Cloquet Schools, where caring for students is not just an idea, it’s tradition.

April 2019

This publication is brought to you by the Cloquet School District.

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Cloquet School Board: Duane Buytaert; Gary Huard; Jim Crowley; Dave Battaglia, Treasurer; Ted Lammi, Board Chair; Nate Sandman, Board Clerk

Board meetings are held the second and fourth Monday of each month at 6 pm in the Garfield School board room on 2nd floor, and are open to the public.

Music Performances:

Washington Elementary:
April 25, 2nd grade, 6:30 pm

CMS/CHS:
Tuesday, May 7, 6:30 pm: 6th grade Choral Program
Thursday, May 9, 6:30 pm: 5th grade Choral Program
Monday, May 13, 7:00 pm: High School Band Concert

All CMS/CHS concerts are scheduled to take place in the newly renovated CHS Auditorium

Work for Cloquet Public Schools!

If you are looking for flexible work, have a four year degree and like working with kids, consider substitute teaching in our Cloquet Public Schools.

Individuals with a four year degree can become licensed substitute teachers through a reasonably simple process. No previous teaching coursework or experience necessary. Call the district office to learn more at 879-6721, ext: 6204, 6205

Performers by CHS Theatre. Come see the hilarious murder mystery based on the cult classic film and board game!

Murder! Mystery! Mayhem!

Clue on Stage

Wednesday, May 15, 7:00 pm: 6th grade Band
Thursday, May 16: Middle School Band Concerts 6:45 pm, 7th grade 8:00 pm, 8th grade
Monday, May 20, 6:45 pm: 7th - 12th Choral Program

Weather & Emergency Alerts

School closings, delays or cancelations are reported to local stations listed. Check more than one station.

Parents or guardians have the right to keep their children at home if they believe the weather conditions are too severe. Alerts are also sent to home phones, cell phones and emails from the contact information on file. Please make sure your information is up-to-date.

Television Stations
WDIO (10), KBJR (6), CBS (3), FOX (21)

Radio Stations
WKLK AM (1230) or FM (96.5)
KDAL AM (610) or FM (95.7)
For those who pay attention to economic trends, we hear that over time the economy has tended to shift toward specialization. I remember as a student wondering what that meant. As an adult, I was in the beginning stages of earning my doctorate degree in educational administration when a professor of mine summed it up for me perfectly. He was describing the process for completing the degree and he said something to the effect of, “Earning a doctorate doesn’t mean you know a lot about everything, it means you’re an expert on a very small subject”. That’s not to say that earning a doctorate degree isn’t important. It was meant to put the process into perspective. You go through the process to specialize in an area, not to learn a great deal about everything.

In our PreK-12 public schools, our goal is not specialization. Our goal is to provide students with an excellent general education. The purpose is to prepare our young people for life after high school to allow them to choose where they want to specialize. People, in recent decades, have certainly become aware of the demand for specialization within our economy and often interpret it as a need to go to a four-year university to “earn a college degree.” I can attest to hearing the college degree mantra constantly while in high school twenty-some years ago and many students still hear it today. While I certainly support students choosing to attend four-year universities, I want students and families to know there are many other excellent options and pathways to a great career. Specialization can take many forms: employer-based training, technical certificates, associate’s degrees, four-year bachelor’s degrees and beyond.

“The key in the modern economy is for our young people to get a strong **general** education that provides them with ample opportunity to build the entry skills into future areas of **specialization** in fields they enjoy!”

The key in the modern economy is for our young people to get a strong general education that provides them with ample opportunity to build the entry skills into future areas of specialization in fields they enjoy! This requires we provide a broad range of programming that focuses on the development of skills, which can apply to many future career areas. While our Cloquet Schools have done an excellent job of providing opportunities for those students interested in four-year degrees, we would love to create more options for our students who seek to specialize through other technical and work-based opportunities.

You’ll see this edition of the Pine Needle is dedicated to current efforts to expand our career and technically focused courses and programs. You’ll also see information about our new robotics extracurricular program, which provides students an opportunity to learn in an applied setting allowing them to see, in real time, the fruits of their work. **We’re committed to providing an excellent general education so every student is well prepared to follow the career path and specialization of their choice.**

If you have a child who will start kindergarten this fall and if you did not attend kindergarten round-up, it’s not too late! You and your child can visit the school, take a tour and meet the teachers. Call the district to arrange a visit. We want to meet your child (and you)!
Cloquet Schools have always worked to foster knowledge and skills in students to help them prepare for the future. But recent collaborative work with various local entities is expanding opportunities available for students.

