

# The Comstock Communicator

COMSTOCK HIGH SCHOOL | COMPASS HIGH SCHOOL & ADULT EDUCATION | COMSTOCK MIDDLE SCHOOL | COMSTOCK ELEMENTARY | STEM ACADEMY | CELA



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## MORE NEWS

Turn over to read  
*Center Point*  
A newsletter about the  
Comstock  
Community Center



# From the Superintendent

Dear Comstock Community,

School security and student safety have always been top priorities for our school district and community. As educators, we place a high value on the lives of the children entrusted to us each day.

Educational research is clear - the optimal learning environment for students begins with them feeling protected and safe from harm or danger. This calm and reassuring educational atmosphere fosters higher levels of student engagement and connection to the learning process.

Accordingly, increased engagement maximizes the brain's ability to store greater amounts of information into long-term memory. Over the years, the district has taken important steps to produce positive and safe school cultures. Now, a recent state law is helping to advance our efforts to new levels.

## PA 436

Michigan's Public Act (PA) 436 of 2018 mandates that each school district develop or review an Emergency Operations Plan (EOP), and that by no later than January 1, 2020, local Boards of Education review and adopt the EOP. The purpose of the EOP is to provide best practice guidelines and options for use by the district's administration, faculty, staff, and emergency responders when preparing to deal with or responding to an emergency or crisis that affects the school community.

So, I am pleased to announce that after more than a year of drafting and revision, the district has completely updated and upgraded our emergency preparations. The EOP our Board reviewed and adopted in December, 2019, met or exceeded the extensive requirements of PA 436.

Key parts of the district's plan include the following:

- Incident Command Structure - The district now has an organized incident command structure that provides a clear chain of command combined with clarity of key duties.
- Training Plan - The district understands the

importance of training, drills, and exercises in planning and maintaining readiness for an incident. The EOP now outlines how employees learn about emergency response and what their responsibilities are during a variety of crises. Training of administrators and school personnel in these revised protocols has already begun.

- Emergency Assessment - PA 436 requires that districts conduct ongoing evaluations of their emergency preparedness. Accordingly, each of our buildings will be forming Building Emergency Response Teams (BERTs) to coordinate and improve emergency responses at the building, hallway, and classroom levels.

- Building Evacuation - Comstock's EOP contains evacuation protocols for relocating students from one building to another. District personnel will rehearse a small-scale mock evacuation this spring to enhance our ability to coordinate an actual evacuation should that ever be necessary.

- Secure and Lockdown Modes - Comstock's EOP also clarifies and simplifies the procedures and circumstances for securing and locking down a building.

- Hazards, Crises, and Emergencies - The plan contains guidelines for responding to almost two dozen distinct types of hazards and crises, including emergencies at a variety of athletic venues. This level of specificity helps to clarify the distinct responses necessary to a variety of dangers that may occur in a school.

- Five-Day Postvention Plan - Exceeding the requirements of PA 436, Comstock's EOP contains an addendum that details how members of the Building Emergency Response Teams (BERTs) help support students and staff after a crisis so that a sense of normalcy may return to both individuals and the school as soon as possible.

- Review by Local Agencies - Finally, PA 436 requires at least one law enforcement agency with

*Continued on page 3*



COMSTOCK PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
A SCHOOL DISTRICT DEDICATED TO KIDS  
[www.comstockps.org](http://www.comstockps.org)

Dr. Jeff Thoenes  
*Superintendent*

## BOARD OF EDUCATION

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## MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Comstock Public Schools is to serve our community by supporting, inspiring, and challenging every person within the school district to reach his/her full potential through education.

## VISION STATEMENT

The vision of Comstock Public Schools is to be an educational community where every person is empowered to reach his/her full potential.

## QUESTIONS?

If you have questions concerning your schools, the answer is only a telephone call away:  
269-250-8907

## STORIES OR INFORMATION

The Comstock Communicator is published by Comstock Public Schools. Information may be sent to Dr. Jeff Thoenes at [thoenesj@comstockps.org](mailto:thoenesj@comstockps.org) or by fax at 250-8908. It may also be e-mailed to Phyllis Rose at [phyllisarose@aol.com](mailto:phyllisarose@aol.com).



@comstockPS

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jurisdiction over the district to review the plan. We are grateful and appreciative that Comstock's plan was collaboratively reviewed by four agencies:

Township of Kalamazoo Police Department  
Kalamazoo County Sheriff's Department  
Township of Kalamazoo Fire Department  
Comstock Fire Department

If you have any questions about the district's emergency response planning, feel free to reach out to me either via email, phone call, or personal visit. I can be reached at [thoenesj@comstockps.org](mailto:thoenesj@comstockps.org) or 269-250-8906.

If you happen to see me at a school event or in the community, please take the time to say "hi" and allow me to introduce myself. I look forward to our conversation!

Dr. Jeffrey J. Thoenes  
Superintendent  
"It's a great day to be a Colt!"

## Community Auditorium Events Open to the Public

### February:

- 8 Comstock Athletics Father/ Daughter Dance, 5:30 p.m.; Tickets: 250-8712
- 9 Dinosaur Encounter, 4 p.m.; Tickets at the door.
- 12 Compass High School graduation, 6 p.m.
- 15 Traci Phelps Dance Studios Competition Showcase, 2-3:30 p.m. Call Studio for details.
- 21-
- 23 Chicago, Center Stage Theater; February 21, 7:30 p.m. Matinee on February 22 and 23 at 2 p.m. Tickets: at the door or call: 269-348-SHOW.
- 22 Kalamazoo Singers Concert: 7 p.m. Tickets are sold at the door or call 269-373-1769 or online: [www.kalamazoosingers.org/purchase-tickets/](http://www.kalamazoosingers.org/purchase-tickets/)

- 25 Comstock Elementary K-2 Music Program, 7 p.m., Free.
- 26 Comstock Elementary 3-5 Music Program, 7 p.m., Free.

