



CCSIGNAL

A publication of Community Christian School

"Educational Excellence through Christ"

April 2024



Community Christian School board members are, left to right, Nathan Lawrence (vice president), Brittany Grim (secretary), Clayton Anderson, Fonda Nelson (treasurer), Jason Ribbens (president), Joyce Nerhus, Jon Janssen, Samantha (Sam) Kuhn and Colin Brown.

Through Change Come Exciting Future

By **JASON RIBBENS**
School Board President

Hello to all the supporters of Community Christian School. I recently had the opportunity to speak in front of a church to talk about the mission that is CCS. Preparing for that speech I realized what a unique opportunity this school has to be more than just a place to get an education. It truly is a mission in our community touching so many lives and bringing light and hope to those around our students.

Large concern looms

I feel that it is important to talk about the large concern that is looming over CCS. As some of you may know, the administrator was terminated a few weeks ago. The board is not trying to hide anything, but I cannot give any details about the causes of termination because that is protected by employment privacy laws. I can say that the decision was not made hastily nor out of spite by the school board. In the interim, the day-to-day duties have been handled by several people. Jeannette Larrabee, our 3rd-4th grade teacher, has been appointed lead teacher and will be working with all the other teachers to coordinate the classroom activities through the end of the school year. It has

been so encouraging to sit in on their weekly staff meetings and watch them discuss and solve the issues at hand. I truly feel like they have the situation handled and the kids will be taken care of and will finish the year strong. There have also been a lot of administrative duties that have been taken care of and the board has relied on our secretary Lauri Wendell to carry a lot of the work as well as delegating out a lot of tasks to board members. The board has also relied on the guidance of wise counsel from many people. I never thought I would end up knowing so much about education leadership, but God has provided a great group of people to work through this uncertain time.

I have been encouraged knowing that God will work good through all of this. I as a human can get caught up in the worry and burden of this situation, but as I step back and look toward the future, I know that this is a great opportunity. We have been compelled to discuss what we really want as a school and where do we want to be five years from now and beyond. The school board will pray diligently and listen intently to what God would have us do, and we will work to put the right people in the right

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positions to accomplish His plan for our school. I might not know enough to make the perfect decisions in the moment, and you as supporters might not like all the decisions that have been made, but be assured that we do all of this for the glory of His kingdom.

Please share your thoughts and ideas with me (President@ccsfd.org) or with any other board member.

Enrollment is very strong

Meanwhile, enrollment is very strong this year which can be attributed to the availability of Educational Savings Accounts through the state of Iowa. There are many in our community that desire an education with a Christian world view and in an environment that follows Biblical principles. ESA has taken down the barrier for so many families. This increased enrollment has also brought about an improved financial outlook for the school. We as the board can look toward the

future and plan a vision instead of struggling to meet budget year to year. There is still a place for financial support as these plans unfold, to allow sustainable growth, wise improvements, and build sound foundational support for the future.

Great improvements at CCS

I am happy that I can tell you about some great improvements to the school building recently. Due to a grant, CCS has upgraded the video surveillance system in the school, installed privacy and safety film to all of the ground floor windows, installed new exterior doors by the gym with security locks, and will be installing new interior doors to the classrooms that will better protect from unwanted intrusion. There will also be additional secure exterior doors added elsewhere in the building. While we like to think that our school is immune from the violence in the world, we need to use the resources provided to us to keep our students and employees safe.

FIRST SEMESTER HONOR ROLL

EIGHTH GRADE

Laina Christensen
Isaiah Grim
Lexie Grim
Caleb Heath
Kaylee King
Sadie Shields
Mya Zdrazil

FIFTH GRADE

Israel Altman
Wyatt Anderson
Nicholas Fisher
Hannah Heath
Fia Hill
Isaiah Lawrence
Logan McDuffey
Marlow Ruppel

SIXTH GRADE

Wesley Anderson
Jace Bockoven
Raelynne Brady
Jeremiah Chichester
Andrew Heath
Adrie Ribbens
Lainey Shields

FOURTH GRADE

Sully Crandell
Annabelle Krog

THIRD GRADE

Claire Anderson
Gideon Heath
Elyn Slife

UPCOMING KEY DATES

April 16-June 30 – ESA Parent Application Window

April 22-26 – Christian School Week

April 27 – Crusader Carnival 5-7 p.m.