“Our goal is to prepare students for life after high school,” said CHS Principal, Steve Battaglia. “For some students that means preparing for a four-year college. We offer 73 College in the Schools credits at CHS. This is a number unmatched in our region and we’re very proud of that.”

But Battaglia knows the four-year degree path is not for everyone. “Only about 30 to 35 percent of the population has a four-year degree,” he said. “We have to be sure we offer relevant education for the remaining 65 to 70 percent.”

From this need, the Career and Technical Education Committee was formed to broaden the pathways available for students. The committee is made up of CHS administrators, career and technical education teachers, school counselors and local colleges, industry and trade representatives.

“The goal of the committee is to produce curriculum that will help CHS deliver employable graduates to local industry, businesses and trades,” Battaglia said.

Just last year we partnered with the Regional Council of Carpenters to align our industrial technology courses to the apprenticeship curriculum they use within their unit.”

Ted Lammi, Chair of the Cloquet School Board supports these efforts. “Our schools need to recognize that there is a shortage of qualified workers in the trades. It is our mission to train students to meet the needs of the present and future economy and not just for the sake of student’s employment prospects. Cloquet needs to produce the kind of graduates who will enable us to solve society’s future problems, including how to build, maintain and manufacture,” he said.

Industrial technology teacher, Dusty Rhoades, has seen a favorable response to the new course offerings. “The response to the curriculum change has been amazing,” he said. “Our registration numbers are up, with the expectation they will continue for years to come.”

Lammi agrees. “Good paying jobs are going unfilled in the technical fields partly because society in general has shifted its focus toward college prep. We’ve made some important changes in the high school curriculum, but we have a long way to go. I support the push toward technical training and think it should be one of our highest priorities.”

Battaglia says CHS plans to develop more tracks similar to the construction one. “We’re collaborating with the City of Cloquet and the Chamber of Commerce to identify industry and business opportunities for our students. We’re probably six months to a year away from rolling out numerous other career paths that could lead directly to jobs after high school. We’re looking not only at industry and manufacturing careers but also automotive and transportation, healthcare and business, financial and office careers,” he said. “This is very exciting work.”

Rhoades says the need for workers is growing. “Many people in the trades industry are getting ready to retire in the near future. We need young people to look at the careers in the trades as a very viable option for a career. These are good jobs with good pay and benefits.”
Cloquet High School has a robotics team, the Ripsaw Robots! The team is part of FIRST (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology), a 501c(3) not-for-profit public charity designed to inspire young people’s interest and participation in science and technology and to motivate them to pursue education and career opportunities in STEM fields. FIRST was founded in 1989 and has a global reach of more than 615,000 students.

Cloquet’s team is made up of 23 high school students. According to team coach, Cameron Lindner, everyone has a vital role in the team’s success. “We are doing many different things, that range from working with sponsors to making the robot come alive,” he said. “This includes making buttons, spreadsheets, making bumpers, coding the robot and building the robot itself.”

Through the team, students gain skills as well as friendships. “Students learn to work as a team, construct devices and much more,” said Lindner. “All the while we are getting to know each other and each other’s abilities.”

The rookie team competed for the first time at regional competitions March 6 – 9 in Duluth at the DECC where they went head to head against other teams that have also designed, built and programmed a robot. Competition consists of a 2 minute 30 second session where teams attempt to have their robots pick up as many cargo pods as possible.

While they didn’t advance to semi-finals, the team did great for their first year and came home with The Lake Superior Regional Rookie All Star Award. This award celebrates the rookie team exemplifying a young but strong partnership effort, as well as implementing the mission of FIRST to inspire students to learn more about science and technology.

At the end of the day, students all come out winners in the skills and experiences gained. “Students are preparing and learning work skills for real life,” said Lindner. “They are learning to work with people coming from all parts of the social spectrum, how to make decisions, how to use tools given to them and how to adapt to different situations. FIRST robotics gives kids the opportunity to be exposed to many facets of engineering and STEM careers.”
Good choices now equals success later

The Cloquet Area Chamber of Commerce and local business leaders are teaming up to help Cloquet students prepare for the future through the CEOs in the Classroom program. Its main purpose is to help students understand the importance of making good choices—both academically and socially.