### March:

- 5-7 Kalamazoo Christian High School Musical: *Cinderella*, March 5-7: 7 p.m.; Matinee at 2 p.m. on March 7; Tickets: Call Kalamazoo Christian High School: 269-381-2250.
- 20-
- 21 Heritage Christian Academy Musical: *Beauty and the Beast* 8-9: 7 p.m.; Also a matinee at 2:30 p.m. on the 21st. Tickets: 372-1400.
- 24 STEM Academy Music Program, 7 p.m., Free.
- 25 Blood Drive-Colt Center-7 a.m.-2:30 p.m.

## Board Briefs

### REGULAR MEETING

#### October 14, 2019

- Cindy Bloom, middle school geography teacher, gave a slide presentation on her recent trip to the British Isles as part of her work as a Grosvenor Teacher Fellow of the National Geographic Society.
- Approved Steve Johnson as an eighth grade science teacher at CMS.
- Approved retirement of David Kramer, CHS industrial arts teacher.
- Superintendent Thoenes updated the board on construction renovations, superintendent's evaluation process, and the rescheduling of outdoor events due to the outbreak of eastern equine encephalitis.
- Jill Ansel, assistant superintendent, presented the data from the fall test assessments.
- Authorized Steve Edison, director of finance, to perform various financial functions.
- Approved the bid from Bailey Excavating in the amount of \$113,000 to pave the parking lot and access road at the STEM Academy.

### REGULAR MEETING

#### October 29, 2019

- Nicole Kalmbach, literacy consultant at Kalamazoo RESA, presented an update on the progress of the Early Grade Reading project.
- Approved resignation of Heather Crabtree, second grade teacher.
- Approved retirement request of Stacy Costello,

third grade teacher.

- Approved adopting the Comstock Public Schools Board Operating Guidelines.
- Set the dates for the superintendent's periodic evaluations for 2019-2020.
- Accepted bids for remodeling the public bathrooms at the Community Auditorium with a decision to be made at the November 11 meeting.
- Asked the superintendent to discuss with the facilities director, Sean Gillette, about purchasing his leased vehicle for district use.
- Moved into closed session for the superintendent's evaluation.

### SPECIAL MEETING

#### November 5, 2019

- Moved into closed session for discussing negotiations with the CEA and Attorney-Client Privileged Communication.
- Approved filing Unfair Labor Practice (ULP) charges against the Comstock Education Association (CEA) pertaining to the Comstock Early Learning Academy (CELA) program.

### REGULAR MEETING

#### November 11, 2019

- Sara Fetke-Sweers, assurance senior manager with BDO and John LaFramboise, director, presented the 2018-1029 audit report.
- Mark Wilke, Middle School Principal, made a

presentation on the positive changes at the middle school.

- Jill Ansel, assistant superintendent, reported on action steps for student achievement.
- Approved the bid of \$32,445 from Hazelhoff to replace the countertops, sink basins, faucets and to install tile backsplash in the Comstock Auditorium bathrooms.
- Voted to support the goal of the Reading Now Network, an alliance of school and community organizations in west Michigan dedicated to raising literacy rates.
- Approved the Comstock Public Schools Emergency Response Guide.
- Moved into closed session to discuss negotiations with the Comstock Education Association, Administrative Assistants and Paraprofessionals.

### REGULAR MEETING

#### November 25, 2019

- Superintendent Thoenes provided a construction renovation and timeline update.
- Steve Edison, director of finance, shared a new budget reporting spreadsheet.
- Moved into closed session to discuss negotiations with administrative assistants and paraprofessionals.
- Ratified 2019-2020 agreement with Comstock Paraprofessional Association.
- Ratified 2019-2020 agreement with Comstock Educational Professional Administrative Assistants Association.

Comstock High School

# High School Hosts KVCC Dual Enrollment Courses

Comstock High School is once again hosting three Kalamazoo Valley Community College (KVCC) courses taught by KVCC instructors. The courses - Interpersonal Communication, World Geography Maps & Media, and Arts & Culture - each meet twice a week at the high school as part of the Comstock/KVCC dual enrollment program.

During the fall semester, 41 students earned college credit through either Dual Enrollment, Early Middle College, Education for Employment (EFE), or Education for the Arts (EFA). Those 41 students earned 264 KVCC credits, valued at \$35,750, but there was no charge to them or their families.

These experiences make Comstock students better prepared for college and help them save thousands of dollars before entering college.

Any students interested in taking dual enrollment courses at the high school should reach out to Post Secondary Dean, Mr. Cotter, for further details.

# CHS Band Students Play in Hillsdale Wind Symphony

Several Comstock High School band students have had the opportunity to play with the Hillsdale Wind Symphony hosted by Hillsdale College.

Participating students include Roman Kersey, Andru Harper, Jeme Richards, RJ Baker, and Zoe Vandrey. Band director Jason Fritz drives the students to Hillsdale for weekly rehearsals.

Mr. Fritz and his wife, Dani, have been playing with the ensemble for many years. The purchase of the new school van has provided the opportunity some high achieving band students to join them.

In December, they performed in the new chapel on Hillsdale's campus, a new facility that cost almost \$30 million to construct.



Above: Performing with the Hillsdale Wind Symphony were (front row) Jeme Richards, senior; Zoe Vandrey, senior; and Dani Ryskamp-Fritz; and (second row) RJ Baker, sophomore; Roman Kersey, junior, and CHS band director, Jason Fritz.

Left: Freshman Andru Harper rehearses with the Hillsdale Wind Symphony.

## Comstock Public Schools 2019-2020 School Calendar

February 22	<b>MID-WINTER BREAK</b>		No Students /Teachers
March 5	CHS Conferences	3:00-7:00 p.m.	
March 17	Comstock Elementary & STEM Conferences	4:00-8:00 p.m. (CES) 3:00-7:00 p.m. (STEM)	
March 19	Comstock Elementary & STEM Conferences	4:00-8:00 p.m. (CES) 3:00-7:00 p.m. (STEM)	
March 20	Half Day Students AM/Teacher PD P.M.		Half Day Students A.M./ Teacher PD P.M.
April 3-10	<b>SPRING BREAK</b>		No Students/Teachers
May 7	Comstock High School Conferences	3:00-7:00 p.m.	
May 14	Comstock Middle School Conferences	3:00-7:00 p.m.	
May 25	<b>MEMORIAL DAY</b>		No Students / No Staff
June 8-10	Half Day Students K-12 (High School Exams)		Half Day Students & Teachers K-12
June 10	<b>LAST DAY FOR STUDENTS</b> Records Day P.M.		Half Day Students A.M./ Staff Records Day P.M.

