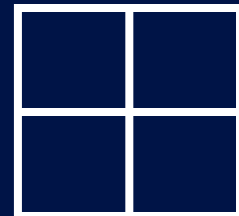


# THE WHITNALL WINDOW

SPRING 2021



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## THE SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE

As we wrap up the 2020-2021 school year, I sense a return. A return to color, a return to bloom. This may seem typical of any spring season, but this spring carries with it another return--a return to events as we knew them. Fundraisers, dances, graduations. It may seem counterintuitive for the end of a school year to feel like a return, but I am filled with so much hope as I look towards the next school year and the school years to follow.

Last school year saw the cancellation of many traditional events. But as I alluded to, those events are being held once again. In the middle of May, Whitnall High School held prom, utilizing the new courtyard, cafeteria, and multi-purpose space. We are holding an in-person commencement ceremony on Falcon Field for the class of 2021. These are just two familiar examples of the many in-person events that have returned this school year. It has been so wonderful to attend school fundraisers, sporting events, and to meet with staff members face-to-face. I look forward to even more of this in the 2021-2022 school year.



As we return to the things that we missed during the pandemic, we are being intentional about not leaving behind any lessons to be learned from the challenges. We are working with a research professor who conducted focus groups with teachers, students, and parents about their perceptions of the effectiveness of the district's efforts to support each student's learning needs throughout the pandemic. The compiled report will be shared at an upcoming board meeting and will be made available for the public.

Learning from the past school year and looking forward to the next is nothing new, but this spring, it feels particularly significant. This spring, it feels like a return.

*Lisa R. Olson*

Dr. Lisa L. Olson, Superintendent

#whitnALLIN

## BOARD UPDATES

Board members Kevin Stachowiak and Quin Brunette were re-elected to the Whitnall School Board on April 6 and sworn in for a new term at the April 26 board meeting. Congratulations, Kevin and Quin!

In February and April, the board met with their continuous improvement consultant to continue discussions on the district's strategic plan and to develop a specific school board goal. On May 24, the board approved their 2021-22 board goal, which reads: "Over the next year (2021-2022), we as a board will work collaboratively with district administration to develop a dashboard, so that we can track district performance as measured by finances/budget, student achievement/success, and employee engagement."



## STATE LEVEL INVOLVEMENT

Whitnall School District is a member of the Southeastern Wisconsin School Alliance (SWSA), which consists of school district administrators and school board members. SWSA is a regional approach to working together with policymakers to advocate for sound public education policies. Quin Brunette is Whitnall's board member liaison to SWSA. He attends monthly meetings in addition to legislative advocacy activities. Over the past few months, he has attended meetings with both republican and democratic members of the Joint Finance Committee to listen and learn as the biennial state budget is being created. Through SWSA, Quin has also participated in activities such as state superintendent candidate forums and medical update meetings led by Children's Hospital Chief Medical Officer and the President of Children's Medical Group.

## SCHOOL & COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Whitnall board members serve as liaisons to parent organizations as well as community organizations. Each of our buildings has a parent organization and each parent organization has a representative from the Whitnall School Board. Steven Butz works with the high school's booster club. Kevin Stachowiak works with the Whitnall Middle School PTO. Quin Brunette works with the Edgerton Elementary PTO. Quin can be seen to the right (top) helping with the Edgerton PTO's spaghetti dinner fundraiser. Jesse Stachowiak works with the Hales Corners Elementary PTO. To the right (middle), Jesse can be seen attending an HCE PTO meeting.



Our board members also serve as liaisons to community organizations. For example, Nancy Zaborowski represents the school board in her involvement with Greenfield's Department of Parks & Recreation. Jesse Stachowiak represents the school board in his involvement with the Hales Corner's Department of Parks and Recreation.

Board members' involvement in the community goes beyond acting in an official capacity. Nancy Zaborowski and Jesse Stachowiak can be seen to the right (bottom) attending the May social for the Hales Corners Chamber or Commerce, where they competed in Hales Corners trivia!



"If there is one thing that this past year has taught us, it is the importance of the relationship between adult and student. Whether a family chose in-person or virtual, we have seen those important relationships flourish and keep us all moving in the right direction. I have seen the in-person students find consistent comfort in going to a classroom and in knowing that there are smiles under the masks. Our virtual students and virtual teachers bonded by learning together how to best conduct school when not in the same room. This has been a trying year in many ways academically, socially, and mentally. But we have had many successes despite the trials, thanks to the people and relationships here at Whitnall."