April 30 – Ag Field Day

May 2 – National Day of Prayer

May 3 – K-8 Spring Music Program 1:00 and 6:00

May 6 – Bells Mill Park 5-6th field trip

May 7 – All-school field trip (Jungle Book at ISU's Stephens Auditorium and Reiman Gardens)

May 9 – Student Art Show

May 10 – 8th-grade field trip (Sky Zone, Escape Room)

May 22 – Kindergarten and 8th-grade graduations, TBA

May 24 – Last day of school (1 p.m. dismissal)

Community Christian School

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2406 9½ Ave. South | Fort Dodge, IA 50501
P. 515-573-3011 | F. 515-573-5425
ccsfd.org | ccsofficefd@gmail.com



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Lead Teacher: Jeannette Larrabee

School Board: Clayton Anderson, Colin Brown, Brittany Grim (secretary), Jon Janssen, Samantha Kuhn, Nathan Lawrence (vice-president), Fonda Nelson (treasurer), Joyce Nerhus and Jason Ribbens (president).

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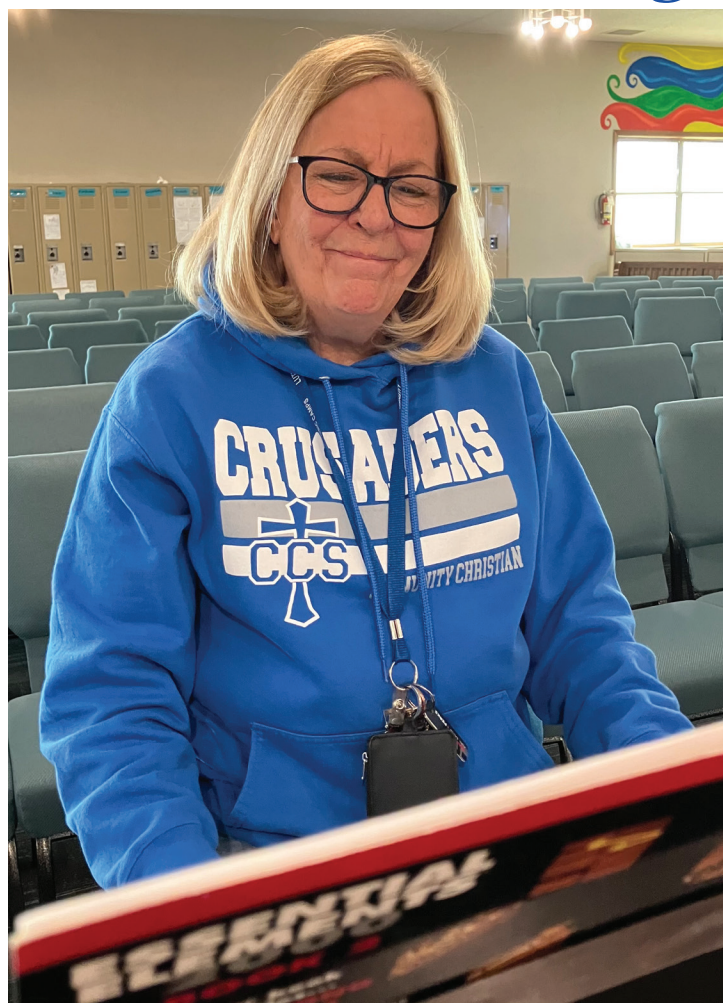
CCS Music Teacher Nears Her ‘Swan Song’

After 40-some years of teaching classroom music in several schools, Kristin Bodholdt is retiring from one ‘happy place’ to another – as a loving grandma. Mrs. Bodholdt, a native of Blue Earth MN who spent her high school years in Fargo ND, has taught band at Community Christian School since 2012. And in 2016 she added vocal music teaching here. **Her final music programs will be May 3 when the K-2 students and the 3rd-through-8th students will present back-to-back performances at 1 p.m. and again at 6 p.m. in the CCS Spring Music Program.**

“It’s the end of an era,” said seventh-grader Olivia Clausen, adding that Mrs. B “has a BUNCH of patience.” “I’m definitely going to miss her,” said fifth-grader Fia Hill. “She’s an amazing teacher and is really nice,” said fifth-grader Hannah Heath.