## Compass High School

## Compass Carries on Holiday Breakfast Tradition

The Friday before Winter Break is always a special day at Compass because every year the staff plans a big breakfast for students first thing in the morning.

Staff prepared and served eggs, pancakes, bacon, sausage, fruit, juice, and coffee as usual this year.

Staff and students were joined by Comstock Superintendent, Dr. Jeff Thoenes, while Compass Dean of Students, Roderick Carson handled emcee duties.

Top right: Chris Coash, Dawn Krasts and Shannon Wonnacott serve breakfast to Jhonta Glass. Kristin Townsend (in the background) cooks more eggs.



## Compass High School Opens First Library



Compass students and staff get their first look at the new books.

After months of planning, preparation and hard work, the Compass High School staff recently opened the school's first library with a grand opening ceremony to commemorate the event.

The room was recently re-carpeted with bond monies and cleaned up by staff and student volunteers. All of the shelving and library furniture, and a large portion of the books were donated by the Comstock Township Library.

Staff members Michele Coash, Dawn Krasts, and Chris Coash, as well as Compass student, Vincent Falls, worked very hard to open a work-in-progress library.

After a brief dedication and ribbon cutting led by adult education instructor, Michelle Coash, the doors swung open and students and staff poured in to look at the collection and check out books.

The collection is organized by genre and each student could check-out two books to explore over the holiday break. On Monday, January 6, a quarter of those students returned books, and checked out new ones during Compass Drop Everything And Read (DEAR) time.

Compass plans to hold events, host speakers, and conduct a Book Club in the library as well.

There is plenty of room for additional books so if you have any you would like to donate, contact Compass English teacher, Chris Coash, at [coashc@comstockps.org](mailto:coashc@comstockps.org) or Compass Adult Education Instructor, Michelle Coash, at [coashm@comstockps.org](mailto:coashm@comstockps.org).

## Compass GED Classes Begin Soon

Looking to get your GED or complete your high school diploma requirements? Comstock Adult Education will help!

Winter semester morning and afternoon classes are underway. Register Monday-Friday from 8-10 a.m. or from Noon-2 p.m. at Comstock Compass High School, 3010 Gull Road.

Please call 269-250-8930 for more information.



## Compass Students Introduced to KVCC

The entire Compass student body visited KVCC recently. They took a walking tour of both the Main and Groves campuses to orient themselves to all that KVCC has to offer.

At lunch, law enforcement instructors spoke to students and Mr. Mike Knapick spoke about his experiences from life in Chicago to being a successful business owner.

The day was full of information and students came away with a much deeper appreciation and understanding of future opportunities.

This experience was paid for by a state grant.

## Compass Students Visit KVCC

Seventeen students from Compass High School visited KVCC's Groves Center and participated in either the Phlebotomy or Electrical Safety classes. The tour of these introductory-level courses was intended to expose students to possible opportunities within these career fields.

The trip was funded through a state grant and students came away with a much deeper understanding of and appreciation for these professions as well as their own future job paths.

Comstock Elementary

# Comstock Elementary Students Learn About Computer Science

During Computer Science Education week, Comstock Elementary School celebrated by participating in the event called Hour of Code, which code.org says is “a global movement introducing tens of millions of students worldwide to computer science, inspiring kids to learn more, breaking stereotypes, and leaving them feeling empowered.”

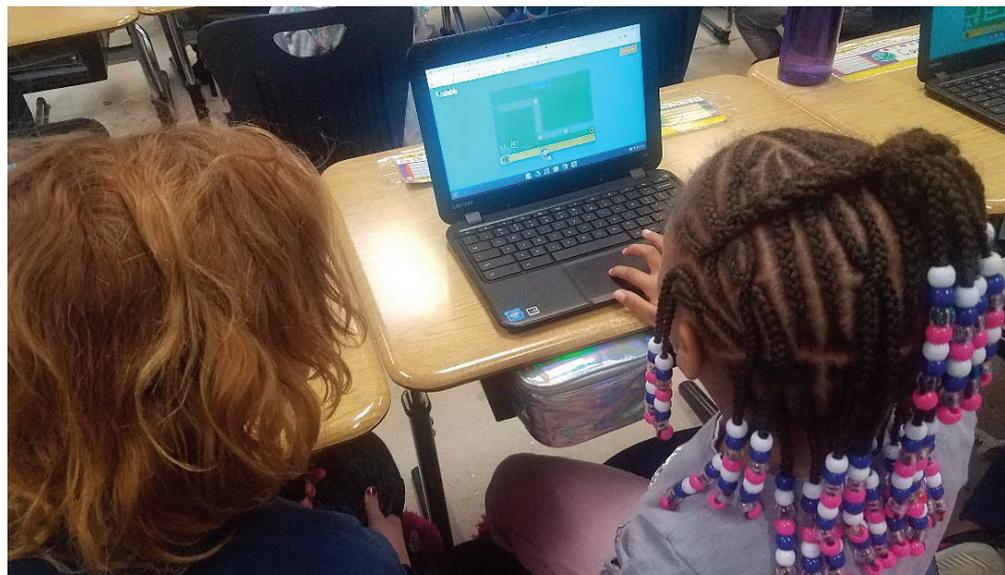
Each class practiced being real computer scientists during their weekly Technology Class. Young Fives practiced writing algorithms. This is a list of steps to do in order while playing a game called “Algorithm Hopscotch.” Students took turns playing the role of a computer scientist and a robot following directions.

Other fun activities included creating mazes for classmates to solve and building a game built around the Star Wars Universe.

Second grade student, Puneet Kaur, said, “I like coding because when we learn it is more fun learning on the computers than on paper.”



Young Five Students from Mrs. Lori Johnson’s class show their hopscotch algorithm.



Two second graders complete a computer maze.



## Mother/Son Bowling

Boys of any age with their Mothers!  
A grand night of Bowling, Pizza and Fun!

