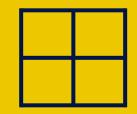
# THE WHITNALL WINDOW



FALL 24-25

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#### The Superintendent's Message

As we dive into the fall season, I'm thrilled to reflect on what has already been a remarkable start to the school year. The energy and enthusiasm in our classrooms, hallways, and athletic fields are truly inspiring, and it's a testament to the dedication of our students, families, and staff. The strong start we're seeing reaffirms what makes Whitnall such a special place for learning, growth, and community.

HONECON

Additionally, we have some wonderful achievements to celebrate. Whitnall High

School recently received the Silver Award for its outstanding Advanced Placement (AP) courses, a recognition of our commitment to rigorous academic standards. Moreover, Hales Corners Elementary has been named a 2024 National Blue Ribbon School, a prestigious honor that highlights the dedication of our teachers, students, and families.

I am also immensely proud of the Whitnall community's support in passing the facilities referendum on November 5. This achievement marks a significant step forward in our mission to provide safe, innovative, and inspiring spaces where our students can thrive. We look forward to continuing this collaboration as we move ahead, ensuring that each step reflects our shared commitment to excellence and student success.

Thank you once again for your unwavering support, and here's to a wonderful, productive school year ahead. Together, we're building a brighter future for Whitnall!

#### #whitnALLIN



#### **National Merit Semifinalists**

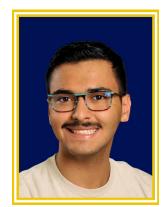
We are thrilled to celebrate an extraordinary achievement for two of our seniors: Emiliano Sanchez Quintanilla and Marina Walczak have been named semifinalists in the prestigious 70th Annual National Merit Scholarship Program! This accomplishment places them in the top 1% of students in the state on the PSAT—an exceptional and rare distinction that speaks to their dedication, academic excellence, and hard work.

The National Merit Scholarship Program is one of the most esteemed academic competitions in the nation, honoring students who demonstrate outstanding academic ability. For Emiliano and Marina, this recognition reflects their impressive achievements and commitment to their education.

To advance to the finalist round and be considered for a National Merit Scholarship, Emiliano and Marina will need to meet several additional requirements. These include maintaining an exceptional academic record in rigorous coursework, submitting SAT or ACT scores that affirm their PSAT performance, and receiving endorsement from school officials. They will also complete an application process that includes writing a personal essay. Their next steps are a testament to their resilience, and we look forward to supporting them as they complete their applications.

In the spring, around 7,000 National Merit Scholarships will be awarded, totaling nearly \$28 million from approximately 320 sponsors. We're all cheering you on, Emiliano and Marina, as you continue this journey. Congratulations on this tremendous accomplishment, and best of luck in the next phase of the program!

Whitnall is incredibly proud of you!



Emiliano Sanchez-Quintanilla



Marina Walczak

#### Athletics

**Boys Cross Country** Woodland East Conference Runner-Up **Girls Cross Country** Emily Teixeira: 1st Team All Conference & Individual State Qualifier **Football** Timo Blankenbhler: Scholar Athlete • Tanner Effertz (QB &P), Jayveon Gold (OLB), Taurean Harris (OL), Nate Kasten (DE), Max Pamtag (WR), & Beau Pokorny (DL): 1st Team All Conference • Jayveon Gold (RB) & Kate Kasten (TE): Honorable Mention **Boys Soccer** Alban Carka: Woodland East Player of the Year • Same Fowler: Scholar Athlete • Lucas Berndsen, Alban Carka, Gabe Gomez, Mark McSane, & Jacob Stasiewicz: 1st Team All Conference • Vance Gromowski: 2nd Team All Conference • Mason Jaklich & Justin Walker: Honorable Mention **Girls Swim & Dive** Rianna Dobbie (Diving): 1st Team All Conference • Chelsea McDowell (Diving) & Mya Miles (50 Free): 2nd Team All Conference **Girls Tennis** Woodland East Conference Team Runner-Up • Tierney Brick: Woodland East Conference Singles 1 Champion, Sectional Qualifier Singles 1, State Qualifier Singles 1 **Boys Volleyball** Zac Millmann: Scholar Athlete • Kyle Klumb: 1st Team All Conference • Luke Parkinson: 2nd Team All Conference • AJ Capione, AJ, Marek, Alex Meyer, & Nolan Miller: Honorable Mention **Girls Volleyball** Woodland East Conference Champions • Regional Final Qualifier • Jordan Dalland: Woodland East & All Woodland Player of the Year • Kasey Bieganski: Scholar Athlete • Kasey Bieganski, Jordan Dalland, & Kaitlyn Kaye: 1st Team All Conference • Sarah Bystra & Jacey Kawczynski: 2nd Team All Conference • Kennedy DeZur & Lydia Johnson: Honorable Mention

