

**Cedar Cliff Local Schools
Superintendent's Newsletter
December 2023**



It is the mission of Cedarville Schools to “Provide students with the best well-rounded education that teaches, challenges and develops the mind, body and character and prepares responsible graduates who contribute within society.”

A Final Word!

This will be my last Superintendent's newsletter. My time here at Cedar Cliff has come to an end. My family and I have enjoyed our time here and I want to thank everyone who has helped us along the way. Many superintendents send out newsletters, as they want the community to be informed. Most of us in the position want everyone to know and understand the events taking place in the district, they want to celebrate student successes, and they want to keep stakeholders informed of issues surrounding the operations of the school.

During my time here though, I have taken special time to write articles that provide an insight as to what I, personally, hold dear and value most. I think it is important to let my community know what I value most and the items that are my core values as the leader of the district. Since this is my last letter to the community, this may be a bit longer as I want to review my final thoughts on the position and review some examples of thoughts put into action over the years.

When I learned that a HS athlete falls onto the field and dies *every three or four days* in the US, I worked with the PTO and athletic department to make sure all of our coaches have an AED readily available. With every minute that passes, the chance of survival drops by 10% for the student/athlete—after ten minutes, there is no chance of survival. That makes sports like Cross-country, Golf, and even Baseball and Softball at a higher risk for our students. I have prayed for a decade to never have to make the call to a parent that their child is lost and wonder if we could have done more.

We have done *ALICE* (armed intruder) drills for virtually all of my years here. I hate doing them—hate it. I find it demoralizing that we, as a society, have normalized this—most other professions do not practice a violent shooter coming into the work place and killing the individuals in the building. But yet, after so many incidents, we are accustomed to making this a commonplace activity. It makes me saddened beyond words.

We put in a no-contact period at the end of June and July so students get a break from all activities at school. Students need a break—they *MUST* have it. Professional athletes take time off but as I started to analyze schedules and time commitments, I realized most multi-sport high school athletes have very little

if any time off. This is not good for their mental or physical well-being and I hate that I have to periodically remind/convince parents and coaches to let kids be kids and leave them alone for a bit.

We added a mental health counselor at the MS/HS levels because I know phones, devices, and screen times are changing young minds and the youth of today are experiencing depression and challenges never seen in our generations past. They need all the help they can get.

In spite of our actions, in spite of my concern for students as a Superintendent, there was always a perpetual criticism—often from many fronts. My position and profession have become increasingly politicized and this comes at a cost. The politicizing of education erodes a community and society's faith in our work and demoralizes those who choose to take on the role of educator. Where I used to get 300 applicants for a teaching position, now I may garner 25. Colleges have repeatedly announced a reduction in the number of students entering the educational field.

For almost 25 years, I have served in the educational administrative ranks—nearly a quarter century. I have watched my colleagues and I perpetually be criticized for a system that is too expensive, too bureaucratic, and too unwilling to change. Mandate after mandate have been thrust upon schools—your school—and most of this governmental oversight has reduced students to a number, a test score, a mathematical interpretation of their worth and our work. I take great pride in resisting that push to the best of my ability. I have always understood just what this process means—make a test that is arbitrary and designed to fail at least 25% of the respondents and then use this data as a measure for criticism and defunding of the profession. I have watched creativity—a hallmark characteristic that makes the US the world leader in innovation—slowly erode and become less valued in our educational programming. I have asked politicians for help for 25 years—and not *ONE* of my requests were granted—not one. Why would politicians see what I see, I am merely *just* an educator.

I am still frustrated regarding what, in my opinion, should spur my fellow Ohioans into action. When I see a headline that reads, “*Ohio will spend nearly 2 Billion on Private School Funding in the Next Two years,*” it bothers me that it does not bother more folks outside the educational ranks. The lines used to be clear—private schools were funded outside the state coffers—in fact, that is what made them private—**it was the core definition of private**. This meant those schools did not have to follow state mandates, did not transport students, did not have its teachers pay into a state retirement system, did not have to take/educate all students (regardless of their disability), and did not have to continually provide data to the state as to whether their students were successful or educated to a minimum level.

Now private schools in the Dayton region regularly get nearly 80% of their budget from the state—nearly 80%—sometimes more—and we still call them private?! This year, Cedar Cliff will be required to track students after high school—*after* high school—to justify to the state that district monies spent to educate our students was not wasted. Private schools, however, getting the very same funding are not required to do so. Private school monies are considered good investments—without question—without supporting data—why? This comes on the heels of the largest wasted tax initiative in the state's history in ECOT—the ENRON of Ohio—our State's reaction, double-down on the ventures. I am perpetually frustrated that we allow this again and again. I do not disregard private education—I disregard private education with no measurable standards by which to compare to public counterparts.