**Saturday, February 8, 2020**

**12 to 2 p.m.**

**Check-in begins at 11:15 a.m.**

Eastland Bowl

\$23/couple and \$7/extra son

Includes 2 hours of bowling, shoe rental, pizza and cookies.

More information – Call Ramon DeLeon at 277-4693

Registration/Money due by Wednesday, February 5.

We have to CAP at 148 people.

## Mother/Son Bowling Registration Form

Return by mail to:

Comstock High School

Attn: Ramon DeLeon

2107 N. 26th St.

Kalamazoo, MI 49048

Mother’s name \_\_\_\_\_

Son’s/Sons’ name(s) & grade(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ School \_\_\_\_\_

Bumpers needed: Yes or No (circle one)

If you wish to bowl with another family, check in together day of event.

**Please make checks payable to: Comstock Athletics**  
**Pre-registered names will be at the registration table.**  
**No tickets will be sent!**

\*\*\*In the case of inclement weather, cancellations will be on TV.

## Comstock Elementary

## Comstock Elementary Carries on Tradition

Comstock Elementary School continued a school tradition carried over from Green Meadow Elementary, a school-wide Thanksgiving treat consisting of pumpkin pie with whipped cream.

Over 600 students and staff from Young Fives to fifth graders enjoyed meeting together in the gym and sitting on the floor at the long “tables” made from paper.

Principal Susan Caswell shared what she was thankful for this year. Superintendent Dr. Jeff Thoenes joined students and staff as well for the special treat.

Students enjoyed the event. “I like it because pumpkin pie is good,” said fifth grader, Colleen Wilson. “This year we sang happy birthday to Mrs. Boyce. It’s cool that we sit as a whole school.”

Fifth grader Kaleb Brown added, “It was fun because we could eat on the floor and see every class. It was a good day.”

It was a wonderful time to be together as a new school family.



Jhontae Jamison and other students wait to dig into their pumpkin pie and whipped cream.

## Students Express Thanks with Feathers

For Thanksgiving at Comstock Elementary School, every student created a feather to add to a turkey in the library. On each feather was written something that the students were thankful for. The turkey had over 600 feathers. It was a huge display and full of a variety of things, people, and places students were thankful for.



This closeup shows some of the things the students were thankful for.



Over 600 feathers created the turkey display.

## Kalamazoo Symphony Brass Quintet Visits CES

The Kalamazoo Symphony’s Brass Quintet came to CES to share their love of brass instruments and music. The musicians played music from “The Nutcracker” in the cafetorium - twice.

First, they played for third and fourth graders and then for the Young-5s through second graders.

Students learned about the different brass instruments and enjoyed the different musical selections. CES is very thankful to the Kalamazoo Symphony members and Morgan Fleming, music teacher, for making the morning concerts possible.



The Kalamazoo Symphony’s Brass Quintet plays for the young-5 through second graders.

Comstock Elementary

## Knitting Club Gives to CES Students

Comstock High School's Knitting Club, led by high school teacher, Ms. Chelsea Brooks, presented homemade scarves to students in Ms. Kaitlynn Baylerian's fourth grade class at Comstock Elementary School.

The Knitting Club visited CES where Ms. Brooks and Ms. Baylerian collaborated on a lesson. The high school students and fourth graders watched a video about a young boy who creates by crocheting. They also completed a yarn-inspired craft lesson and enjoyed the gifts of the scarves.

If you would like to help support the CHS Knitting Club, please contact Ms Brooks at [brooksc@comstockps.org](mailto:brooksc@comstockps.org). Donations of yarn can also be dropped off at the high school.



Sophomore, Ahmir Walker, demonstrates how to make a yarn pom-pom for some students.



The Knitting Club with Ms. Baylerian's fourth graders and the scarves.

## CES Students Enjoy Breakfast with Santa

Over 200 student families enjoyed Breakfast with Santa before the holiday break.

Families enjoyed a pancake and sausage breakfast. Students also went from station to station to do crafts, decorate cookies, and listen to the story, "The Polar Express."

Students also had their photos taken with Santa.

A special thanks goes out to Julianna's Restaurant, WalMart, Chartwell's, Maureen Thomas, and to Santa Claus who made a special trip just to be with CES students.



Morgan Fleming, music teacher, cooks pancakes.

## Hazardous Weather Communications



With hazardous weather conditions just around the corner, Comstock Public Schools is encouraging all parents to talk with their children about the possibility of school closing due to bad weather. In the event that school must be closed early on any given day, please have a plan developed with your children so they arrive home safely.

Every effort is made to make a decision to close school by 5 a.m. and to notify the news media immediately. However, the district has no control over how quickly the information is disseminated by the media.

Below is a list of the multiple ways you can be notified of early closings, or school closings:

You may sign-up to follow Tweets at <https://twitter.com/ComstockPS> regarding school closings or go to our website at [www.comstockps.org](http://www.comstockps.org).

Make sure your Infinite Campus portal is current with correct contact information in order to receive ShoutPoint notification.

For the latest school closings, turn your radio or television to the following stations:

### CALL LETTERS

98.5 FM, 96.5 FM (WNWN, WFAT)  
100.9 FM (WQXC)  
903 AM, 1400 AM (WBCK, WRCC)  
106.5 FM, 590 AM, 1470 AM (WQLR, WKZO, WQSN)  
107.7 FM, 103.3 FM (WRKR, WKFR)  
TV 3 WWMT-TV  
TV 8 WOOD-TV  
TV 4 WOTV

Comstock Elementary

# Students Celebrate 50th Day of School

On the 50th day of school last fall, Comstock Elementary students and staff celebrated by going back to the 50s in style. Some classes celebrated by listening to music from the 50s and having root beer floats.



Miss Cathy Buscher, kindergarten teacher, and Jadeleigh Taylor are ready to celebrate 50 days of school.



Chloe Menken dressed in 50s style to celebrate 50 days of school.



Miss Ashley Hufnagel, technology teacher; Mrs. Julia Knieling, art teacher; and Miss VanDagan dressed up, too.

# Father/Daughter Winter Dance

Girls of any age with their Fathers!  
A grand night of Dancing, Games and Food!

## Saturday, February 8, 2020

at Comstock High School

Dancing and games from 6-8:30 p.m.  
Pizza and refreshments served from 6-7 p.m.