“When I think of Community Christian, I think of it as my happy place,” said Mrs. B, who got her music education degree in 1981 from Luther College in Decorah. “I have always felt welcomed here and I have just loved being here. I’ve been in a lot of school buildings and never felt like this.”

Her first teaching job was at Mallard High School. Four years later Kris moved to Colorado where she ran a music school and also taught at a high school in Nederland, which is near Boulder. After returning to Iowa, she taught at West Bend-Mallard and Emmetsburg until taking a job at St. Edmond High School in 2008, resulting in a one-hour commute to Fort Dodge from her home in Newell, where she lives with husband Scott. At one time she taught at four Fort Dodge schools at the same time – St. Edmond, CCS, St. Paul Lutheran and McSweeney’s School of the Performing Arts. “I was all over town,” she said. The last few years, Kris has taught only at CCS three days a week. “I’ve been trying to narrow everything down as far as hauling things back and forth,” she said, noting that the driving has become more of a chore with age.



CCS music teacher Kristin Bodholdt plays keyboard to accompany a private lesson with one of her band students.

Kris said she’s excited (about retirement) now that she’s a grandmother. She has two grown children with two grandchildren ages seven and 10 months. She also has two stepchildren and five step-grandchildren who live much further away. “The last straw was having my granddaughter’s Christmas program on the very same date and time as my own,” she said. “So, the music teacher couldn’t go to her music program. I need to be available for those.”

Mrs. B said she hasn’t ruled out offering private lessons in the future. She continues to enjoy playing piano at her church in Newell, and her beloved French horn in the Fort Dodge Area Symphony and the Karl King Municipal Band.

CCS teachers tell of 'journeys



**Rachel Butler,
Kindergarten**

Some things I've discovered about this year's CCS kindergarten class is that they love science, they love the Bible, and they love their parents.

Science has generated enthusiasm because we have gotten to record our observations, track data, make scientific gauges, and use what is learned. We are looking forward to inviting parents to class at the end of the year to hear our weather service announcements in case of severe weather.

These students love the Bible, too. As their teacher, it has been an amazingly rewarding experience to watch them discover how great our God is and how He guides us. These kindergarteners love Jesus and would love to go to church if they don't already. They are super proud when they get to share that their dad or mom prays with them, reads the Bible together, or takes them to church.

This class also loves their parents dearly, and I'm so thankful for this! We have just started a book that will be published and available for purchase. We love to use our learning!



**Colleen Hansen,
First Grade**

We started this year building a classroom community of trust, fun, and the ability to laugh as we worked together to learn what was expected in our first-grade community. This group of students have wonderful, sweet spirits and they were ready and willing to learn from the very start.

We jumped right into working on the journey of reading. The students had a wonderful beginning from last year in kindergarten. So, the journey started out with a review of the alphabet. Then we went on to add all the special sounds that make up our language. The class now is able to read independently and each student enjoys his or her time to read every day. They especially like Thursdays when they pair up to read with their 7th and 8th-grade "Reading Buddies." The class also works hard to learn all of the first-grade math lessons. They enjoyed the ability to use technology to practice their new math skills. Also, with the use of technology came the older students visiting our class and introducing them to simple coding.

We have had good conversations throughout the year. They love to talk about Jesus and how important He is in their young lives. They loved to present in chapel. It brought them great joy to share

their love for Jesus with all their fellow CCS students.

My own personal challenge of dealing with an injury has been made easier by this class. They helped me with anything and everything. They are a group that loves to give hugs and have fun. We named the fly that would not leave our room, "George." We even had our own special way for them to settle down and pay attention.

It has been a joy to watch them grow socially and emotionally. They, as any family, have had disagreements and misunderstandings. But they have learned this year how to work out their differences and their sweet spirits have grown so much.

I have loved laughing and enjoying this class. They have given me much joy and have made this year so amazing. I am looking forward to watching them grow and seeing what God has in store for them.



**Rebecca Munsterman,
Second grade**

This school year is going by so fast, but it has been a great year in second grade! I love teaching second grade because students are learning how to become more independent in their classwork and I love seeing those "lightbulb moments" happen each day.

Our class was small, with only eight students, but we developed a class family and established relationships with each other throughout the year. We discussed what it looked like to be leaders for the younger grades, as kindergarten and first grade and second grade were together for morning recess. It was sweet to see the kids develop their leadership skills and be loving toward the younger ones.

