

**Cedar Cliff Local Schools
Superintendent's Newsletter
January / February 2021**



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."

I am a fan of movies—always have been. Often, my family and friends are surprised at the quotes, lines, or stories I recall from movies I have seen in my past. One of my favorites, “*We are Marshall*” is the story of the Marshall University’s football program attempts to come back after a devastating plane crash tragically took the life of virtually every player and coach from the 1970 football team.

I am certain Hollywood took some liberties to add to the plot and story line, but in one particular scene of that movie, the new coach is speaking to one of the assistants who just happened to not be on the plane the night it crashed. The assistant coach was bemoaning the team’s lack of success, how it was a blight on the memory of the victims and did not honor what they stood for or their legacy as a team. I still vividly remember that new coach’s reply, “Not now, no, winning is not the only thing, but sometime, someday, we will be like every other team, when winning is the most important thing to us. That is when we will honor them, but right now, we just have to play, we have to show up, we have to keep moving—so that one day, we will get to be like every other team.”

I feel that way about everything we do this year. Many individuals have said how “unfair” this has been or how “they just hate what COVID has done.” You will get no argument from me. I too, am COVID weary, but one day, some time, we will have a year like every other year—like every other concert, like every other game, like every other graduation—the point is, and the right message is, we will have these “different looking” events, but we will show up—we will play—we will keep moving, so that one day, we can have events like every other year.

I do not bemoan what we have lost due to COVID. Quite honestly, I just don’t have the time. However, I do spend time celebrating what we here at Cedar Cliff have managed to accomplish in the first semester of this year—just consider:

- Nearly 80 days of full and all-day instruction
- A Fall sports season with 100% of the contests taking place
- A Winter sports season, that has seen its fair share of quarantines and active cases, still moving forward and surviving.

- A Christmas Concert put on by the music department when many activities like that were cancelled in other districts.
- Try-outs for a drama production, that while not a musical this year, will still showcase the dramatic talents of the students in our school building.

The preceding list is not all-inclusive. We have much to be grateful for this year and we will proceed—we will keep showing up—we will teach our students the lessons of endurance and fortitude. Another one of my favorite movie quotes, below, reinforces that same message, overcoming life's hardship is the essence of enjoying life's greatest moments. We need to teach our children, we cannot truly enjoy the good, if we have not learned to endure the bad.

This is not my typical “New Year well-wishes message,” but this year, I find this more important. I truly wish you all a happy, safe, and positive New Year. Join me in celebrating the first semester and garnering the strength and grit to do it again for the second—so one day, we can have a year like every other.

Best Regards,



Chad Mason, Superintendent



“Slow Return” Slated for January 4-8

As we have communicated last week, the Cedar Cliff Local School District will be moving to an amended schedule the first week back from the Christmas Break. We believe some families will be traveling, socializing, and gathering over the holiday break, and we want to provide a “built-in” quarantine period before all students return.

On Friday, December 11, we had our highest COVID *quarantine* numbers yet (75), we hit our highest COVID case number yet (5), and this was before individuals began with their holiday plans. As a result, after conversing with our local health department, getting feedback from other area Superintendents, getting input from the Board of Education and my administrative team, we decided to move forward with a different instructional model to begin 2021.

The district will, for the week of January 4-8, deliver instruction in the following manner:

- We will be on red/hybrid in the Elementary School for the week of January 4-8 (half-day instructional schedule). Families should already be aware of their status (AM or PM) based on our past practicing/usage of this model. Should you require information, please contact the Elementary office.
- The MS and HS (grades 6-12) will be utilizing virtual/remote instruction for that week.
- The district will be open for 6-12 students who have special needs, services, or special programming (i.e. Speech/OT/PT/etc.). Mary Ann Fenwick, Student Services Coordinator, or one of the principals will be in contact with you to schedule times for services during this week.
- The district will also be open for students in grades 6-12 who do not have adequate Wifi/Internet at their homes to complete virtual work. We will have a room/area for them to work and complete assignments so they do not fall behind during our remote learning week. These students will be assigned an AM or PM time slot, the same as the Elementary School plan, to complete virtual work. Prior to break, the MS/HS principal, Mr. Haemmerle, took note of all students who needed assistance due to connectivity issues, should there be additional families added to this list, please contact the MS/HS office as soon as possible so a time slot can be scheduled for your child.
- Additionally, the district will provide meals for *any* students who wish to come and pick up food items for the week. I have spoken with Mrs. Satchell in the cafeteria and there will be an evening pick-up for this service. The times will be Monday, January 4, from 3:00 pm-4:00 pm and again on that same Monday evening from 6:00 pm to 7:00 pm.
 - For food items to be available, anyone who desires breakfast and lunch items for the virtual week should email our cafeteria personnel so an order can be ready for pick-up. Please email Gay Christian gchristian@ccliff.net or

(Slow Return -- cont.)