\$25/couple and \$5/extra daughter

Professional photographs available at an extra charge beginning at 5:30 p.m.

*More information – Call Natalie Miles at 808-3463*

Advance registration highly recommended to help us get an accurate count for food.

### Father / Daughter Dance Registration Form

Return by mail to:  
Comstock High School  
Attn: Natalie Miles  
2107 N. 26th St.  
Kalamazoo, MI 49048

Father \_\_\_\_\_

Daughter \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Daughter's Current Grade \_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_

Please make checks payable to: Comstock Athletics  
Pre-registered names will be at the registration table.  
No tickets will be sent!

\*\*\*In the case of inclement weather, cancellations will be on TV

Comstock Early Learning Academy

# CELA Earning Praise from Parents

Comstock's Early Learning Academy (CELA) has only been open since last fall but it's already earning praise from parents.

Stephanie Brown, who was looking for a preschool for her son, enrolled him in CELA where she says he is thriving and loves to attend school.

"He is learning so much more than we expected and is always surprising us with his newfound knowledge," she said.

The staff and teachers seem to love what they are doing and the quality of instruction is beyond what was expected, she said, noting that his teacher also loves the kids.

"The fact that our son asks if he gets to go to school on the weekends is a testament to her quality of teaching as well as her passion for her job," she said.

When Angel Sabin was looking for a more structured learning environment for her son as he transitioned from daycare, she attended the CELA open house which gave her the confidence that CELA would be the right choice.

Within a couple of weeks, Ms. Sabin was overwhelmed with gratitude for the staff and teachers at CELA as she saw her son was once again excited about school.

"Due to the high standards, remarkable teaching curriculum, and one-on-one evaluations of each child, I have watched my child grow by leaps and

bounds this year," she said. "This program has surpassed all of our expectations for a Pre-K STEM program."

Her son's fantastic relationship with his teacher has cultivated his love for learning and given him confidence, she said.

"He now brings his lessons home to share and is excited," she said. "What better feeling than to know that our child is getting his educational needs met in so many ways, thus setting the foundation for a successful future."

Through daily contact and parent-teacher conferences, she is able to see her son's progress, his strengths and weaknesses, and what can be done at home to foster his education.

"This is priceless," she said.

Echoing the praise of other parents, Jenny Mulder says she can't say enough about the STEM Pre-K program at CELA. She cites the teacher's upbeat, fun and caring personality.

The teacher greets the children with a smile each day, asking about how things have gone since she saw them last, she said.

"She is always coming up with new creative ideas on how to help kids learn new things," she said.

When her son started school, he barely knew his ABCs and only a few numbers and shapes, she said.

"In the three months that he has been in STEM Pre-K, he has already learned all of his letters,



Having fun while learning at Comstock's Early Learning Academy are (back row): James Mulder; STEM Pre-K teacher, Dawn Thomas; and Hudson Momcilovich, and (front row): Hunter Sabin, Dmitri Brown, and Aiden Schoenherr.

shapes and can count to 20," she said. "My son always comes home and talks about how much fun he had at school and he can't wait to go back."

If you would like to enroll your child in this program, please contact CELA by phone at 269-250-8960 or email the principal, Meadow Nuyen at [nuyenm@comstockps.org](mailto:nuyenm@comstockps.org) or stop by in person at 6171 East MN Ave. Kalamazoo, MI 49048.

# CELA Receives Four Star Rating

Comstock's Early Learning Academy (CELA) recently received a four-star rating from Great Start to Quality. This is Michigan's quality rating and improvement system designed to help early childhood programs improve what they do and also to help families find quality child care programs.

The program evaluates five categories to measure quality:

1. Staff qualifications and professional development.
2. Family and community partnerships.
3. Administration and management.
4. Environment.
5. Curriculum and instruction

CELA will reapply and try for the highest star rating: 5 stars, said Principal Meadow Nuyen.



CELA which opened last September serves students ages 6 weeks - through fifth grade.

To inquire about enrollment, call 269-250-8960 or stop by in person at 6171 East MN Ave.

# One More Blood Drive for NHS

Comstock High School's National Honor Society is hosting blood drives during the 2019-20 school year. Money earned from these blood drives will be used for the Leader In Me Scholarship for a student from the graduating class of 2020.

The final blood drive will be held in the Colt Center at Comstock High School from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. Wednesday, March 25.

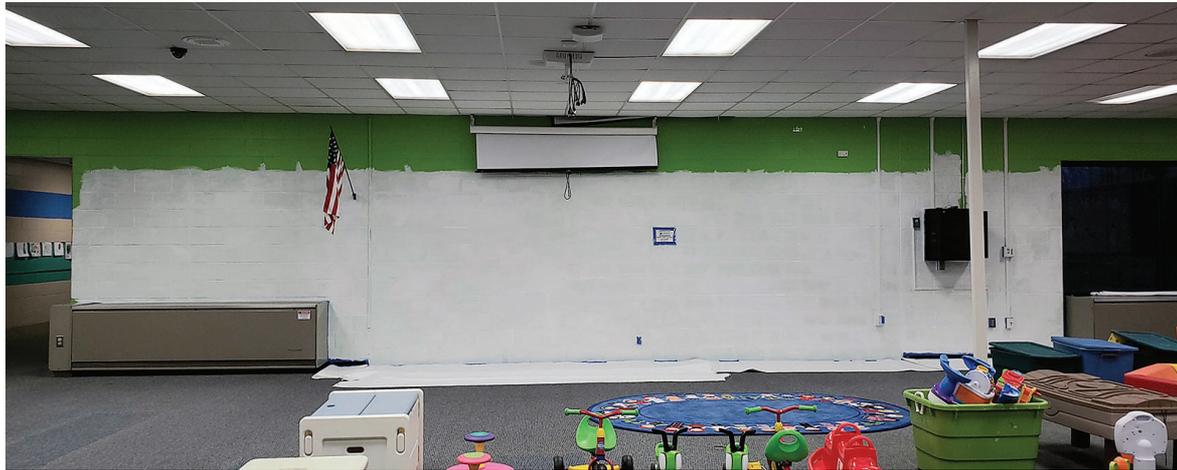
If you would like to schedule a time to donate, or have further questions, please e-mail Colleen Grueter at [GrueterC@comstockps.org](mailto:GrueterC@comstockps.org).