**CHARLES TOLLEFSEN | WHITNALL HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPAL**

"The 2020-21 school year has been like no other that I've experienced in my 27 years in education. I am so proud of the perseverance displayed by our families, students, and staff throughout this ever changing and memorable time. We've shown creativity, as we transformed how we teach to meet the needs of students in both face-to-face and virtual learning environments. We've practiced adaptability, as we adjusted to new safety precautions by rethinking our classroom spaces, how we run school events, and even how we open and close a school year. Our students and staff have been through transformational experiences, and we know that families have been called on to do more. Our perseverance throughout this pandemic has strengthened relationships, and the bonds we have built during this difficult time will be the legacy of the Whitnall community as we move into next year and beyond. 'We're All In' this together."



**CHRIS D'ACQUISTO | WHITNALL MIDDLE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL**



"As the school year began, we had so many questions about what the days ahead might bring. With the final days of the 2020-21 school year in sight, it is important to celebrate the successes of the year, and there are MANY! As a district, we offered both in-person and virtual learning. Giving our families the choice helped everyone feel heard and respected. This year, student achievement was defined less by losses or lagging skills due to last spring's closure and more by truly understanding our students and planning for instruction with intentionality. We wanted to meet each day and each challenge with the courage to say that we will do what it takes to be here for our students and families. I am already feeling nostalgic; I can honestly say that this is yet another year that I won't forget. It was a year of being 'stronger together.'"

**LORI KOMAS | HALES CORNERS ELEMENTARY PRINCIPAL**

"This school year, at Edgerton Elementary, we saw the power of our community coming together for our students. As a group, we were determined to provide quality learning for our students in both in-person and virtual settings. Parents and educators came together to ensure that we were consistent with safety protocols so we could 'stay safe to stay open' for in-person learning. As well, we increased the rigor and quality of our virtual learning for those who choose that model for the year and for those students who temporarily found themselves in quarantine or isolation. We are incredibly grateful for the community support that made this unexpected year a great success for our students. At Edgerton Elementary, we're ALL in!"



**MEG ZEI | EDGERTON ELEMENTARY PRINCIPAL**

**RETIREES**



*From left to right*

- CINDY BROSSART** Hales Corners Elementary Physical Education Teacher, Joined Whitnall in 1988
- JIM GABLEMAN** Whitnall Middle School Counselor, Joined Whitnall in 2000
- KATHI GLICK** Hales Corners Elementary First Grade Teacher, Joined Whitnall in 1994
- KIM KENASTON** Hales Corners Elementary 4K Teacher, Joined Whitnall in 1989
- LISA KUSSLER** Whitnall High School Special Education Teacher, Joined Whitnall in 1989
- LYNN LEROY** Director of Teaching & Learning, Joined Whitnall in 2006
- SANDY SRAMEK-WEYKER** Whitnall Middle School Science Teacher, Joined Whitnall in 1995
- LORI WINDT** Edgerton Elementary Administrative Assistant, Joined Whitnall in 2003

**STAFF APPRECIATION**

The week of May 3rd was National Teacher Appreciation Week, but at Whitnall, we celebrated ALL staff. It took all of our employees being all in to make it through this past year. We started the week by sharing the message below with all staff.

**YOU DIDN'T QUACK UNDER PANDEMIC PRESSURE**

For over a year, you have been a duck (hear us out).

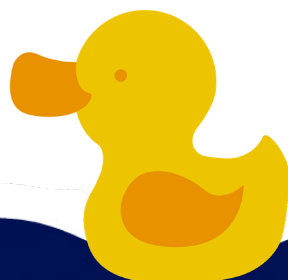
This pandemic has required school district employees to remain calm, cool, and collected on the surface, while kicking like crazy underneath.

Accepting, adapting, and achieving.

We have always been appreciative of our staff, but this challenging year has brought about new things to appreciate and has revealed that our appreciation is limitless, expanding with your endless displays of excellence.

It seems we are ducks too--lucky ducks--because we have you.

