

CHARGERS CONNECT

Winter Edition



**WE ARE CHARGERS!
WE CHANGE THE WORLD!**

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MATTSON MEMOS

Greetings to our CTA Charger Community!

My name is Autumn Mattson, and I have the privilege of serving as the Superintendent at Creative Technologies Academy. For the past 22 years, I have worked in education as a teacher, coach, presenter, consultant, High School Athletic Director, Dean of Students, and Elementary Principal. All of these experiences brought me to Creative Technologies Academy, where I am inspired and excited to be working with a dedicated and collaborative staff who always puts their student's needs as their top priority.

Here at Creative Technologies Academy, the 2022-23 school year marks twenty-four years of providing free public education and doing what is best for children and families. We continue to take pride in educating and preparing students for the rigors of college and careers while supporting them to lead fulfilling and productive lives. We are committed to continuing our legacy of success in partnering with families and our communities. Our goal is to shape our students into tomorrow's leaders so they can positively influence their homes, communities, workplaces, and the world.

Many ask: "What is a public charter school?" Charter schools are free, independently-operated public schools that have the flexibility and autonomy to meet their students' needs. As public schools, charters are held to the same state-mandated academic standards and participate in the same state testing. Charter schools, like traditional public schools, are funded according to enrollment and receive funding from the state according to the number of students attending. Every single charter school in Michigan is a tuition-free, public entity with nonprofit status.

Creative Technologies Academy is required to meet all local, state, and federal requirements. In addition to meeting these requirements, Ferris State University authorizes Creative Technologies Academy's charter contract. Authorizers are the institutions that create contracts with their charter schools, set expectations, oversee school performance, and decide which schools should continue to serve students. We value our relationship with Ferris State University as our authorizer, as well as our partnerships with the Kent Intermediate School District and other local districts.

As we start the 2023 year, we welcome the opportunity for celebration, self-reflection, and growth. The first half of this school year has been exciting at Creative Technologies Academy. We have opened a new middle school building, completed a new soccer field, celebrated our academic growth, and partnered with many current and new students and families. We hope that this newsletter will provide you with an opportunity to view our accomplishments and learn more information about our school.

We are CHARGERS. We CHANGE the WORLD!

Autumn Mattson
CTA Superintendent
amattson@ctachargers.org

CTA BOARD MEMBERS

We are grateful to have a collection of board members who are unified in supporting all of our students here at CTA. Their commitment is deeply rooted in a shared desire to invest in all students and staff to support their growth so that they can positively impact our community.

Members of our Board of Education routinely invest multiple hours per month to support the district's work. Preparing for and attending 11 monthly meetings and serving on board committees is only a small part of our board members' work. They are also required to invest a significant amount of time tending to correspondence, reading educational materials, and attending classes related to their role as a member of a board of education.

Please join us in recognizing the efforts of our CTA Board of Directors:



Front (L to R): Jim Comden - Trustee, Cindy Patin - Trustee,
Tony Domico - President, Austin Hilyer - Trustee,
Shanielle Rypma - Vice President, Terry Treman - Secretary
Not Pictured Mike Tawney - Treasurer

SCHOOL BOARD RECOGNITION MONTH

Thank you for your extraordinary service
in helping **CTA** children thrive!

CTA SOCCER FIELD

Four years ago, Cedar Springs community members Fred and Carollee Gunnell gifted CTA ten acres of land. The CTA Board of Directors and administration have worked hard to complete our campus expansion and bring the CTA soccer field project to life. On August 26th CTA held its first soccer game on their new soccer field.



SCAN QR CODE TO WATCH VIDEO



NEW MIDDLE SCHOOL BUILDING

On December 9, 2022, the CTA middle school classes officially moved into the new classrooms of the new building on CTA's campus. It has been a long-standing dream for our students and staff in grades sixth through eighth to have their own space. There are four classrooms to house staff and students throughout the school day. The new building has become a place to build a stronger middle school community, to strengthen collaboration, and to inspire deeper learning. We are grateful for the addition and look forward to many years of supporting students through their middle school experiences!