Comstock Early Learning Academy

# Painting Project Transforms CELA

Over winter break, Comstock Early Learning Academy principal, Meadow Nuyen, and a crew of volunteers painted the walls of the school's multipurpose room transforming it from lime green to Comstock blue.

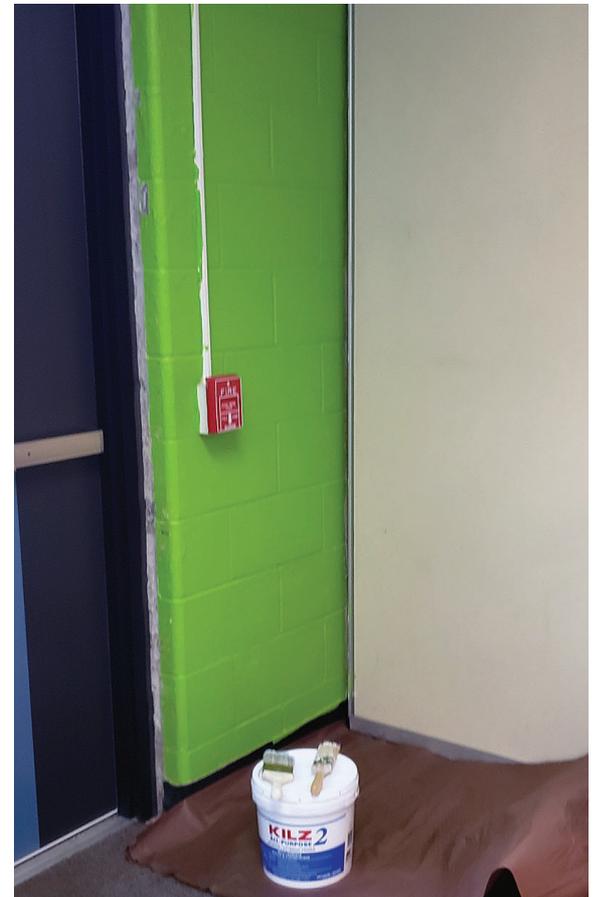
Thanks to Ms. Nuyen and all the volunteers who helped paint.



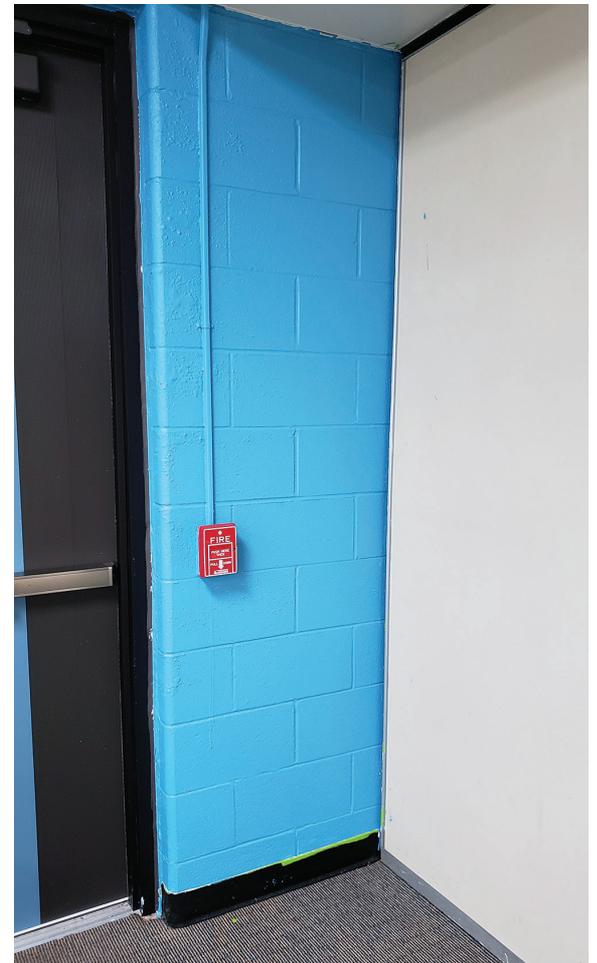
Before



After



Before



After

## Comstock Receives State Grant to Support K-3 Reading

The State of Michigan has awarded Comstock Public Schools \$24,968 in grant funding under Section 35a. These monies are specified for additional instructional time and interventions targeting students who need reading support in kindergarten through third grade. The district is grateful for this financial investment in our schools.

## STEM Academy

# STEM Academy Is Finalist in Samsung Contest

For the third time in five years, the Comstock STEM Academy is a Michigan State Finalist in the tenth annual Samsung Solve for Tomorrow Contest, a \$3 million nationwide competition that encourages sixth through twelfth grade students to creatively use STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) skills to solve a community challenge. From a pool of more than 2,000 entries nationwide, only 300 schools have been selected as State Finalists and the Comstock STEM Academy is one of them.

The STEM Academy was chosen based on the creative proposal submitted by art teacher, Mrs. Jeanine Roys, to address PTSD in military and first responder communities using STEM learning in her art classroom. As a Michigan State Finalist, Mrs. Roys will receive a Samsung tablet for her classroom and has the opportunity to advance through future phases of the contest to win additional prizes.

For the second year in a row, the STEM Academy has been chosen as one of the 100 State Winning schools and will receive \$15,000 in technology and classroom materials and a video kit to help showcase the project.

Staff and students will be working hard on the project and hope to advance to the top 20 in the nation, and ultimately win one of the five national grand prizes which would come with a \$100,000 technology award, and a trip to Washington D.C. to present the project to members of Congress.

Celebrating its tenth anniversary this 2019-2020 school year, the Samsung Solve for Tomorrow Contest fosters critical thinking and creative problem solving skills among thousands of students across the country.



Seventh graders react with excitement when they found out the STEM Academy is a state winner in a national contest sponsored by Samsung.