#### 2024 NATIONAL BLUE RIBBON SCHOOL | 3

We are thrilled to announce that Hales Corners Elementary School has been named a 2024 National Blue Ribbon School by the U.S. Department of Education! This prestigious honor celebrates not only exceptional academic performance but also the school's unwavering commitment to creating equitable opportunities and closing achievement gaps for all students.

The recognition places Hales Corners Elementary among an elite group of schools nationwide—a true testament to the dedication of our students, educators, and families. U.S. Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona highlighted this honor as a celebration of "exceptional achievements" and a model of "effective teaching and intentional collaboration." This acknowledgment reflects the hard work and collaborative spirit that infuses our entire school community.

To celebrate this honor, school leadership and a couple honored staff members proudly represented Hales Corners Elementary School at the National Blue Ribbon Schools Recognition Ceremony on November 8, 2024 in Washington, D.C. In honor of this distinction, the school will re-



ceived a commemorative National Blue Ribbon School plaque and flag, which will be displayed as a symbol of excellence and pride for our entire community.

Principal Mrs. Komas shared her pride in the accomplishment: "Being recognized as a National Blue Ribbon School is an incredible honor for our students, staff, and community. This achievement reflects our commitment to providing a nurturing and challenging educational environment for all students. We are proud of the hard work and dedication that has led to this accomplishment."

Whitnall School District Superintendent Dr. Brady Reinke echoed this sentiment, emphasizing, "We are incredibly proud of Hales Corners Elementary School for receiving the 2024 National Blue Ribbon Award. This prestigious honor showcases the dedication of our students, staff, and families, as well as the strong support from our entire community. Together, we have created a learning environment where every student can thrive, and this recognition affirms our shared commitment to excellence."

Hales Corners Elementary School stands among the best in the nation in both categories recognized by the program: Exemplary High Performing Schools and Exemplary Achievement Gap Closing Schools. This achievement is more than a recognition; it is a celebration of what our community can accomplish together.

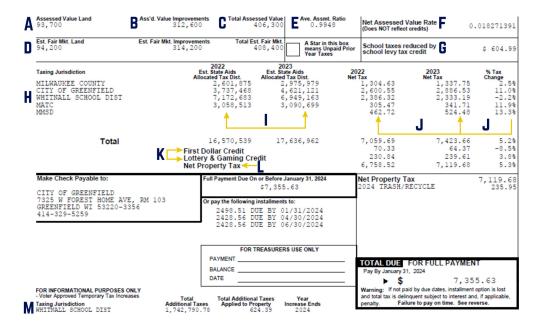
Congratulations to the Hales Corners Elementary—your dedication to excellence and student success makes our entire Whitnall community proud!



#### 4 | SCHOOL FINANCE

#### **Making Sense of Your Property Tax Bill**

Tax bills are mailed annually in mid-December. The following information will help to understand the different sections of the tax statement. There are three taxing municipalities within Whitnall School District boundaries. The image below shows a tax statement from 2023. Each municipality bill might look a little different, but the same general information is provided. Each **blue letter** corresponds to a description below the image. Please note an important piece of information is not included on your property tax bill – the mill rate. The mill rate is the tax rate per \$1,000 of estimated fair market value. Whitnall School District's 2023 mill rate was the lowest it has ever been at \$7.15. With the passing of the referendum, it is now \$7.18.



(A) Assessed Value of Land: This is the value of the land on your property, determined by an assessor.

(B) Assessed Value of Improvements: This is the value of buildings or other structures on your property, determined by an assessor.

(C) Total Assessed Value: This combines the value of your land and buildings. It may differ from current fair market value and is used to determine your property tax based on the tax rate (F).

(D) Total Estimated Fair Market Value: This reflects the estimated selling price of your property under current market conditions, including both land and buildings.

(E) Average Assessment Ratio: This is a comparison of your assessed value to the fair market value. It should fall between .9 and 1.10 or a reassessment must be done.

