

# The Califon School

## *100 Years and Going Strong - You Belong here!*

Welcome to the Califon School,

For 100 years, traditions have made The Califon school a valued and effective educational community within a small Hunterdon County town. The Board of Education has determined, based on the past and present successes of The Califon School, to extend this unique educational opportunity to all students in the surrounding area. The Califon School is a high achieving and safe learning environment, best described as being caring and nurturing. The goal to provide each child with the opportunities to reach his or her full potential is modeled and practiced every day. By offering small class size, global outreach, application to the community and the modeling of citizenship, our children are inspired to attain their full potential.

The faculty and staff of The Califon School are valued for their professionalism, expertise, and commitment to serve the children in our care. To support the development of our faculty, the teachers partner in county articulation, individualized professional learning, and are members of a four-district professional development consortium.

To expand the academic community and offer our students with opportunities for individually paced research and diversity of thought, each student in grades K-8 has their own Chromebook. The integration of technology enables for the amplification and individualization of learning/instruction. The Smartboards within each room further enhances the learning experience, and enables our teachers to be innovative as it relates to their instructional design and organizations. Digital portfolios offer parents/guardians opportunities to maintain our partnership.

Students regularly engage in cross-curricular and cross-grade level collaboration that provides for diversity of thinking, and builds community among all students from pre-school through 8th grade. Older students serve as mentors fostering civic responsibility and activism. Califon students have a long and exemplary tradition of community participation at school and in the community at large. Some examples of how Califon School students work together:

- Pre-school Pals - Older students are paired with pre-schoolers to read, play games and complete projects together which builds community from our youngest to our oldest students.
- Buddy Books - 5th graders are coupled with 1st graders each year. 5th graders interview each 1st grader getting to know their favorites, interests and hobbies. All of these details are then integrated into a bound story book that stars each first grader. The books are gifted to the 1st graders at the completion of the project. These "buddy books" are cherished Califon School keepsakes.
- STEAM - Students work together weekly engaging in STEAM challenges that promote innovative thinking, design/build skills and teamwork.
- Book Clubs - Students read and discuss books based on authors, genre and themes offering literary observations and insights.
- Wax Museum/State Fair - 3rd and 4th graders work together to create "museum-like" exhibits that require extensive research in order to compose informational texts and create visual displays that highlight the research content. Students also design costumes and create interactive features to engage the visitors to the Wax Museum and/or State Fair.

- Probability Fair - 4th and 5th graders explore probability and cooperatively design and build a game of chance to be shared and enjoyed by all other Califon School students.

Teachers regularly utilize field experts to expose our students to their professional expertise.

- Luray Gross, Poet in Residence, facilitated a year-long writing project with 3rd through 5th graders focusing on seasonal, nature themed poetry.
- Trinka Hakes Noble, New Jersey author, worked with students at every grade level facilitating writing workshops as well as teaching about NJ history.
- Barry Lane, a well-respected expert in the field of writing and literacy conducted school-wide workshops focusing on narrative writing.
- Dove Environmental Group - Worked with 3rd through 5th grade students offering a hands-on workshop about the first people of NJ, Lenni Lenape.
- Liz Fulmer, county basket artisan and historian visits Califon School's 4th graders every year as part of their study of Native Americans and colonial times. Ms. Fulmer of the Hunterdon Cultural and Heritage Commission and the Board of Chosen Freeholders.
- Wikipedia Project - Collaborating with the Hunterdon County Office of Economic Development our students will be research and confirming data as offered on Wikipedia.

"Enrichment for All" is evident with field experiences for all students, STEAM specialized programs, the Genius Hour and the "Arts". TREP\$, (entrepreneurship) is offered to students in grades 4 to 8. The school day does not end at 3:12PM, student-interest based extracurricular activities, extend the day. A sample of the activities:

- Reading Olympics
- K'NEX Club
- Destination Imagination
- Focused Art
- Debate Team
- Drama Club
- Student Government
- Yearbook
- Cross Country Team
- Basketball Team - First place in the "B" Division
- Cheerleading
- Fencing and Chess are on the horizon for 2019

The effectiveness of The Califon School has received acknowledgement from respected and valued organizations. To identify, please review:

- County Recognition
  - Hunterdon County Cultural and Heritage Commission - Throughout the history of the composition contest "The Most Historic Place in My Town", Califon School has had 4th grade students represent their community with interesting and informative essays about historic sites in town - The Ken Lockwood Gorge, the train station, the Califon Firehouse, Rambo's Country Store and many, many more. Top winning essays are celebrated at the historic Flemington Courthouse each spring. Student authors are invited to attend a recognition ceremony with members of the Hunterdon County Cultural and Heritage Commission and the Board of Chosen Freeholders.
  - Wikipedia Project - Collaborating with the Hunterdon County Office of Economic Development our students will be researching and confirming data as offered on Wikipedia.

- World Recognition
  - Destination Imagination - Califon School has a long legacy of success at DI competitions. Our teams are consistently highly competitive at the state level tournaments and have earned invitations to compete at the international level at DI Global Finals in 2013, 2015, 2017, 2018 and 2019. At Global Finals 2017, Califon's middle school team competed against 85 teams from around the world and took 1st place in the Instant Challenge category and earned 3rd place overall. Califon School students have earned the bragging rights to call themselves world competitors!

I invite you to visit our web site <https://www.califonschool.org> to review the curricula, and learn about our school. As members of The Califon School, we are "Proud Cougars" – join our team!

Johanna S. Ruberto, Ed.D.  
Interim Superintendent