Anyone can see, my tenure as Superintendent has come with wins and losses—successes and failures. Accomplishing some things and coming short in other areas. But, what I am most proud of, what I hold most dear, is trying to take care of our students in all facets and putting the best and most caring individuals with them every day to see they are cared for and educated to the best of our abilities. I wish the community the best moving forward, in addition to Mr. Masser having success and continuing the programming that makes Cedar Cliff so special.

Best regards, thank you all, and I wish everyone a great holiday season



Chad Mason, Superintendent
Cedar Cliff Local Schools

~~~~~



### **Meet Our Quick Recall Team**

Quick Recall is an academic competition, whereby Cedarville High School students compete against other schools in the Ohio Heritage Conference (OHC) on a range of topics from virtually all subject areas. Cedarville students have done very well in this competition in the past and we expect they will compete at a high level again this year. Be sure to follow their schedule on the district calendar and feel free to stop by and watch a competition; the team would appreciate all the support they can get. Under the direction of Ms. Shaw, this year's current team members are:

**Seniors:** Megan Hulbert and Connor Smith

**Juniors:** Austin Bigham, James Brooks, Isaiah DeWitt, George Landon, and Ezri Rice

**Sophomores:** Mack Foerch, Sophia Lopez, and Stewart Kroh

**Freshmen:** Abby Conover, Mark Landon, Gloria Lopez, Clayton Smith, Asher Stewart

+++++



## ***Congratulations to our Awarded Fall Athletes!***



Once again, Cedarville High School was represented when the coaches of the Ohio Heritage Conference voted for All-Conference selections. We wish to congratulate all honorees for their work and accomplishments on a job *Well-Done!*

### **Golf:**

**None for this Year**

### **Volleyball:**

**Molly Mossing—*OHC South Player of the Year* / 1<sup>st</sup> Team All-Conference**

**Zoe McKinion—1<sup>st</sup> Team All-Conference**

**Taylor Butts—2<sup>nd</sup> Team All-Conference**

**Mia Burr—2<sup>nd</sup> Team All-Conference**

### **Football:**

**Jackson Pyles - 1st Team All-Conference**

**Colt Coffey - 1st Team All-Conference**

**Chase Baldwin - 1st Team All-Conference**

**Josh Flora - 1st Team All-Conference**

**Jackson Miller - 2nd Team All-Conference**

**Tyler Cross - 2nd Team All-Conference**

**Jake Winter - 2nd Team All-Conference**

**Kaiden Odon - Honorable Mention All-Conference**

### **Cross-Country Girls:**

**Ellie Mark – 1<sup>st</sup> Team All-Conference**

**Emma Minor—Honorable Mention All-Conference**

**Gloria Lopez—Honorable Mention All-Conference**

**Emma Krizo—Honorable Mention All-Conference**

### **Cross-Country Boys:**

**Archer Holston—1<sup>st</sup> Team All-Conference**

**Isaac Wallis—1<sup>st</sup> Team All-Conference**

**Nathan Sultan – 2<sup>nd</sup> Team All-Conference**

**Stewart Kroh—2<sup>nd</sup> Team All-Conference**

**Luke Moore—Honorable Mention All-Conference**

**Bradyn Long—Honorable Mention All-Conference**

**Josh Sultan—Honorable Mention All-Conference**

### **Girls' Tennis:**

**Hannah Peterson –*OHC Player of the Year* / 1<sup>st</sup> Team All-Conference**

**Reagan Smith – 1<sup>st</sup> Team All-Conference**

**Ryleigh Burnett – 1<sup>st</sup> Team All-Conference**

## ***Cedar Cliff Welcomes New Superintendent and Honors Retiring Board President***

At its November 20, regular Board of education Meeting, the Cedar Cliff Local Board of Education welcomed Mr. Brian Masser as its new Superintendent. Brian Masser replaces Chad Mason who has served the district the past ten years and is leaving the position in January. Mr. Masser currently serves as the Assistant Superintendent for the Clark Shawnee School District, a position he has held for five years. He was issued a contract after the Board meeting and will begin his new post on January second and told the individuals present, "I am eager to get started serving the Cedar Cliff school community. My family and I look forward to attending events and getting to know as many people as possible between now and when I officially begin as superintendent."