(F) Net Assessed Value Rate (Tax Rate): This rate combines the tax rates of all taxing bodies, like your city, county, and school district. It's multiplied by your total assessed value to determine your property tax.

(G) School Levy Tax Credit: This is a credit that helps reduce property taxes, applied to all eligible properties. Though it doesn't go directly to schools, the state counts it as part of its support for education.

(H) Taxing Jurisdiction: This includes all entities that can levy taxes on your property, such as the state, city, county, school district, local technical colleges, and in some cases, special districts like the Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District (MMSD).
(I) State Aid: This shows how much revenue each taxing jurisdiction received from the state compared to the previous year. It helps see if state funding has increased or decreased year over year.

(J) Net Tax: This is the total tax amount for each taxing entity, with last year's figures included to show any change.

(K) First Dollar Credit and Lottery and Gaming Credit: These are credits that help lower property taxes.

(L) Net Property Tax: This is your total property tax after applying credits like the lottery and gaming credit.

(M) Voter-Approved Temporary Tax Increases: These are additional taxes approved by community vote to fund specific school or municipal projects. This item shows who requested it, the total amount left to pay, and what amount applies to this year's taxes. It is included in your Net Tax (J)

If you would like to get an ESTIMATE of your 2024 property tax for the Whitnall School District portion ONLY take your Total Estimated Fair Market Value (Line D) and multiply it by the 2024 mill rate (\$7.18). Subtract off the School Levy Tax Credit amount (item G).

#### **Thank You Whitnall Community!**

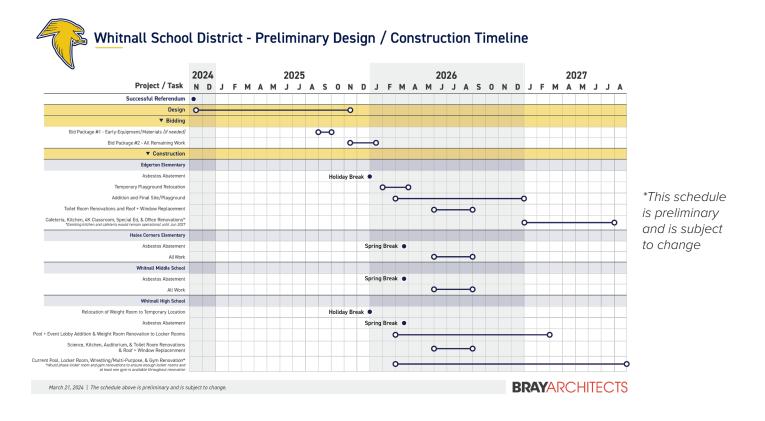
We are pleased to announce that the Whitnall School District's facilities referendum was approved by voters on November 5. This approval enables us to move forward with essential projects across our district, addressing infrastructure needs, expanding learning spaces, and creating environments that will serve our students for generations.

Superintendent Dr. Brady Reinke expresses his appreciation, stating, "We are extremely grateful for our community's support and the productive conversations we've had about the future of our schools over the past several months. This referendum will enable us to provide students and staff with the modern facilities they need to succeed. We look forward to continuing this partnership as we move forward."

Board President Cassie Rainer echoed this sentiment, adding, "This outcome reflects our community's commitment to creating the best possible learning environments for our students. We are grateful for your trust and excited to bring these projects to life, knowing they'll positively impact our schools for years to come."

These projects were developed to address growing concerns about aging facilities, space constraints, and long-term capital needs. Groundbreaking is planned for early 2026, and we will keep the community updated on each stage of the process.

Thank you once again for your support and partnership in creating a brighter future for Whitnall School District!



#### **Stay Connected**

We encourage all community members to stay engaged in this journey by visiting our webiste for regular updates. Simply type in whitnall.com/referendum2024. If you have any questions or wish to request more information, we have established a dedicated email account for referendum related inquiries: referendum2024@whitnall.com. We also encourage you to attend or watch our school board meetings. All meetings are live streamed and saved on our district YouTube channel.

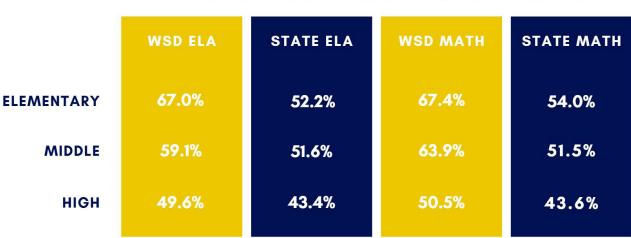
#### 6 | STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Each spring, students across Wisconsin participate in state assessments as part of the Wisconsin State Assessment System (WSAS). These assessments help us understand how well students are progressing in core subjects like English, Math, Science, and Social Studies, and how they compare to state academic standards.

