

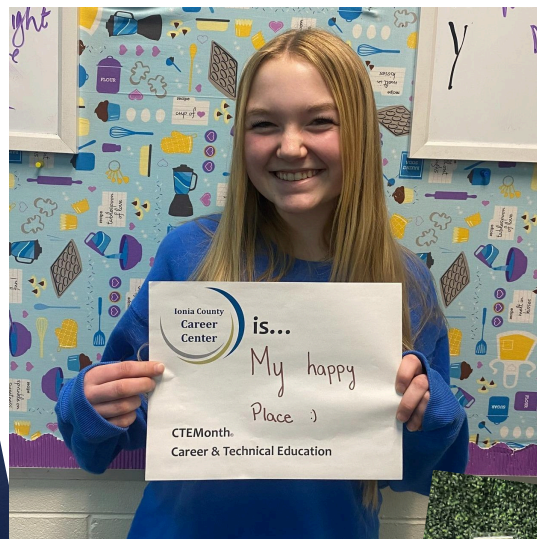


## February & March 2025 Board Report

Ted W. Paton  
Associate Superintendent of CTE/Principal

### CTE Month

February is recognized as Career and Technical Education (CTE) Month, a time to highlight the importance and impact of CTE programs on students, communities, and industries. As we observe this month, we reflect on how our district's CTE programs are equipping students with the skills and knowledge necessary to thrive in a rapidly evolving workforce. From hands-on training in high-demand fields to the integration of real-world experiences, our CTE programs continue to foster career readiness and success. Here are just some of our ongoing efforts, student achievements, and future goals as we celebrate the role of CTE in preparing students for both college and careers. Below are some of our students and their words on what the Career Center means to them.



## FFA District Leadership Contest

On January 30th, 2025, our Ionia FFA students demonstrated exceptional leadership at the FFA District Leadership Contests. Their performance was outstanding, reflecting their hard work and dedication. We are extremely proud of their achievements and encourage them to continue striving for excellence.



## Cultivating Connections

Mr. Griffith and Mrs. Brooks had the honor of presenting at the Michigan Career Education Conference. They showcased their innovative approach to integrating plant and animal science with culinary arts in the classroom. Throughout their session, they highlighted a series of engaging cross-curricular lessons, including projects like "Farm to Table," "Milk to Cheese," "All About Apples," and "Exploring Fruits." These lessons emphasize the successful fusion of agricultural knowledge and culinary education, providing students with a hands-on, comprehensive learning experience. Their presentation not only illustrated the value of interdisciplinary teaching but also demonstrated how these projects inspire creativity and deepen student understanding in both fields.



## Hands on Learning Criminal Justice

Criminal justice students put their knowledge to the test in not one, not two but three exciting hands-on learning experiences. First, Deputy Director Heinlein of the Ionia Department of Public Safety provided our Criminal Justice students with valuable insights into fire services and emergency response practices, offering an in-depth look at fire safety. They participated in a simulated smokehouse rescue, where they donned full fire gear and applied their skills in a controlled, realistic scenario with the assistance of Officer Skorka. Next, the Ionia County Dive Team introduced students to the complexities of underwater rescue operations. They had the opportunity to test scuba gear and gain firsthand experience with water rescue techniques. A huge thank you to both the Ionia Department of Public Safety and the Ionia County Dive Team for providing these incredible real-world learning opportunities. Finally, students participated in Teen Court, providing them with a unique, hands-on opportunity to engage directly with the legal system. This experience not only enhanced their critical thinking abilities but also offered valuable insights into courtroom procedures, further enriching their educational journey.



## Ionia County Chamber Awards Dinner

Our Culinary Arts and Machine Tool programs had the opportunity to showcase their talents while supporting the community at the Ionia Area Chamber of Commerce Dinner & Awards Ceremony. The Culinary Arts students crafted a variety of delicious desserts, impressing attendees with their skills and creativity. The Machine Tool program contributed by designing and creating a custom sign for the event, demonstrating their precision and craftsmanship.

This collaboration not only provided valuable real-world experience for our students but also highlighted the impact of Career & Technical Education in our community. We are proud of their hard work and dedication!



## Fine Dining Night

At the annual Fine Dining Night, our Culinary Arts students impressed guests with their culinary expertise and attention to detail. They had the chance to serve a refined meal to their families, perfecting skills in gourmet cooking, fine table service, and hospitality. This hands-on event provided invaluable experience in presentation and delivering a top-tier dining experience.



## Welcome Mrs. Valdez

Give a big welcome to the newest member of the Ionia County Career Center team!



The graphic features the Ionia County Career Center logo in the top left. The main heading is 'Welcome to the Team!' in a cursive font. Below this is a paragraph of text introducing Mrs. Valdez as the new Administrative Assistant. To the right is a photograph of a family (a man, a woman, and a child) standing outdoors. Below the photo is a dark blue box with the text 'MRS. VALDEZ'. At the bottom left, there is a list of facts about Mrs. Valdez, including her education and interests, each preceded by a small icon.

