

Michael Ludwig



Chautauqua Lake CSD School Board Candidate

Why are you running for the school board? If elected, what will be your top five priorities and why?

1. Continue to press for low cost, high quality and meaningful education that is applicable to today.
2. Explore new and novel ways to deliver education to bring out the very best from every child.
3. Build upon CLCS being a positive influence in our community while holding true to our number one district goal “that all students and staff will contribute to a supportive and positive environment that promotes integrity, tolerance and respect for self and others”.
4. To never go above the tax cap and hold any tax increases to the absolute minimum to deliver premium education.
5. Make CLCS the example for Chautauqua County. Whether that is in sports or in the classroom, I want this to be the place that every parent dreams of sending their child. I am proud of what has been accomplished during my term as a school board member, but we need to continue to push the district’s overall instructional program in areas of academic, school-to-work, STEM and other vocationally oriented programs.

Chautauqua Lake strives to be a “destination district” for families and students who are looking for a place to reside. What do you know about Chautauqua Lake that makes it a great school district?

At the time of writing this, we are the only district to offer 100% Pre-K – 12th Monday through Friday in school learning for the entire school year WITHOUT interruption while at the same time providing a robust remote option for students and families. This was done through extensive collaboration and an “all hands-on deck” attitude of all our staff including teachers, clerical staff, custodians, building and grounds team, bus drivers and our substitute teachers.

Chautauqua Lake is the only school district in the county with a New Visions Program that is available for any student in the region (Chautauqua, portions of Cattaraugus and Southern Erie County). New Visions, is an academically rigorous STEM/Career and Technical Education program, designed for students interested in pursuing engineering or a related field in college. Students enroll in four college credit-bearing classes which operates in our high school and is integrated with our Project Lead The Way curriculum. Students who complete the program can earn college credits from the Rochester Institute of Technology and from Jamestown Community College. In addition to this, Chautauqua Lake presently offers over 10 courses that are college credit-bearing, 2 AP courses, 3 honors courses and 35+ electives.

As technology advances so does our approach to education. I am incredibly happy to be on the Budget Task Force that helped steer funding so that every student K-12 is provided their own Chromebook computer. This drive to stay current in technology extends into our manufacturing program as well. Our manufacturing program utilizes a variety of real-world equipment such a HAAS CNC Mill and CNC Lathe. Students who are part of our manufacturing program leave high school with the skill set needed to find good jobs in the manufacturing field.

I understand that there is more to school than just academics, that is why I have voted in favor of CLCS continuing to offer a variety of co-curricular opportunities and athletic teams. The district offers 15 varsity level athletic options and 14 co-curricular clubs and activities.

As a prospective school board member, what are your views of regionalizing education in Chautauqua County?

Any individual who knows me understands that I have been and always will be a huge advocate for regionalism. It is because of this belief, I voted repeatedly for the CLCS tuition agreement with Ripley. This regional approach has brought about more educational opportunities, kept tax warrants at or below the tax cap as well as attracted new and highly qualified teachers. With our communities continued dwindling census, the only way to continue to provide this high level of educational opportunity is to work with our surrounding districts. I believe that CLCS is and will remain at the forefront of this movement.

What particular experiences or skills qualify you to serve as a school board member? In what school / district activities have you been involved? In what community activities have you been involved?

As a Physician Assistant I have learned that a one-size-fits-all approach to health care is not always productive, nor should this be the same for raising and educating our children. As a father, grandfather, preceptor of numerous Physician Assistants/Nurse Practitioners, medical students, and a Sunday School teacher, I understand that each child is different and learns differently. Along with volunteering at school and being blessed to serve on the school board for nearly 12 years, I have come to understand that our skilled teachers need to be allowed to teach children to the standards set forth while allowing them to tailor this education to the individual needs and abilities of our children.

Are you the parent of children in the CLCS school district?

Charity, now 24 years old started CLCS in 1st grade, Amber age 25 years old started in 2nd grade. Isaac is now in 7th grade and Eliana is currently in 5th.