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TRUE BLUE

Calhan School District Newsletter

FALL 2022



"CHOOSE TO SUCCEED!"



SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE

It's hard to believe, but we're nearly at the end of the first quarter already! Our staff and students have had a great start to the 2022-23 school year. They picked up right where they left off in May with real-world application of their learning and building their leadership skills through clubs, athletics and performing arts.



The hard work of our staff and students over the last year is reflected in our student achievement and growth scores, which were recently released. Achievement scores measure students' performance against a set scale, and growth scores measure the amount of improvement compared to other students in the state. I'm happy to report that both scores significantly improved over previous results.

I want to specifically thank and congratulate our Calhan Middle School (CMS) team. Their work has resulted in CMS being Accredited with Distinction. This accreditation is reserved for the highest performing schools in the state and is the result of a concerted effort on the part of students and staff. All of this good news is received against a backdrop of national reports of declining math and reading scores, so well done CMS!

Even as we celebrate this good news, we must remember there is work to be done. We must continue to provide education and training that is responsive to the current economy, and that means expanding our capabilities and program offerings. We are working on several initiatives this year that are outlined in our Strategic Plan to help us achieve this.

First, Calhan School District will be on the Nov. 8 ballot with a bond issue designed to help us construct a permanent facility for our Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs. Our CTE is a crucial part of Calhan's future and helps students enter high-paying jobs as

soon as they graduate. Learn more about this bond issue on page 4 of this newsletter.

Second, we are excited to add Criminal Justice, Teacher Cadet and Paraprofessional pathways to our CTE this year. The Criminal Justice program covers everything from constitutional law to enforcement. The Teacher Cadet program prepares high school students who wish to pursue a teaching career while the Paraprofessional program prepares students to become paraprofessionals, or teacher assistants, after graduation.

Similarly, Calhan was instrumental in the new Calhan Teacher Apprenticeship Program, which was approved by the U.S. Department of Labor and is now being offered in our schools. It is an alternative for those wishing to become a teacher who don't have the ability to earn a typical four-year degree. Now, people with two or three years of experience working with children can receive a teaching credential through an apprenticeship. The program is one solution to the nationwide teacher shortage.

Third, we will continue building on our improved test scores by focusing on three pillars of success this year: on-time attendance, on-time work and discipline. Our data shows students who struggle are those who are not in school regularly and don't turn in their work, making it hard for us to identify the help and support they need.

If you're interested in helping plan the future of Calhan Schools, contact us for more information on how to join the District Accountability Committee made up of community members and school staff. Thank you for your continued support of and investment in Calhan Schools. We can't do what we do without you.

-Mr. David K. Slothower, Superintendent of Calhan School District, RJ-1

SECONDARY PRINCIPAL NOTES

The 2022-23 school year is off to a fantastic start. Our faculty and staff have worked diligently to welcome returning students, as well as assist in acclimating our new students to our school culture. In addition, all of it would not be possible without various department directors who have worked tirelessly to ensure our smooth start: Jimmy Cochran, Dylan McGill, Deb Yirku, Amie Waugh, Brittany Clark and James Rottenberry. Without their hard work and constant adjustments, our students would not have the necessary accommodations.

As we receive our state testing results, I feel it necessary to again mention the work of our middle school students and staff during this past school year, achieving the highest scores we've seen from Calhan Middle School. Earning the title of Distinction is not a feat that is overly abundant in the state of Colorado. The CMS students and staff have proven that effort, consistency and grit will most always yield positive results, even in the face of difficult circumstances.

Finally, thank you to our Calhan families for their positive support and the role they have played in the beginning of the 2022-23 school year. The success of any school district relies heavily on the support that students receive at home. Thank you for your effort, your positivity, and your dedication.