Thank you for staying afloat and, in turn, keeping Whitnall afloat. We didn't quack under pandemic pressure, because you didn't. Happy Staff Appreciation Week!



**ATHLETICS**



Over the last 18 months, the idea of athletics has been evolving on a day to day basis. This was a must in order to offer opportunities for our students to safely participate in the activities they love. With changing schedules, state/city/district protocols, lack of officials, and even lack of participation, this was no easy task. However, we are proud to say that Whitnall has done everything in our power to adapt, accommodate, and create opportunities for our students. Athletics may have been a bit different than in the past, but at least there was progression towards normalcy. We held successful fall and winter seasons and even completed an "alternate fall" season, March 8 - May 10. The alternate fall season was created by WIAA to offer districts the option to participate in fall contact sports in an alternate time slot, when the risk was likely to have decreased. Whitnall moved football and boys soccer to this time to guarantee the completion of a full season without interruptions. We are pleased to say that in this season our boys soccer team was crowned regional champions. Currently, we are in the traditional spring season and students are participating in baseball, softball, track and field, girls soccer, boys golf, and boys tennis. Whitnall is still participating but already bringing home accomplishments, such as the boys golf team winning the Woodland East Conference Championship. And some year-long sports have had some recent accomplishments as well; Whitnall Dance took third in hip hop and fifth in poms at state, and Whitnall Cheer took first place at state. Considering all the challenges, we want to acknowledge our coaches, our buildings and grounds workers, and our athletic department assistants. These seasons would not have been able to be completed without all of their hard work, flexibility, and passion for high school athletics. Go Falcons!

**DECA**

Two of our students have received international recognition for their involvement in DECA (the student marketing organization). Seniors Sydney Reinhard and Manas Arora have both been DECA members and competitors since their freshman year and, as a team, they have qualified for state the last three years and for internationals the last two years in their event, Travel and Tourism Marketing. This year, they qualified for internationals by taking first place in their event at the state competition, beating 45 top teams from around the state. At internationals, they competed against 47 of the best teams from around the world, advancing through the preliminary round and ultimately taking 2nd in the country and 7th in the world! An accomplishment unmatched in the history of Whitnall DECA. Both Sydney and Manas are Whitnall DECA officers; Sydney is this year's President, and Manas is this year's VP of Competition. In September, Sydney was recognized as State Member of the Month for her work on the State Leadership Council. Outside of DECA, Sydney and Manas are both at the very top of their class. Congratulations, Sydney and Manas!