- Terry Satchell tsatchell@ccliff.net by *Wednesday, December 30th*, if you will be arriving for breakfast/lunches for the week of virtual learning.
- *The food-service pick-up area is behind the HS, near the rear entrance to the cafeteria, at Door #8 (this is the same location as the Spring pick up for cafeteria items).*
- We will be sending home electronic devices for student usage during our virtual week. Please assist us in monitoring the usage and care so all equipment can be returned in working order. We will need these devices after students return for our normal full-day instruction.
- I have been informed the Cedarville library has “hotspot” capabilities available for checkout (but you must have a library card for this service). I have also been informed this is a short-term item that has some stipulations with the use of the equipment. Additionally, I believe there are spaces, socially-distanced, that are for usage in the facility whereby students may be able to complete assignments. We encourage you to contact the library personally for any information you desire. We are merely passing along to better assist our families and their possible needs.

As always, I remind everyone, these decisions are difficult and fluid—much of our information changes daily and, even hourly, but we have tried to do what we deem is both the best educationally, as well as safe for our students and staff.

Be on the alert for more information from your child’s administrative office staff. If you have *ANY* questions, do not hesitate to call the building principals as they will be working diligently to ensure we have the best week possible.



In Spite of Pandemic, Cedar Cliff Students still Earning Accolades!

Even though the COVID pandemic has been an obstacle to many things school districts traditionally complete during a school year, several Cedar Cliff Local School District students have managed to earn honors and special recognition.

Cedarville High School FFA students Liam Harris, Gracie Scott, Lilly Frizell, and Anessa Butts all competed in the district Career Development Event Competition. This is a very tough competition involving application, interviewing, and resume building skills.

Freshman Liam Harris finished 6th, Freshman Gracie Scott and Senior Lilly Frizell both finished 3rd in their respective competitions, while Senior Anessa Butts finished first. Anessa then went on to compete at the State Level, and earned a top ten finish!

Additionally, Sophia Lopez, a seventh grade student, won the Cedarville Middle School Spelling Bee and Joscelyn Evans, another seventh grade student, finished second. It was a tough competition between two very good students and exceptional spellers. While the word “vigorous” was eventually the championship spelling, other words included “proscenium,” “chauffeurs,” “epaulet,” and “traitorous.”

The district was pleased the Middle School could put together a COVID-safe event and the students could still have a traditional competition.



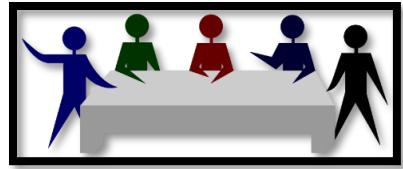
In other Cedar Cliff news:

The Cedarville Music Department, under the direction of Mr. Jason Mahan and Mr. Caleb Vanden Endyn, put together a wonderful “COVID-Friendly” Christmas Music concert utilizing a combination of virtual and live performances. Obviously, the district had to limit spectators and socially distance spectator seating and performing, but the students were able to provide a Christmas concert and add to the Holiday Season. Parents and community members are able to see the virtual performance by visiting the school district website and viewing the musical showcase link.



Elementary students in grades K-5 each decorated a tree for the Christmas season. It was a great way for students to get a sense of “normalcy” and a way for the students to have an enjoyable moment at the holiday season. The normal, *“Christmas Around the World”* event had to be put on hold due to the COVID pandemic, so instead, students worked together in grades to decorate one of six trees that are on display in the cafeteria balcony. Each tree was designed and decorated by the students and their teachers. The pictures showcase each grade level’s tree and work they put into a special project for the Christmas season.





January: School Board Recognition Month!

The position of public school board member can often be a thankless job. The month of January is designated as a 'School Board Member Appreciation Month,' and offers us the occasion to thank each of the board members for their dedication and time commitment to Cedar Cliff Local Schools.

Our board members help us by developing governing policies for the district, future planning and goal oversight, as well as serving as the liaison for the community. If you see them, please take a moment and thank the following Cedar Cliff Board Members for their dedication and support for the district.

Charlene Campbell, Member
Gail Martindale, President
Matt Sheridan, Vice-President
Maria Waymire, Member
Chris Cross, Member

Save on Trash and support a good cause!

Everyone is taking Christmas lights down this time of year, and if you are like me, many of those lights need replaced rather than stored away for Christmas, 2021.

In the past there were businesses that offered to recycle those lights rather than put those chemicals in landfills. As those locations and organizations have appeared to be out of the Christmas light recycling endeavor, it was good to hear of a program whereby folks can recycle strands of lights and support a good cause at the same time.

Follow this link if you are interested in researching more about this worthwhile endeavor: https://www.christmas-light-source.com/Christmas-Lights-Recycling-Program_c_210.html and "Happy Recycling!"