Some academic highlights have included: learning new vocabulary words, learning two and three-digit addition, and an introduction to multiplication facts. Students also loved coding on Scratch and creating their own 3D-printed bookmark on Tinkercad.

I have loved being these kids' teacher this year!



**Jeannette Larrabee,
3rd-4th Grades**

Third and fourth grade has had an awesome year of learning and growing, both as learners and in their walk of faith. I have been thrilled to see the growth in math this year. Fourth grade struggled with large multiplication problems

at first, but through perseverance and cooperative learning, they all mastered it. I love watching the students support each other in this way. Our advanced math students have really thrived as they

work at their ability level. This continues to amaze me as I see top fourth- and fifth-grade

Third grade has gotten to do science this year along with third-graders who are new to come a long way with the science they had very little experience coding in the schools they attended. They are not only able to code, but they are also helping second-graders create a new tool we have for CCS. Now the students can use a stylus to write in the space above the keyboard!

Our reading groups continue to grow. We have welcomed some new members for reading groups. Our top readers are reading novels at the middle school level.

We are gearing up for our field trip where the students will be choosing their own project of their choice for the afternoon. We also played a big role in the state Convention for the K-2 students. We had sessions on Play-Doh lightbulb models) and Cubetto coding. We have been learning about how we can grow in Iowa. We are working on a project and will be planting a garden on the playground soon. We are also participating in a community service cleanup project going to Kennedy Park for a field day activities in May.



**Marsha,
5th-6th**

The 21st Century Learning Banker, Mission Classroom SOME among

up this year's 5th and 6th-grade

This creative, rambunctious teacher (I miss me back to Community Church year absence) and CCS family encouragement upon my return. Having a large class is more than enough desks and textbooks. The level in the room can be in the excitement about a topic.

Our weeks have been filled with 21st Century Skills and Field service projects. The previous are part of My Classroom

, joys and lightbulb moments'

Their commitment to learn the two third-graders are level math students.

dig deeper into computer in fourth grade. Our to CCS this year have support of their peers as nce with 3D modeling or transferred from. Now ode, but are leading first- e to be 3D printed and are ate a quiz in Scratch. A is 3D computers where as to 'pull' objects into the like a hologram.

ue to grow and improve. igh-level second-graders p group has advanced to l level.

Wax Museum May 1 come an historical figure' rnoon. Students in 3/4 e Computer Science udents where they led circuits, Tinkercad (3D ng robots. We have also limate affects what crops re starting a greenhouse g in the raised garden e will be doing some o for Earth Day soon and r some outdoor education

a Halbach, Grades

— a small army.

brarian, Fine Officer, Recyclist, Zoologist, s, Horticulturist and om Assistant are just of the job titles that exist the 21 students that make grade class.

us group welcomed ristian (after a three- ilies offered amazing return. The challenge of e than just where to fit ks. Occasionally, the noise tense when everyone is

d with Bible, Academics, ld Trips, along with ously-mentioned jobs Economy Management

system – where each student has a significant job that helps the classroom run smoothly and provides financial literacy skills.

Memorizing Bible verses has been a big priority and we celebrated our success in February with a very competitive Bible Quiz Show with trophies. We owe a big 'thank you' to Pastor Dale Harlow from Northfield Church.

One of our pen pals, Coach Joel Harvey, stopped in at CCS when enroute to the State basketball tournament. Coach Harvey has been a great pen pal and has also given our CCS athletes some great basketball advice!

Academics have included lots of writing projects, book clubs, fractions, decimals, long division, spelling, cursive, readers theaters, world & Iowa history and STEM. We completed a service project at the Hospice House and “adopted” two senior citizens for Christmas. We will finish the year off hosting Chapel one more time, one more trip to the Hospice House, a Classroom Economy Plant Sale, the Spring Music Program, Art Show, a Field Trip to Bell's Mill Park (part Iowa history and part service project, along with fishing and Dutch-oven cooking) and Ag Days at the Hamilton County Fairgrounds.

The 21 have had a great year!