Jeannie Kermeen, Cloquet Educational Foundation Executive Director, is the chair of the Chamber’s Education Manufacturing Support committee and has been involved in the CEOs in the Classroom program.

The CEOs programs are presented to both middle school and high school students by two local community leaders: Rick Breuer, CEO at Community Memorial Hospital, and Ralph Hamann, Chief Financial Officer/Chief Human Resource Officer at Members Cooperative Credit Union.

“Having the sessions delivered by local business professionals willing to share their personal experiences and what they consider important when hiring new employees helps provide students with a real-world perspective,” Kermeen said.

Although the principles of both programs are basically the same, the high school presentations are four sessions long and cover additional topics such as the importance of reputation, recovering from a bad choice, establishing a life balance, possible career and educational paths, and developing professional skills.

“It’s important for students to see the importance of making good choices,” said Kermeen. “A four-year college can be a path to success for many students, but not every student is destined to follow that path. We want students to know they have options and that there are many people who want to help them find the best path for them.”

Mike Bushey, a teacher at CMS, says student response to the CEOs program is always positive. “The presenters are always excited to speak with our students and it’s great to get members of our community giving a message for success,” he said. “For our students to see community leaders within our schools, it shows they have a vested interest in the success of those students throughout the broader community or the real world. We appreciate the willingness of the presenters to take the time for our kids!”

Electrical careers through Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College

FDLTCC wants to help local students succeed. In that vein, the college offers two programs specifically related to technical education. They are Electrical Utilities Technology (EUT), which is a two-year degree, and Clean Energy Technology (CET), which is a two-semester certificate. In addition, through continuing education the college offers the Building Performance Institute’s national certification in home energy auditing.

According to Anna Fellegy, FDLTCC Vice President of Academic Affairs, all three programs lead to successful careers. “Students are highly employable in our region and throughout the country with these degrees,” she said.

While the degree programs, in their entirety work well for many, Fellegy stressed the value and importance of individual courses. “People often see degrees and credentials as packages and often don’t think about the individual courses that compose the package,” she said. “Each course has an important purpose. Students who move into the workforce with the special assets that some individual courses provide have an advantage in hiring. Both EUT and CET programs contain coursework in programmable logic controllers, industrial electricity and power transmission. This content is relevant to big industries and can provide entrance into jobs other than electrical utilities.”

The success stories of FDLTCC students are numerous. “We have graduates working throughout the state at electrical utility companies and working for a federal government agency,” said Fellegy.

According to Fellegy the need will continue to grow. “Our region’s future economy depends on healthy industries and energy will play a front and center role,” she said. “We will need employees who are technically skilled and people who are able to think about energy in a multidimensional manner. The healthy evolution of the energy industry will depend on the ability of its workforce to “see in all directions,” and that is what we at FDLTCC attempt to do every day.”

Future expansion

FDLTCC is expanding career paths in the manufacturing industry. The college and SAPPI received a three-year, $400,000 grant from the Minnesota Job Skills Program to address the labor shortage in the pulp and paper industry.

“Along with the University of Minnesota we will be developing curricula and training across the breadth of the workforce,” Fellegy said. “FDLTCC already offers some of the core courses in area high schools; we will be deepening some of that and adding new opportunities in the next two years.

Prospective students wanting to know more about the options available at FDLTCC can call and arrange a tour of the campus: 218-879-0817 or email to jcleveland@fdltcc.edu.
Blue Jean Ball
Thanks to our amazing sponsors, donors, guests, and volunteers this year’s Blue Jean Ball held on February 2 raised over $60,000. Proceeds are used to provide innovative educational opportunities for our students. The support this event receives from our community is awe-inspiring and humbling. Thank you very much!

The Blue Jean Ball photo booth captured some of the great fun from the evening. Photos courtesy of Euphoric Entertainment.

Invest in Kids sponsors

provide support to Cloquet student education and opportunities through the CEF, but that’s only the beginning of their support.

These local businesses go on to hire Cloquet graduates, providing them not only with success in school, but success in their careers and life. Supporting these businesses supports not only our kids, but our communities - in many ways!
Ziigwan (Spring) Powwow

Saturday April 27, 2019
Middle School Gym
Registration: Noon
Grand Entries: 1 pm & 6 pm
Feast: 4 pm
Everyone is welcome!