Also at the meeting, the Board took some time to honor with a resolution its retiring Board President, Mr. Matt Sheridan. Mr. Sheridan has served on the Board for the past sixteen years and his tenure was highlighted by the completion of the building project in 2013. When asked about his time on the board, Mr. Sheridan responded, "I have always tried to base my decisions as a board member on what is best for the students and have relied on my faith and the values my parents, Keith & June Sheridan, taught me. I have really enjoyed everyone I have worked with and am going to miss it."

Current Superintendent Chad Mason stated, "It has been an honor working with Mr. Sheridan and the rest of the Board over the last decade. I am proud of the status of the district at this time and I have known and respected Mr. Masser for some time. I have no doubts the district will continue to move forward under his stewardship."

*Pictured below:*

Mr. Matt Sheridan, Cedar Cliff Board of Education President is awarded a certificate of honor by Mr. Chad Mason, outgoing Superintendent.



The Cedar Cliff Board of Education welcomed Mr. Brian Masser as the new Superintendent.

(Pictured below from Left to Right): Christi Frizzell, Maria Waymire, Vice President, Matt Sheridan, President, Brian Masser, Incoming Superintendent, Brittney Gillaugh, Charlene Campbell



Below: Cedar Cliff Board President, Mr. Matt Sheridan (right) congratulates and welcomes Mr. Brian Masser (left) as the new district Superintendent.



*“Tis the Season”  
(For Delays, Cancellations and Phone Calls!)*

Each year, as the winter approaches, I try to pass along some information regarding the thought process for closing or delaying school due to inclement weather. The following is the information that I have passed along in previous years.

*Why are they not in school?*

Winter has finally begun; it took some time but it is here. I hope you each have a wonderful and relaxing Christmas break enjoying time with family and friends while you have a safe holiday season.

As we approach this time of year, “snow days” are often the topic of conversation and exactly what process a superintendent utilizes for the alteration of a normal school day. Last year, I submitted an article for this newsletter entitled “Anatomy of a Snow Day,” and I thought it pertinent as we approach the typical winter season/events and may answer any questions you have as to the necessity of school delays and/or cancellations. Here is a re-print of that article:

*Anatomy of a “Snow Day”*

Experienced superintendents often talk of the stress and worry associated with calamity days and whether or not to make the decision to cancel school. Community members often ask what determines whether or not school is on-time, delayed, or cancelled and exactly what takes place when superintendents have those conversations (and yes, those conversations take place).

As superintendent, I can now attest to the process and having been through it, unfortunately, on multiple occasions, I know the frustration involved. After all, it is Ohio, and it is winter—snow is going to come. School will always take place during winter months, however, there are many considerations when cancelling school—and in an effort to be honest and frank, here are some of the things I consider during those times Cedar Cliff Local Schools have to be closed due to inclement weather.