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CTA CREATES ART PROGRAM

CTA's 6-12th Art Club meetings have begun! In partnership with Stacy Rowland, an active parent and part of our school community, students have the opportunity to tap into their creativity while enjoying time together. The Secondary Art Club is facilitated by Ms. Rowland twice a month after school. We are excited to see all that our Chargers will create this year!



HOLIDAY PERFORMANCES

CTA hosted its first Holiday Music Program since 2019. It was such a joy to bring back this tradition for our staff, students, and families. Kindergarten through 2nd grade performed, followed by 3rd through 5th grade and lastly our Charger Voices and middle school choir. Mr. Grayson Barton did a wonderful job planning and directing the performances. It was a lovely way to celebrate.



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WIN-ACADEMICS

Whatever I Need (W.I.N.) is a special program CTA implements 4 days per week for 30 minutes per day to support ALL students in small group instruction right at their level. Our Instructional Coach, Academic Specialist, Interventionist, Resource Teacher, Teacher Aides and all General Education teachers collaborate and support instruction for this valuable time frame. Enrichment projects, book clubs, reteaching, and intervention all take place during this protected time. It's always exciting to see our Chargers thriving and growing!





MRS. KATE BIALKOWSKI CTA Principal (K-5) kbialkowski@ctachargers.org

Hello! My name is Kate Bialkowski, and I am the Elementary Principal at Creative Technologies Academy. I have the privilege of being both a leader of teachers and students as I support them to reach their daily potentials and find ways to positively change the world!

The 2022-2023 school year is my 16th year as an educator and 8th year as a Charger. Before joining CTA, I have served at Okemos Public, Grand Rapids Public, and Charlotte-Mecklenburg Public in covering a variety of positions including kindergarten teacher, 1st grade teacher, K-5 Academic Specialist and K-12 Instructional Coach. Education has been my passion since adolescence and I am so thankful to be growing in my career here at CTA!

My husband, Steve, and I live here in Cedar Springs with our two children who both attend CTA as well. Being rooted in our home community both personally and professionally allows me to build authentic, meaningful and lasting relationships with our Charger students. At CTA, students are seen and heard and our relational environment allows students to be themselves and thrive! It's that culture that brings me back year after year, as both a team member and a parent.

Connecting with community members in Cedar Springs and surrounding communities is very important to our growth as well. I'd like to take this opportunity to welcome you into our school community. If you are interested in exploring another school option that includes small class sizes, personalized instruction, and meeting students where they are, please contact me; I would love to share all of the wonderful things we have to offer.



MRS. JENNY BANGMA CTA Principal (6-12) jbangma@ctachargers.org

Hello! My name is Jenny Bangma, and I serve as the Secondary Principal at Creative Technologies Academy. Alongside our staff, I have the opportunity to lead, engage, and empower students in grades sixth through twelfth to grow every day. The 2022-2023 school year marks my seventeenth year as a Charger; I began my journey as the middle school English language arts teacher for thirteen years, and then I shifted into the role of 9th-12 Academic Specialist. After a few years in that position, I had the honor of becoming the Secondary Principal, overseeing the middle and high school buildings.

Leading, building relationships, teaching, and learning are my guiding lights. Creative Technologies Academy and the community found therein is such a wonderful and welcoming place for everyone to grow in all of these areas. I am grateful to our staff, students, and our greater CTA family who make it possible for me to do what I love every day.

Connecting with community members in Cedar Springs and surrounding communities is very important to our growth as well. I'd like to take this opportunity to welcome you into our school community. If you are interested in exploring another school option that includes small class sizes, personalized instruction, and meeting students where they are, please contact me; I would love to share all of the wonderful things we have to offer.

DAY OF SERVICE

At Creative Technologies Academy, we are committed to changing the world by developing students in character, scholarship, and leadership. It's been 21 years since 9/11, and every year CTA sets aside time to observe the events that took place on September 11, 2001.

CTA held a ceremony at their campus flag pole led by Steve Washington to remember the events of 9/11. After the ceremony, CTA welcomed to their campus, Montcalm County: EMS, Ambulance, and Fire Truck, Greenville DPS, Michigan State Police, Walker Police, and the Grand Rapids Police.