Chrissy Larson, 7th-8th Grades

This year has been so much fun and we have accomplished so much in the 7th and 8th-grade class. The year started with some new faces to CCS and it has been wonderful to see them become part of our class family as well as the school as a whole. I have a class full of smart and fun middle schoolers and I feel so lucky to have gotten to spend the year with them. They amaze me every time we get the privilege to present at chapel on Wednesdays with how creative and excited they are to share the Bible lesson with the rest of the school. Whether they are challenging Goliath to a burrito fight or handing out samples at Costco with Jacob and Esau, they made sure our presentations were unique and fun.

I love the joy they have when we get to work with the younger kids in the school and how much fun they have had with their Reading Buddies and their Tech Buddies. They have had a blast making rubber band cars and pneumatic puppets, programming finch robots, and even designing graduation charms with the kindergarteners.

We have enjoyed so many fun times together it is hard to list them all, but I would have to say that everyone probably would say they really enjoyed

the 7th and 8th- grade retreat in the fall. We had so much fun being together and getting to know each other. It was a real team building and bonding time that has only made our class relationships stronger.

These kids have spent the year learning so many new things and preparing themselves for whatever next year brings. With the majority of the class heading off to high school, I know they are going to take everything they've learned at CCS and will be a light in whatever school they head to. What a blessing it has been for me to share this year with them and get to have even a small part in their journey as students and Christians.



Kris Bodholdt, Instrumental & Vocal Music

This is my final year of teaching instrumental and vocal music before retiring and it has been a busy one.

The CCS choirs began the year by performing for the Grandparent's Day Celebration in September. Following that, they began learning music for the Christmas program. Since January, the choirs have been learning musical plays for the Spring Program coming up on May 3rd in the CCS chapel. Everyone is invited to attend. The kindergarten through 2nd grade choir will perform a play called “Bunnies” and the 3rd through 8th-grade choir will follow with a play called “Voice Message.”

Something new is that our 22-member CCS band hit the road for its first-ever “band tour” this winter. Not only did they present a Christmas concert at CCS, but they also took their talents south to perform the same Christmas concert at a small Baptist church in Glidden. This fun event consisted of the concert and a wonderful lunch provided by the Glidden church.

The final performance by the band was at the student recital April 18th. All band students receive a lesson on their chosen instruments each week, as well as six other students who are taking piano lessons. These students each played a solo with accompaniment at the April recital.





The CCS boys were much improved and posted a 7-4 record led by the hustle and scoring of eighth-graders Caleb Heath (19 points per game) and Sawyer Evans (8 ppg). In front, from left, are Gideon Heath (team manager), Miles Krog, Logan Fisher, Nicholas Fisher, Asher Grim, Jeremiah Chichester, Sully Crandell and Eli King. In middle, from left, are Silas Hayek, Mason Nelson, Isaiah Grim, Andrew Heath and Eli Grim. In back, from left, are Coach Clayton Anderson, Isaiah Lawrence, Evans, Caleb Heath, Wesley Anderson, Jace Bockoven, Corban McHone, Wyatt Anderson and Coach Brent Heath.



SLAM DUNK





The CCS girls' basketball team had an impressive 9-3 record led by eighth-graders Sadie Shields (9.3 points per game) and Mya Zdrzil (6.0 ppg). In front are Annabelle Krog, left, and Hannah Heath. In back, from left, are Coach Michael Grim, Lydia Baluczynski, Leah Fisher, Shields, Zdrzil, Lexie Grim, Fia Hill and Coach Ken Fisher.



The Crusader cheerleaders were coached by Amanda Slife and Kylee Hayek. In front, from left, are Lydia Baluczynski, Logan McDuffey, Lainey Shields, Selena Diaz and Hannah Heath. In back, from left, are Mya Zdrzil, Lyla Seward, Bella Hill and Kaylee King. Not pictured are Annabelle Krog and Gracia McHone.



The CCS pep squad, with students in kindergarten through third grade, produced many smiles and a lot of spirit at basketball games this season. In front, from left, are Kennedy Kuhn, Ava Huffman, Charolette Fisher, Caroline Lawrence, Evelyn King, Lydia Grim, Koralyne Peart, Madeline Sorenson and Dale Konen. In back, from left, are Elyn Slife, Claire Anderson, Winnie Meriweather, Molina Crandell, Presley Lawrence and Molly Anderson. Not pictured are Cooper Cianciolo, Zendaya Diaz and Kinsley Lawrence. The squad was coached by Amanda Slife and Kylee Hayek.