*First and foremost—Safety.* There is a difference between a ‘*consideration*’ and a ‘*determining factor*.’ For all intent and purpose, there is only ONE determinant for a calamity cancellation/delay, that being safety. Superintendents may consider many things when making a decision, but the one true factor is always the well-being of the students. Safety in all facets—safety on the roads for the buses and our drivers, for the students waiting at the stops/homes, for the parking lots and parents dropping off students for the day in the hustle and bustle of their morning routine, for the new teen-age drivers who are facing slippery streets for the first time, and for staff who may be driving some distance to get to the workplace. Superintendents carry a heavy burden—no superintendent wants to attend a funeral or visit a family in the hospital after an accident in which a child was traveling to school.

*Snow Day (cont.)*

After safety, all else is merely a consideration:

*Second—Other perspectives.* Yes—we call colleagues, those others entrusted with making the decision. Having other perspectives and input is valuable, especially when your colleagues have more experience. To not have that interaction is naïve and an example of poor judgment, in my opinion. The opportunity for criticism is ever-present; it is exacerbated when a call is made that goes ‘against the grain’ and leaves your district in a solitary position.

*Third—Timing.* It is very frustrating when school starts at 8:00 am (roughly) and you believe weather conditions will be fine by then; however, you must make your decision at 5:30 am. Drivers begin arriving for work, preparing their buses for pre-trip activities, and then begin their routes shortly after. It is quite common to expect conditions to be acceptable by the start of school but you wonder if there is a chance that you may not get the weather you expect. Then, the district is caught with drivers on routes that make the superintendent’s decision questionable.

*Fourth—Days out already.* Most folks think at some point in the year, “Well, they had 5 days to burn and had only used one, so they cancelled today.” I detest that point of view—NO good educator likes to “burn” a day of a child’s education, when, for some children, that school day is the best sense of normal they have. Having said that, ‘pressure’ seems to mount as one nears that 5-day ‘limit’ imposed by the state. So, do some superintendents consider the number of days missed already? Probably so.

*Fifth—Activities at school.* OAT testing, OGT testing, expensive presenters that cannot be re-scheduled admittedly do enter into your mind when making the decision. But to be very clear, entering your mind and rising to the level of safety are not the same—while “what is happening that day” may be a consideration, but remember, it is not a determination for a delay or cancellation. It is merely what crosses one’s mind as a repercussion for the actions of altering the daily schedule.

=====

### **Pass along the Information!**

If you know of someone who would like to receive the newsletter, feel free to forward the information. We will also have copies available at the Board Office and the Senior Citizens’ Center if someone would like the traditional paper copy. Once again, you can sign up to receive the newsletter from the Cedar Cliff Website at:

<http://www.cedarcliffschools.net/>

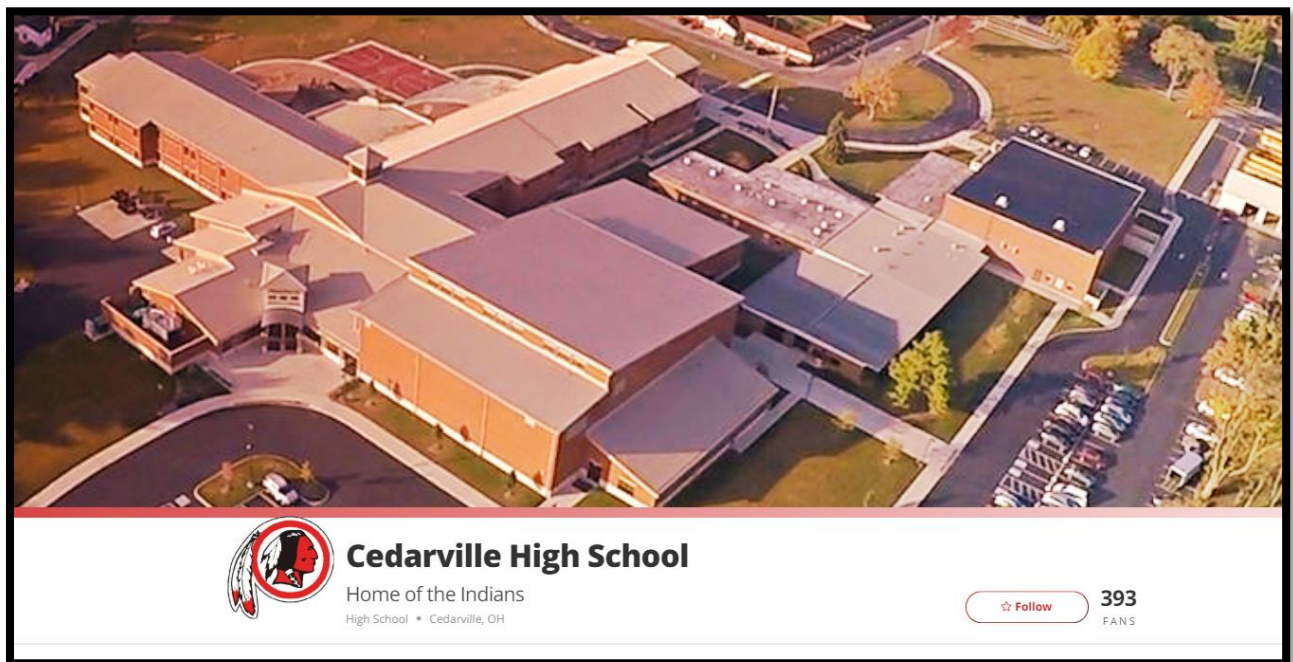
-----



## **Want to Stay Up-to-Date on Cedarville High School Athletics?**

As newspaper coverage for local high school sports teams decreases, many fans have turned to alternative ways to stay current on their high school team's seasons. **Scorestream**, a web/app based resource offers fans a way to report the scores and statistics and provide a means for those who are not in attendance to stay up-to-date on the High School happenings.

While not all sports teams are tracked, it is a way to stay current on the teams that utilize this site. If you (or someone you know) would like to see how our teams are faring, check out: <https://scorestream.com/team/cedarville-high-school-indians-12891> and follow the Indians as they progress through the seasons.