CMS EARNS ACCREDITATION WITH DISTINCTION

Calhan Middle School has earned the performance rating of Accredited with Distinction as measured by the Colorado Measures of Academic Success (CMAS) for the 2021-22 school year. The philosophical views on standardized testing vary widely, but we at Calhan have determined that these tests measure far more than the academic prowess of a student or students. The skills required to score at the highest level, Accredited with Distinction, go far beyond a student's academic ability. These skills include choosing to succeed, not making excuses, doing hard things, and bringing their best every day. We believe that acquiring these skills leads to post-secondary success and they are visible in our Calhan Graduation Competencies.

The display of these skills, along with grit and perseverance from students and faculty, has been instrumental in Calhan Middle School achieving this high academic performance status.

Over the past four years, we have strategically implemented "standards first" education in mathematics, "text first" instruction in language arts, and The 7 Mindsets, a social-emotional curriculum designed to enhance our positive school culture. We believe that implementing these systems, along with the buy-in of students, parents, and faculty, has profoundly contributed to our recent success in achievement and growth. These facts stand out to an even greater degree against a backdrop of what we have heard in the news about the national downward trend in student performance.

We want to recognize the years of hard work and dedication through the untraditional circumstances of the past three years. Our students continued to pursue excellence and respond to the leadership of their teachers. Our faculty worked tirelessly to ensure that students received not only a top-level education in academics but also in the life skills that will enhance their futures. Finally, we want to share our appreciation for our CMS parents and guardians that consistently support the school district by maintaining high expectations of students to show up every day, do their job and actively participate as positive members of our school community.

Our work has not concluded. We will continue to be our best, one day at a time, enabling the potential of a brighter future for every Calhan student.



ELEMENTARY NEWS

As staff and students continue to settle into the 2022-23 school year, it is with great excitement to announce that Calhan Elementary is once again a Performing School according to 2022 CMAS scores. Despite the national media reporting a downward trend in reading and math scores, Calhan Elementary is showing an upward trend. Thank you parents, students and teachers for all of your dedication and hard work! Thank you for joining us in September for the Scholastic Book Fair and the Family Game Night, sponsored by Calhan Elementary ParTnerS (PTO). We had a great time playing your favorite games or those provided by ParTners as well as the free popcorn and snow cones! Elementary students had a fantastic time participating in this year's AG Day, held at the El Paso County Fairgrounds. We were fortunate to have had the opportunity to partner with Calhan FFA students for a fun-filled and educational event. Students are working hard to earn bulldog paws by having a positive attitude, displaying respect and integrity in and out of the classroom, and showing determination and excellence in all they do. Keep up the great work Bulldogs!

SCHOOL BOARD

Mr. Scott Mikita..... Board President
Mrs. Kathy Wilder..... Board Vice-President
Mr. Stephen Teague Board Secretary
Mr. Anthony Tribuzio..... Board Treasurer
Mr. William Hendrix..... Board Member

OUR PHONE NUMBERS

Calhan High School..... (719) 347-2766
Calhan Middle School (719) 347-2766
Calhan Elementary (719) 347-2766
Calhan Preschool..... (719) 347-2766

OUR WEBSITE

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CALHAN SLATED FOR NOV. 8 BALLOT

Calhan School District is on the Nov. 8 ballot with a \$7.5 million (10.1 mills) bond issue. If passed, the monthly cost to residential taxpayers will be \$5.88 per \$100,000 of a home's market value, as recorded on the County Auditor's website. The funding would be used exclusively to build a permanent facility for the Career Technical Education program. The new building would include:

- A two-bay shop for metal and woodworking
- Five classrooms, one of which will be outfitted with stove and oven stations
- Space to grow plants
- Equipment for agriculture, agriculture mechanics, family consumer science/home economics and aviation programs
- Apparatus for future programs such as stoves/ovens, sewing machines and metal and woodworking equipment

The proposed facility would replace the trailers and sheds currently in use, enhancing the level of safety for staff and students. Additionally, it would better equip students to enter the workforce immediately upon graduation.

Calhan Schools' goal is to offer students unlimited opportunities to choose to succeed and ensure that students understand the value of learning by offering education that matters. This bond issue is an important step for our future so that we can continue to meet this mission.