## Athletic Department News

### Hall of Fame Induction Banquet

Congratulations to Dawayne Heath, Class of 1962; Glenn Thomas, Class of 1968; Martin Johnson, Class of 1971; Tracy Daniel, Comstock Teacher and Coach, 1987-2018; and Bryan Crosby, Class of 1985 for being voted into Comstock's Athletic Hall of Fame.

The Hall of Fame induction banquet will be held on Saturday, April 25, at the WMU Fetzer Center. Doors will open at 5 p.m. with dinner starting at 6 p.m. and the induction to follow at 6:45 p.m. Tickets to this great event can be purchased from the Comstock Athletic Office for \$25. Come support these great Comstock alumni and visit with family and friends. The deadline to purchase tickets is April 20.

### Father-Daughter Dance

The Father-Daughter Dance is Saturday, February 8, from 6-8:30 p.m. at Comstock High School. Pictures can be taken at 5:30 p.m. and food will be served from 6-7 p.m. Please return the registration form on page 9 by February 3 to help us get an accurate count for food. The competitive cheer team will be hosting the event this year. Please call Natalie Miles at 269-808-3463 for more information.

### Mother-Son Bowling Event

The Mother-Son Bowling event is Saturday, February 8, from Noon-2 p.m. Check in begins at 11:15 a.m. at Eastland Bowl. It includes two hours of bowling, shoe rental, pizza and cookies. See the registration form on page 6. Please call Shirley Doorlag at 269-250-8712 with any questions.

### Winter Sports Awards Banquet

The winter sports awards banquet will be held on Wednesday, March 25, at 6:30 p.m. in the Comstock High School Auditorium.

### H.S. Spring Sports Start Date & Physicals

A reminder that your son/daughter has to have a physical on file with the athletic office in order to participate in a spring sport. All spring sports at the high school begin on Monday, March 9. Middle school track begins Monday, March 30.

### Spring Sports Parent Meeting

Spring sports programs will conduct their parent meetings individually. Please stay tuned for that information from each program.

# COMSTOCK HIGH SCHOOL WINTER SPORTS SCHEDULES

## Boys Varsity Basketball

Tue, Feb 4	@ Hastings High School	7:00 PM
Fri, Feb 7	@ Buchanan HS	7:30 PM
Tue, Feb 11	Gobles High School	7:00 PM
Fri, Feb 14	Brandywine High School	7:30 PM
Tue, Feb 18	@ Constantine High School	6:30 PM
Fri, Feb 21	@ Berrien Springs HS	7:30 PM
Tue, Feb 25	Paw Paw	7:30 PM
Fri, Feb 28	Bridgman Public Schools	7:30 PM
Tue, Mar 3	Gull Lake High School	7:30 PM
Thu, Mar 5	@ Parchment High School	7:30 PM

## Girls Varsity Basketball

Tue, Feb 4	Harper Creek High School	6:30 PM
Fri, Feb 7	@ Buchanan HS	6:00 PM
Tue, Feb 11	@ Gobles High School	7:00 PM
Fri, Feb 14	Brandywine High School	6:00 PM
Tue, Feb 18	Constantine High School	6:30 PM
Thu, Feb 20	@ Berrien Springs HS	7:00 PM
Tue, Feb 25	Paw Paw	6:00 PM
Fri, Feb 28	Bridgman Public Schools	6:00 PM

## Boys Junior Varsity Basketball

Tue, Feb 4	@ Hastings High School	5:30 PM
Fri, Feb 7	@ Buchanan HS	4:30 PM
Tue, Feb 11	Gobles High School	5:30 PM
Thu, Feb 13	Brandywine High School	7:30 PM
Tue, Feb 18	@ Constantine High School	5:00 PM
Fri, Feb 21	@ Berrien Springs HS	6:00 PM
Mon, Feb 24	@ Paw Paw	6:30 PM
Thu, Feb 27	Bridgman Public Schools	7:30 PM
Tue, Mar 3	Gull Lake High School	6:00 PM
Thu, Mar 5	@ Parchment High School	6:00 PM

## Girls Junior Varsity Basketball

Tue, Feb 4	Harper Creek High School	5:00 PM
Thu, Feb 6	@ Buchanan HS	7:30 PM
Tue, Feb 11	@ Gobles High School	5:30 PM
Fri, Feb 14	Brandywine High School	4:30 PM
Tue, Feb 18	Constantine High School	5:00 PM
Thu, Feb 20	@ Berrien Springs HS	5:30 PM
Tue, Feb 25	Paw Paw	4:30 PM
Fri, Feb 28	Bridgman Public Schools	4:30 PM

## Boys/Girls Varsity Bowling

Mon, Feb 3	@ Parchment HS (Eastland Bowl)	4:00 PM
Wed, Feb 5	@ Hackett Catholic Prep (Continental)	4:00 PM
Mon, Feb 10	Galesburg-Augusta HS (Eastland Bowl)	4:00 PM
Thu, Feb 13	@ Constantine HS (South Lanes in TR)	4:00 PM
Fri, Feb 21	@ Post-Season SAC Tourney at Airway	9:00 AM

## Girls Varsity Competitive Cheer

Sat, Feb 1	@ Harper Creek Invitational	10:00 AM
Wed, Feb 5	@ BCS Parchment Jamboree	6:00 PM
Sat, Feb 8	@ PC Cheer Fest	10:00 AM
Sat, Feb 15	@ BCS Conference Meet - Buchanan	TBA
Fri, Feb 21	@ MHSAA District at Paw Paw or 2-22	TBA

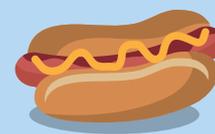
## Boys Varsity Wrestling

Wed, Feb 5	@ BCS Parchment Dual	6:00 PM
Sat, Feb 8	@ BCS Conf Tourney at Brandywine	9:00 AM
Wed, Feb 12	@ MHSAA District at Parchment	TBA
Sat, Feb 15	@ MHSAA Ind District - at Constantine	TBA

# COMSTOCK MIDDLE SCHOOL LEADERSHIP NIGHT



- Special Projects Displayed Or In A Classroom
- Hotdogs And Drinks
- Student Groups, Choir, And Band
- Tours Of Classrooms, Outdoor Classrooms, Office, and Garden
- Drone Flying
- Scavenger Hunt - WITH PRIZES!