The CTA students and staff spent time connecting with our local heroes, and the students had the opportunity to ask questions and tour the fire trucks, ambulances, and police vehicles.

SCAN QR CODE TO WATCH VIDEO



HOMECOMING

CTA held its first official Homecoming Weekend Event earlier this school year, as we celebrated the first home soccer game on our brand new field! The festivities began with a school-wide Spirit Week complete with daily themes for all students to celebrate, and then culminated with a home soccer game on Friday night and a Homecoming Dance on Saturday evening. It was wonderful for our CTA community to come together and celebrate!



HONOR ROLL - MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS

Colren Bailey - 8th
Leilani Beattie - 6th
Mya Brinks - 6th
Owen Carroll - 8th
Jayden Danks - 8th
Ethan Gambill - 7th
Hannah Graham - 7th
Laura Houston - 6th

Hunter Krietemeyer - 7th
Logan Magoon - 7th
Max McCall - 8th
Gwen Middlebrook - 6th
Turner Powell - 7th
Bailey Raap - 6th
Megan Reichelt - 6th
Selah Rohne - 7th

Nelida Romero - 6th
Penelope Rose - 8th
Micah Rypma - 7th
Eliot Schaap - 6th
Olivia Starr - 8th
Hannah Talaga - 6th
Emerson Walters - 6th

HONOR ROLL - HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

Salem Besmer - 11th
Kameron Boomer - 12th
Nadelynn Brinley - 12th
Isaac Bucholtz - 9th
Gabrielle Christie - 11th
Katherine Christie - 10th
Emily Cobb - 10th
Haydn Davenport - 12th
Olivia Davenport - 9th
Jacob de la Rosa - 10th
Jeffrey Dells - 9th
Remington DeWeese - 9th
Jayda Dille - 11th
Jacob Dillon - 11th
Ryan Dykstra - 9th
Caleb Elliott - 9th
Isaiah Elliott - 10th
John Elliott - 12th
Adrian Fisk - 9th
Alison Fisk - 12th

Zachary Gibbs - 10th
Jessica Graham - 11th
Josiah Graham - 9th
Thomas Hoops - 11th
Brenna Jibson - 12th
Abigail Johnson - 12th
Lauren Kasper - 11th
Keaton Kindy - 9th
Brett Kooienga - 11th
Dominic Koslek - 10th
Adalynn Lopez - 10th
Meghan McKinney - 10th
Jacinda McMurray - 11th
Caden McSorley - 11th
Nolan Moran - 12th
Olivia Peay - 11th
Danielle Piskun - 11th
Tyler Potter - 12th
Natalie Reichelt - 9th
Brenden Rizzon - 10th

Lydia Romancky - 12th
Gunnar Rowland - 11th
Brooklyn Schantz - 12th
Sarah Sharp - 11th
Alyssa Shelagowski - 12th
Elijah Shuart - 9th
Sage Sidlauskas - 10th
Eric Tanis - 10th
Parker Tompkins - 12th
Alexxander Toth - 10th
Jaxxon Toth - 10th
Brooke Van'tHof - 10th
Madison Van'tHof - 9th
Logan VandenBoss - 10th
Analiese VanHarten - 11th
Morgan Vogler - 11th
Conner Warner - 11th
Kirsten Willis - 11th
Sierra Willis - 11th

JANUARY CHARACTER EDUCATION WINNERS

Each month CTA focuses on a different character trait. This month, our students learned about being growth-minded. The following students were exemplary in the [Growth-Minded](#) character trait!



Kindergarten
1st Grade
2nd Grade
3rd Grade
4th Grade
5th Grade

Charlotte Denny
Azarius Murphy
Tanner Bitler
Josyln Bishop
Ross VanHaitsma
Karter Butler

6th Grade Mya Brinks
7th Grade Melinda VanEss
8th Grade Ian Jibson
9th Grade Jace Bristol
10th Grade Eric Tanis
11th Grade Gunnar Rowland
12th Grade Makayla Burley

GROWTH-MINDED

MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS ASSEMBLY

Mental health awareness is something we should all be talking about. Here at CTA, we've made it a priority to make safe spaces for our staff, students, and families to come together and support each other in our mental health. We had the privilege of having Shandy Longcore, founder of Embracing Imperfections come to speak to the middle and high school students about suicide prevention and mental health strategies.