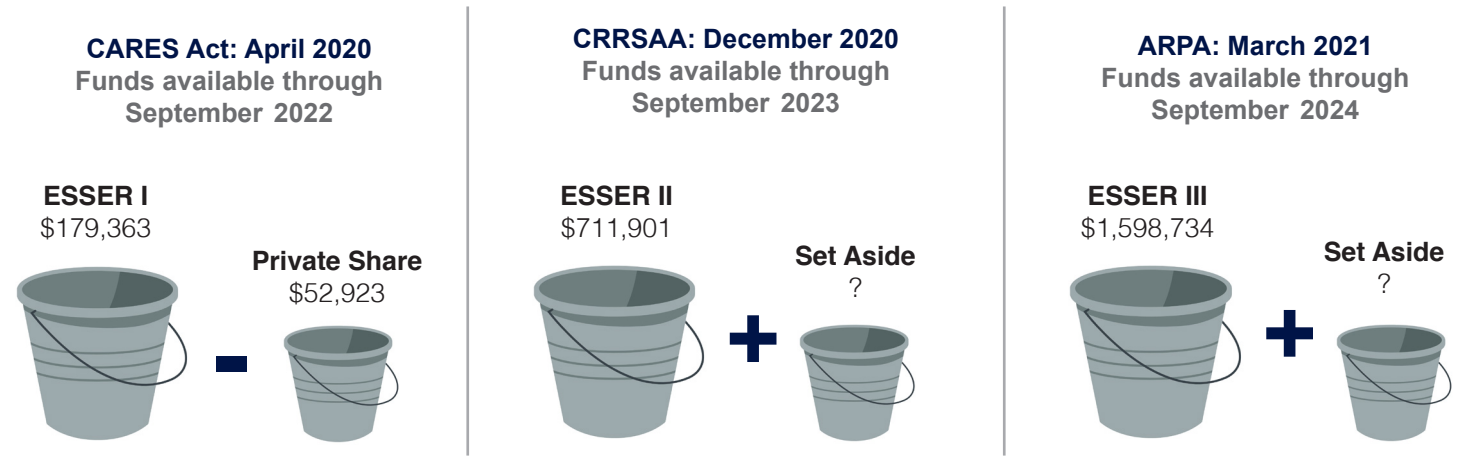
**ROTARY STUDENTS OF THE MONTH**

Each month, the Whitnall Park Rotary Club names a "Student of the Month." WPRC looks for students who are not only accomplished academically, but also exhibit strong school and community involvement. This year, four of the Students of the Month were from Whitnall High School. Congratulations to Morgan Ebert (left), Timothy Breunig (middle), Casey Erdmann (right), and Sydney Reinhard (pictured above). All four of these students excel academically while also distinguishing themselves through their involvement in an impressive variety of clubs, sports, and community service endeavors. It's not just Whitnall High School that is lucky to have these students; it's the entire community!



# 6 | ESSER FUNDING

Since April 2020, the federal government has passed three separate pieces of legislation in response to COVID-19. Each bill provided funding earmarked for public schools called “Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief” or ESSER for short. With three different rounds of funding, we label each funding allocation as ESSER I, ESSER II, and ESSER III. Each piece of legislation comes with slightly different stipulations on use and with varying timelines in which school districts must expend the funds. Below is a visual breakdown of the three different allocation amounts along with a brief explanation of each.



## ESSER I

ESSER I had a requirement to provide private schools within the borders of the district a share of the funds based on a formula. The final share to Whitnall School District was \$126,440. A portion of these dollars has gone towards the cost of implementing an online learning platform called Canvas. The rest of the allocation went towards the cost of the additional staffing needed in order to operate in a virtual setting for those families that chose distance learning for their children. These funds must be expended by September 30, 2022.

## ESSER II

ESSER II has an additional allocation, known as the “set aside” amount, that will still come to Whitnall, along with 173 other districts in the state, based on a formula of minutes that students were physically on site in 2020-2021. This data collection will occur over the summer and the final amount will be provided to Whitnall sometime after that count is collected and compared to the other 173 districts. At this time, Whitnall is planning to reimburse the Food Service Fund, which was depleted last spring. The fund was depleted due to maintaining staffing levels amid decreased revenues. Staffing levels were maintained due to the uncertainty of whether students would return to school, and revenues decreased because there were no students in the buildings. We will also determine the final incurred costs of virtual education and mitigation practices put in place in the 2020-2021 school year for reimbursement. These funds must be expended by September 30, 2023.

## ESSER III

ESSER III is the largest allocation with 20% of the funds mandated to go towards addressing “learning loss.” There is also an additional allocation (“set aside”), much like ESSER II, but there has not been any guidance as of yet on how those additional funds will be distributed. At this time, Whitnall is using approximately \$200,000 in a board-approved staffing plan for 2021-2022 in order to identify and address “learning loss.” With so many variables for the upcoming school year and beyond, the remaining funds will go towards areas identified by the district as most urgent. These funds must be expended by September 30, 2024.



ADVANCEMENT BELONGING COURAGE ADVANCEMENT BELONGING COURAGE



**PROUD  
HISTORY  
BRIGHT  
FUTURE**

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## WSD BOARD OF EDUCATION

**Jonathan Cagle** President, Hales Corners, Since 2014  
**Quin Brunette** Vice-President, Greenfield, Since 2012  
**Kevin Stachowiak** Clerk, Hales Corners, Since 2015  
**Steven Butz** Treasurer, Greenfield, Since 2018  
**Karen Mikolainis** Member, Hales Corners, Since 2019  
**Jesse Stachowiak** Member, Greenfield, Since 2020  
**Nancy Zaborowski** Member, Greenfield, Since 2008



## ALL ON BOARD COMMUNITY EVENT

We are excited to announce that, through our All On Board initiative, Falcon Field is getting a new video/scoreboard! Thank you to all of our local sponsors. We will be holding a grand opening community event in August. Watch our online channels for the details!

Newsletter feedback?  
Send to  
lvasquez@whitnall.com

Follow us on social media!



@whitnallschools for all three!