**Thursday, May 7, 2020 — 6PM - 7:30PM**

# Comstock Township Library Events

Interested in joining a Thursday evening or Saturday afternoon book club? Please inquire at the adult reference desk at 269-345-0136.

**Adult Program:** Monday, February 3, at 5:30 p.m.  
**Mug Painting:** Need a last minute Valentine's Day gift? Want to celebrate how amazing YOU are by treating yourself? Nothing could be sweeter than a mug painted with love. No prior experience needed! Mugs, paint and supplies provided by Art Bayou. Registration is required for this free event and begins January 20 on our website. Go to "Programs" and it will be under "Upcoming Events." You may also register by calling 269-345-0136. Space is limited.

**Ask-A-Lawyer:** Wednesday, February 12, Noon-2 p.m. Join Robert Reilman to get your legal questions answered. This program is free and sign-ups began in January on our website. Go to "Programs" and it will be under "Upcoming Events." You may also register by calling 345-0136. Space is limited. Your legal questions will be answered in the order you arrive, but you must register. Call 345-0136 for more information.

**Adult Craft: Puffy Paint Tote Bag,** Wednesday, February 19, at 5:30 p.m. Decorate a canvas tote bag with a vinyl cut-out. When signing up, please be sure to include the object, shape, or animal you would like for the final decal. Registration is required for this free event and begins February 3 on our website. Go to "Programs" and it will be under "Upcoming Events." You may also register by calling 345-0136. Space is limited.

**Adult Program:** Monday, March 2, at 5:30 p.m. **Vision Boards:** Do you have the winter blues? Need help reaching your personal goals? Join us to create your own vision board to help you focus on the positive. We will provide materials to help you get started, but please bring in a few of your own photos and mementos as well to personalize your board. Registration is required for this free event and begins February 17 on our website. Go to "Programs" and it will be under "Upcoming Events." You may also register by calling 345-0136. Space is limited.

**Adult Craft: Wire-Wrapped Earrings,** Wednesday, March 18, at 5:30 p.m. Bend and wrap wire to create beautiful earrings. We will also add pearls for a finishing touch. Registration is required for this free event and begins March 2 on our website. Go to "Programs" and it will be under "Upcoming Events." You may also register by calling 345-0136. Space is limited.

## YOUTH & TEEN EVENTS

**STORY TIMES:** Ages 0-6. Storytimes include a half

hour of stories, songs, rhymes and other early literacy activities. Each storytime is tailored to a specific age group but younger or older siblings are always encouraged to attend as well. Each storytime is followed by a sensory playtime that lasts around 20 minutes.  
 Mondays: 10:30-11:15 a.m., Preschool Storytime  
 Tuesdays: 10:30-11:15 a.m., Wee Ones Storytime  
 Wednesdays: 10:30-11:15 a.m., Toddler Storytime  
 Thursdays: 10:30-11 a.m., \*NEW\* Musical Mayhem 1-1:45 p.m. - Preschool S.T.E.A.M (Registration required)

**\*NEW\* Musical Mayhem:** Ages 0-6. Get ready to wiggle and rock with fun action songs, musical instruments, parachute time and a short story. Parents and siblings are encouraged to join in! This is a drop-in program every Thursday at 10:30 a.m. during storytime sessions.

**1,000 BOOKS BEFORE KINDERGARTEN:** Reading to your children at a young age is the single most important thing parents can do to help their children become successful readers as they get older. Comstock Township Library is encouraging parents to read 1,000 books to their young children before they begin kindergarten. All children can participate until they enter kindergarten. Pick up your tracking sheet at the Youth Desk today.

**Book Bingo! Wednesday, February 12, at 4 p.m.** Play bingo with popular middle grade novels and earn free new books of your choice if you get five in a row! Ms. Sue will also book talk a number of titles so you can find your next awesome read. Registration required.

**Valentine's Day Necklace: Friday, February 14, at 11 a.m.** Let the library provide all the supplies you need to make a cute Valentine's Day necklace craft! Drop-in program, while supplies last.

**Dr. Seuss Birthday Party!: Saturday, February 29, at 11 a.m.** Celebrate Dr. Seuss' birthday with us. (His actual birthday is March 2)! Whether your favorite is *The Cat in the Hat*, *Horton Hears a Who*, or another timeless classic, join us for a story, crafts, and birthday cake! Children will leave with a new book of their choice to celebrate Read Across America Day which is also celebrated on Dr. Seuss' birthday. Registration is required for every child planning to attend.

**Paint Lab - Confetti Canvas: Wednesday, March 18, at 4 p.m.** Learn about this fun art technique and take home your own work of art on canvas. Open to kids ages 6+. Registration is required.

## CLOSINGS

The library will be closed on Monday, February 17, in observance of Presidents' Day. Please confirm library hours before venturing out in inclement weather.



Call the library to make sure we are open if there is inclement weather.



We now have tutor rooms and Wi-Fi available! Call 345-0136 for more information.



We now have a fax service! Must use credit or debit card to send.



### Now Available

OverDrive! Download free audiobooks and e-books from home using your computer, MP3 player, e-book reader, and other compatible devices. Check out our OVERDRIVE eBooks and audiobooks! <https://smdl.overdrive.com/>



### Computer Help

Have a question about the computer? Would you like to learn how to use the computer? Please call 345-0136 to set up a block of time for one-on-one help. Must be a library cardholder.



### Need Resume Help?

Please call to schedule an appointment or visit the adult reference desk to do so. We will help you write a cover letter or resume, or just proofread one you already have. Call 345-0136 for further information. Must be a library cardholder.

**Half Day Craft Day: Friday, March 20 - all day.** Comstock Public Schools are out early! Stop by the library for drop-in crafts all day.

**T(w)een Drop in Video Gaming: Wednesdays after school.** Drop by and test your gaming skills on various Nintendo Switch games. Open to ages 11 and up or grades sixth through twelfth.

**T(w)een Drop-in Volunteer Hours.** Need volunteer hours during the school year? Our teen volunteer program is super flexible and works around your busy school schedule. Drop in to talk to Miss Traci or Miss Liz and we'll get you started with a volunteer application.