SCAN QR CODE TO WATCH VIDEO



RESOURCES

**National Suicide
Prevention Life Line**
988

**Spectrum Health
Butterworth Emergency
Line**
616.391.1680

**Pine Rest Psychiatric
Urgent Care Center**
616.391.1680

**Kent County Sheriff
Department**
911 or 616.774.2398

**Kent Community
Mental Health
Network**
616.336.3909

**Crisis Intervention &
Suicide Prevention for
LGBTQ Youth**
866.488.7386

**Helen Devos Children's
Hospital ED**
616.267.1680



embracing 
imperfections

Talking about suicide **DOES**
NOT cause it to happen!

Suicide is a leading cause of death.
Suicide affects ALL ages of people.
Suicide affects the well-being of others.

Suicide CAN be prevented.

It is okay to ask for help!

You are NOT alone in this life.

Your life matters.

YOU matter.

CHARGER FALL SPORTS

We'd like to take a moment to highlight our 2022-23 fall teams! We are so proud of each player and their hard work this season!



2022 CTA GIRLS MS VOLLEYBALL TEAM

Front (L to R): Hannah Graham, Samantha Moore, Hannah Reichelt, Laina Dean, Zah'Kyla Williams **Back (L to R):** Nelida Romero, Abigail Gambill, Summar Rowland, Emma Walters, Bailey Raap, Coach Stacy Rowland



2022 CTA GIRLS HS VOLLEYBALL TEAM

Front (L to R): Emily Cobb, Isabelle Willis, Brooklyn Schantz, Jayda Dille, Nadelynn Brinley **Back (L to R):** Coach Katie O'Bezil, Danielle Piskun, Alyssa Bishop, Analiese VanHarten, Calyssa Brinley, Katherine Christie, Zoi DeVries, Lydia Romancky



2022 CTA BOYS HS SOCCER TEAM

Front (L to R): Alexxander Toth, Samuel Elliott, Cooper Christie, Karson Deyman, Ezra Hall, Laithen Holman **Back (L to R):** Coach Connor Russell, Caleb Elliott, John Elliott, Jackson Southwick, Michael Pinkerton, Cody Holman, Trenton Holman, Kameron Boomer, Knox Toth, Deegan VanHarten



2022 CTA CROSS COUNTRY TEAM

Front (L to R): Head Coach Dawson Ingersoll, Isaiah Elliott, Lily Guerin, Assistant Coach Carolynn Cone **Back (L to R):** Brenden Rizzon, Jayden Danks, Colren Bailey

CHARGER WINTER SPORTS

We'd like to take a moment to highlight our 2022-23 basketball teams! We are so proud of each player and their hard work this season!



Front (L to R): Hannah Reichelt, Nelida Romero, Gwen Middlebrook, Eliot Schaap, Hannah Talaga
Back (L to R): Madelyn Reichelt, Mya Brinks, Summer Rowland, Megan Reichelt, Emerson Walters, Coach Mark Reichelt



Front (L to R): Joshua Watson, Colren Bailey, Ethan Gambill, Jayden Danks, Jax Koslek, Sam Cassidy, Tristan Boerder, Coach Mark Reichelt



Front (L to R): Nadelynn Brinley, Elli Bachar, Dani Piskun, Natalie Reichelt, Jama Dillon,
Back (L to R): Taylor Dells, Addison Brinks, Alyssa Bishop, Calyssa Brinley, Coach Kevin Dines



(L to R): Adrian Fisk, Keaton Kindy, Conner Warner, John Elliott, Tristin Metzger, Joey Russo, Alexxander Toth, Tashaun Williams, Brenden Rizzon, Zachary Gibbs, Coach David Shuckerow

350 Pine Street
Cedar Springs, MI 49319



2023-24 OPEN ENROLLMENT



CHOOSE CTA

CTA offers rigorous academic courses, small class sizes, cutting-edge technology, competitive athletic teams, and more. Students and teachers have access to the latest technology which permits frequent opportunities to collaborate and learn together.



ENROLL YOUR STUDENT TODAY!

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