~~~~~

Looking for a Great Christmas Idea??

CedarCare Pharmacy is now, once again, stocking some wonderful Cedarville Indians Apparel for your holiday shopping needs. All proceeds benefit the Cedarville High School Athletic Department and the items have been garnering great reviews! So, remember to stop by if you are in the need for some great gifts—or you could pass along the information to Santa if your child is asking for some school spirit items under the tree! Just another bit of information to pass along, the pharmacy will be open during “*Little Town of Lights*” for sales of all merchandise—see you there!



Equipment Disposal

The district is disposing of older equipment that has not been utilized for some time. The following pictures are of a “metal brake” used to bend and shape metal. This is an older piece of equipment which has not been part of instruction for decades.

The cost is \$50.00 for both pieces and is offered on a first-come -first served basis.

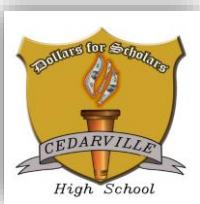
Interested parties should notify the Superintendent's office.



The next item the district is discarding is an old trailer which is no longer used. The following picture shows the trailer by condition and size. It is free of charge if anyone would like to come and retrieve.



Please Consider Donating!!



The Cedar Cliff Educational Endowment Program

Over the years, many talented and hard-working Cedarville High School graduates have furthered their education and gone on to accomplish great things. Additionally, many of those students were fortunate to receive financial assistance or scholarships to offset the cost of a college education and achieve their future goals.

Typically, financial assistance is provided either to families whose income is insufficient to supply resources for a graduate's continuing education *or* to those students achieving exemplary grades and a standardized test (ACT/SAT) score. We are often asked, "What about those students whose parents earn just enough to prohibit needs assistance or the graduate who did well in school academically, but just below the cut-off for academic awards?" In essence, what about the student who earns a 3.0 or better GPA whose middle-income family works hard struggling to provide the help for the dream of a college education?

Thus, the idea of the Cedar Cliff Educational Endowment was formed. The administration and Board of Education saw the need and expressed the desire to help *ALL* graduates earning a 3.0 or higher regardless of need and/or final academic standing. Quite frankly, the desire was to assist any student, regardless of their background or testing results, who simply meets one criteria—that of a 3.0 GPA. It is our goal to provide financial assistance with a check issued to any graduate who provides proof of college enrollment who meets the GPA requirement.

This endowment program cannot achieve its goal without your support! Endowment programs such as this exist only with donations and support from community members and donors. It is our goal to "grow" these funds so the original principal remains and the interest earned is distributed to those qualifying graduates. It is our hope by publicizing this program, donors and community members will remember the Cedar Cliff Endowment Program when searching for altruistic and charitable locations for wills, estates, and tax purposes. All donations are tax deductible as the program is recognized under the *Greene Giving Community Foundation*.

For additional questions see Mrs. Julie Lowe, Treasurer, Cedar Cliff Local School District.

Meeting Announcement

Mrs. Julie Lowe, Cedar Cliff Treasurer, will be presenting to the Board of Education a report on the use of Federal Funds at the next scheduled regular meeting.

On December 11 at 7:00 pm, during the financial presentation, Mrs. Lowe will be outlining the use of Federal Grant dollars for district programming. The district receives funding in the following grant areas:

Title I
Title II (A)
Title IV
Title IDEA

The Public is invited for this informational session.

Upcoming December Events

Monday, December 4

Quick Recall (4:00 @ SE)

Wednesday, December 6

5th Grade Field Trip Ohio Statehouse

Quick Recall (4:00 (H) vs. Greenon)

Thursday, December 7

Christmas Concert (Elem. –6:00 / MS/HS 7:15)

Sunday, December 10

Elks Hoop/Basketball (1:00)

Monday, December 11

Athletic Booster Meeting (7:00)

Regular Board Meeting (7:00)

Thursday, December 14

Quick Recall (4:00 @ NE)

Friday, December 15

Kindergarten Gingerbread Day (8:30—Cafeteria)

Saturday, December 16

Annual Pancake Breakfast-FFA (7:00-11:00)

Monday, December 18

Early Dismissal 2:00 p.m. K-12
4th Grade Boonshoft Museum Field Trip
Middle School Spelling Bee
Quick Recall (4:00 @ Madison Plains)

Tuesday, December 19

Early Dismissal 2:00 p.m. K-12
Coding Championship 4th & 5th Grade (10:15 -4th Grade / 11:30-5th grade)
Elementary Spelling Bee (8:15)

Wednesday, December 20

Early Dismissal 2:00 p.m. K-12
Elementary Christmas Parties

Thursday, December 21—Thursday, January 4

Christmas Break

Thursday, January 4

Quick Recall (4:00 (H) vs. Greeneview)
School resumes after break

***** All Administrative Central Offices Closed:
December 21, 2023--January 4, 2024***