Mandatory Active Shooter/Intruder Drill Information



In January Cedar Cliff Schools will conduct the required active intruder drill with students and staff. This drill is now required by Ohio Revised Code and is meant to better equip and prepare faculty, staff, and students in the event of a horrific incident, that of an active shooter on our campus.

Three drills are mandated as part of this legislation: *a traditional lock-down* drill where there is a threat to student safety ‘outside’ the actual building, an *evacuation* drill where there is a need to quickly exit the building (i.e. gas leak/bomb threat/etc.), or *an active shooter/intruder* drill where someone enters the building attempting to do harm to one or more persons in the building.

In October, Cedar Cliff completed the traditional lock-down drill and January marks the second of the trio of drills. During this time, nationally recognized ALICE techniques will be reviewed and discussed for preparing students and faculty for an active shooter incident.

More detailed information will be posted on the Cedar Cliff website. Included in this information is an Open Letter to the Community with an outline of the day’s events, a video explaining ALICE techniques, and a video for K-2 students utilizing stranger-danger techniques. While no efforts are perfect and can prevent a catastrophe such as this, it is the hope of the Cedar Cliff administration that these efforts, in coordination with law enforcement, will assist in saving lives in the event of an actual emergency.

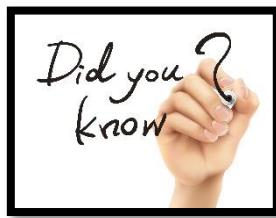
~~~~~

### **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/>

=====

## Interesting information



This article was passed along to me. The topic is college funding and I thought it might generate some “food for thought” for those families with students who will be attending college soon.

=====

### **They’re trying to make your bill look like \$0.**

You probably spent a lot of time trying to impress your dream school, but now that you’re accepted, they’re trying to impress *you*. So just like you exaggerated your bold leadership of the intramural fencing club, schools may, um, try to cast a more flattering light on their mediocre aid package.

“Some colleges do creative things to make your final cost look as close to ‘zero’ as possible,” says Patricia Thompson, assistant vice chancellor for student financial aid at the State University of New York. Prime example: They might subtract your loans to make it look like you won’t owe anything—when in reality, you will (see: the definition of “loan”). “You need to make sure they’re clearly identifying loans that must be repaid, including loans that could have high interest rates or require a cosigner, as part of their math,” Thompson says.

### **SOLUTION**

Make your own spreadsheet to compare each school’s package, apples to apples. Which schools will leave you with loans? What type of loans, and what’s the interest? Which are dangling scholarships you won’t need to pay back? What’s the total cost of each option once you add room and board, your meal plan, and travel—and how much of this total do your grants and loans cover?

### **They might yank your aid if you win outside scholarships.**

“Outside scholarships may or may not change your financial aid offer,” says Chanell Thomas, associate director of the Office of Student Financial Aid and Scholarships at Vanderbilt University. In some cases, applying for that \$1,000 scholarship from your mom’s company might just end up getting you \$1,000 *fewer* dollars from your school. So congrats, you just saved your school—not yourself—\$1,000. How’s that for some BS? (And no, you can’t hide these scholarships, since most get sent directly to your school.) Ask your financial aid office if they

practice “aid displacement,” and if they say yes, see if your outside donor can hold their cash for another semester (in case your aid is reduced) or apply it to summer courses. You could also opt to push back by visiting the financial aid office and saying, “I found this outside scholarship to help defray other costs beyond the aid you’ve given me,” suggests Rachel Fishman, deputy director for education policy at New America and a coauthor of “Decoding the Cost of College.” Oftentimes, aid displacement can be negotiated. “It’s best to check with each school regarding their policy,” says Thomas.

**You could also lose your money for random bureaucratic reasons.**

“We had a situation where one student lost her scholarship because she moved off campus and the aid only applied to the dorms,” Thompson says. “We see students lose scholarship money all the time because they didn’t realize there were certain requirements.”

Call and confirm: Do you need to maintain a certain GPA? Study a certain subject? Take a given number of credits each semester? Live on campus? Changing your major or moving out of the dorms could cost you thousands, no exaggeration. Don’t lose money because of a technicality.

**One way to game their system is to team up with your sibs.**

“Schools are usually sensitive to how many family members are in college at the same time,” reveals E. Whitney Soule, dean of admissions and student aid at Bowdoin College.

So if you and your sib are close in age, why not take a gap year and work to save money until they graduate high school, then apply to colleges at the same time? With two kids in school, your family could be on the hook for far less \$\$ per student.

*KIERA CARTER: Kiera Carter has a decade's worth of experience covering fitness, health, and lifestyle topics for national magazines and websites.*

---



## January/February Events

- Please refer to the website for calendar events. Due to the pandemic, there have been constant changes. The district would rather ask that you navigate to the school district website than disseminate event lists that may be outdated within a short period of time.

*We appreciate your understanding.*