The 6th Annual Ziigwan Powwow will be held in the Cloquet Middle School gym. This beautiful space is the perfect location to bring the community together as we honor our students, program and schools. The royalty contest will name a new or returning princess and brave to Cloquet Schools.

Some of the dance’s Specials will include: Spot Dances, Men’s All Category, Women’s All Category, Anika Hisgun Special, Royalty Sendoffs and more. First 10 registered drums will receive honorarium.

There is no entry fee and the feast is FREE. Bring your families to this public event. Whether it is your first or hundredth powwow, you are sure to see the importance we place on education and the respect we have for our culture.

A special miigwech (thank you) to the Cloquet American Indian Education JOM and LIEC parent committees, AIE staff and students for their time and support planning this event.

If you would like more information or are interested in being a vendor contact Teresa Angell, AIE Program Director at 879-1457.
Talent Search Students Visit College of St. Scholastica:
Eighth grade students from the Cloquet Middle School teamed up with Lincoln Park Middle School and visited The College of St. Scholastica. They took a tour, loved the buffet lunch and were welcomed by the vice president to attend a National TRIO Day celebration hosted at the college.

AIE Afterschool Program:
Churchill and Washington students enjoyed a presentation on migiziwigwan (eagle feathers) by Keith Diver Sr.

Monarch Awards:
Nine middle school students attended the Monarch Ecology Fair at the University of Minnesota. They all came home with project awards. Great job!

100 Days: Students celebrating the 100th day of school.

Book Buddies:
3rd grade book buddy students surprised Mrs. Bakken’s class. Students had so much fun reading to and with them!

PJ’s & Pancakes were the plan for some of our elementary students – along with lots of fun reading too!
Mentoring program supports students

Students Offering Support (SOS) is a REACH mentoring program at CMS, CHS and CAAEP that strives to have youth succeed and thrive within their communities. SOS engages and encourages youth to build a supportive community while teaching valuable leadership skills.

Dakota Koski is the director of the program. “Participation in SOS leads to positive social, emotional and behavioral outcomes,” he said. “These include improving the ability to communicate with others and handle interpersonal conflict effectively, resulting in enhanced attitudes towards self, school and others.”

SOS pairs mentors with mentees to build relationships as well as hope, resilience, coping skills, conflict resolution skills and mindfulness.

“The weekly meetings foster an open and safe environment for students to talk and discuss real life issues,” said CHS Counselor, Shannon Sams. “The safety and confidentiality that has been created has allowed students to be open about the things going on in their lives. SOS is developing assets and building character for our students in a healthy and effective way. We value and support SOS!”

CAAEP students

Students from CAAEP visited the Minnesota State Capital to participate in the Minnesota Association of Alternative Programs Success, Teamwork, Achievement, Recognition and Self-esteem (MAAP STARS) program. The program is to help students develop employment, academic and social skills while experiencing career-related activities that can lead them to making informed career choices.
Wondering about the weather?
Students at Cloquet Middle School can provide you with answers.

Thanks to funding from the Cloquet Educational Foundation, CMS recently acquired a professional weather station, which collects wind speed, wind direction, rain, temperature, barometric pressure and other measurements.

“Students monitor and collect daily weather observations from equipment they can see operating from the classroom and then analyze this data to describe pattern over time,” said CMS Teacher, Matt Winbigler. “By directly observing the equipment operating, students better understand how data is collected from thousands of weather stations across the country to notice patterns and make forecasts.”

The data collected by students is live streamed online. Anyone can access the up-to-the-minute weather-related data through Weather Underground at www.wunderground.com.

“By streaming data to Weather Underground and sharing it with the world, students are contributing to a citizen science network of 250,000 weather stations, which help create local forecasts for the community,” said Winbigler. “Real science!”

Scientific success

Aquatic plant study: CHS sophomore Pery-Boyd Affias was presented with the Donaldson STEM Award for his work studying the effect of road run-off on aquatic duck weed plants. The award is given to one Minnesota Native American high school student who has shown exceptional achievement and passion for a STEM (science, technology, engineering, math) related field of study. He’s shown here using a turbidity tube to measure suspended particles in the water column.

Future Cities: CMS students competed in the Future City Competition where they worked to address a problem from competition organizers. Their task was to design a hydroelectric power plant that would withstand and quickly recover from a tornado. They created a design that was encased in steel and underground, making it safe from potential tornado damage.