**Ionia County Career Center**

### Welcome to the Team!

We're excited to introduce Mrs. Valdez as our new Administrative Assistant at the Ionia County Career Center! Mrs. Valdez brings her infectious positivity to our school, and we know she'll make a big impact here.

Mrs. Valdez is:

- ♥ A proud Ionia High School graduate
- 🎓 A current student at Grand Rapids Community College
- 💍 Recently married—congrats to the happy couple!

Outside of work, she loves:

- 👨‍👩‍👦 Spending quality time with her two Roys (her husband and son)
- 🏃 Running—she's training for a 10k and half marathon this year!
- 📖 Reading, cooking, and all things Disney 🍷
- 🏕 Camping, beach days, BBQs, and making memories with family and friends

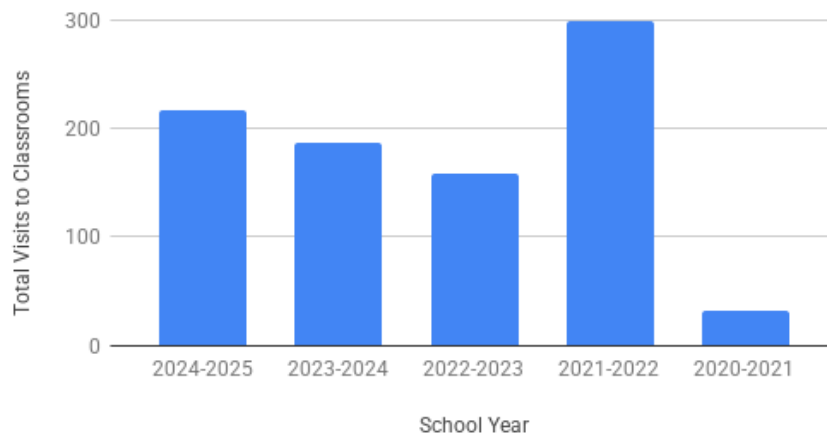
**MRS. VALDEZ**

## Open House

On February 20th, we hosted our annual Open House, giving families and community members a chance to connect with our school, staff, and programs. Originally set for February 6th, it was rescheduled due to widespread illness in Ionia County.

Despite the change, attendance was strong, marking the 2nd highest turnout in five years. Families explored classrooms, met teachers, and learned about academics and extracurriculars. This successful event showcases the dedication of our staff and the strong support of our school community.

Total Visits to Classrooms vs. School Year



## **Diesel SkillsUSA**

For the first time, students from our Ionia County Career Center participated in the SkillsUSA competition, where they demonstrated exceptional skills and dedication. We are incredibly proud of their accomplishments.

### **Action Skills:**

Hunter Roundtree – 1st Place!

### **Operator Competition:**

Grant Pine – 7th Place

Braden Bozung – 10th Place

Austin Thornton – 13th Place

Vander Nye – 14th Place

### **Diesel Repair:**

Landen Steffen – 6th Place

Cole Petersen – Placement TBD

Nelly Shippey – Placement TBD

### **Job Interview:**

Edward Zylstra

### **Extemporaneous Speaking:**

Mario Gallegos-Ortiz

### **Job Skills Demo A:**

Jeffery Ewing



## **2nd Year Diesel Students**

We are excited to announce that for the 2025-2026 school year, the Diesel Engineering program will be opening additional spots for second-year students. This expansion allows us to provide greater opportunities for students to continue developing their skills in this high-demand field. The second year of the Diesel Engineering program will offer students advanced training, hands-on experience, and exposure to the latest industry technologies, ensuring they are well-prepared for careers in diesel mechanics and engineering. This opportunity is part of our ongoing commitment to meeting the needs of our students and the growing demand for skilled workers in the diesel industry.

## Regional Health Career Competition

Healthcare Foundations and Health Occupations students recently participated in the Regional Health Career Competition, where they demonstrated their skills and knowledge across a variety of events. These included Medical Terminology, Professional Interview & Resume Evaluation, Pathophysiology, Medical Math, and the development and presentation of informative pieces on health-related diseases and careers. The Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) competitors showcased their expertise through a comprehensive test, two hands-on assessments, and CPR/AED procedures with bleeding precautions. We are proud to report that our students performed admirably and earned numerous awards in recognition of their hard work and dedication.



## NTHS Induction

We are excited to celebrate the induction of several outstanding students into the National Technical Honor Society (NTHS). This prestigious honor is awarded to students who have demonstrated exceptional academic performance, strong leadership qualities, and a commitment to excellence in their technical fields.

Congratulations to Robin Ward, Jonathon Rico, Autumn Reffitt, Brynn Labadie, Taylor Browne, and Matthew Blanshan for achieving this remarkable accomplishment. These students have shown dedication and perseverance in their studies and have met the high standards set by NTHS, making them deserving of this recognition.

Please join us in congratulating these new members as they continue to excel and lead in their respective technical disciplines.