In the spring of 2024, Whitnall students took the following state assessments:

- Wisconsin Forward Exam: Taken by students in grades 3-8 for English Language Arts and Math, grades 4 and 8 for Science, and grades 4, 8, and 10 for Social Studies.
- **PreACT Secure:** Administered to students in grades 9 and 10, covering English, Reading, Math, and Science.
- ACT with Writing: Taken by grade 11 students, testing English, Reading, Math, Science, and Writing.
- Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM): Measures progress for students with significant cognitive disabilities in grades 3-11.

For the third year in a row, we're proud to report that Whitnall students scored above the state average in English Language Arts and Math across elementary, middle, and high school levels. This success is a reflection of the dedication and hard work of both our students and our teachers. Their commitment to excellence has a noticeable impact across our district.



#### WSD V. STATE AVERAGES IN ELA & MATH

#### **CHANGES TO STATE ASSESSMENTS**

This year, the Wisconsin Forward Exam was updated to better align with the latest state standards in English Language Arts and Mathematics. Here's what's new:

- ELA Changes: A distinct reading assessment has been added, and the listening section has been removed.
- New Benchmarks: Educators from around Wisconsin helped set new benchmarks, creating a fresh score scale to determine whether students meet state standards.

Additionally, performance levels for the PreACT and ACT exams were updated by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. Proficiency levels for all assessments now use these terms: Developing, Approaching, Meeting, and Advanced.

Because of these changes, proficiency rates from the 2023-24 assessments are not directly comparable to previous years. However, we're excited to share that Whitnall School District students in Grades 3-11 *performed above the state average in the Meeting and Advanced categories this spring.* 

Thank you to our incredible students, families, and teachers for their dedication and support in making Whitnall a place of high achievement!

#### ACT 20 | 7

In July 2023, Wisconsin Act 20 was signed into law, bringing changes to early literacy instruction, screening, and intervention for students in grades K4-3. Starting in winter 2025, our district, along with others across Wisconsin, will implement updated literacy screening and diagnostic procedures. This new law aims to strengthen literacy support for young learners and ensure that every child receives the resources they need to thrive in reading. Here's what's new:

- 1. Continued High-Quality Instruction: All Whitnall elementary students will continue to benefit from our comprehensive literacy curriculum, Wonders. Our dedicated teachers will continue to use differentiated instructional methods and materials tailored to meet the unique needs of each student.
- 2. Universal Early Reading Screening: Students in Grades K5-3 will undergo reading screening assessments in Winter and Spring 2025 using a new state-selected reading screening tool, aimswebPlus by Pearson. This assessment will help us identify students who may need additional support in their literacy journey. Students in K4 will also participate in this reading screening in Spring 2025. Parents will be notified of the results of these assessments for their student(s). In future school years, all K4-3 students will also be screened in reading using the aimswebPlus assessment in fall.
- 3. Diagnostic Assessments: For K5-3 students scoring below the 25th percentile on the aimswebPlus screener, we will conduct additional diagnostic assessments to identify specific areas requiring additional support. Parents will receive detailed reports on these assessments.
- 4. Personal Reading Plans (PRP): K5-3 students scoring below the 25th percentile on the aimswebPlus screener, indicating a need for additional reading support, will also receive a Personal Reading Plan. This plan will outline targeted interventions, personalized goals, and strategies for improvement. We will share these plans with parents and provide regular updates on their child's progress throughout the year. We understand the importance of parental involvement in a child's education, especially in literacy development. To support this, the PRP will include practical strategies for parents to implement at home to reinforce classroom learning.

Along with these assessment changes, Whitnall educators who work with students in Grades K4-3 are currently participating in the AIM Pathways to Proficient Reading program, a 55-hour professional learning experience emphasizing research and instructional strategies for teaching the science of reading. We are proud of our educators for tackling such an intensive program and for the hard work they have put into this new learning!



#### 8 | INDUCTIONS

#### **Athletic Hall of Fame**

During our Homecoming celebrations, we had the pleasure of inducting our 2024 Whitnall High School Athletic Hall of Fame recipients! The Hall of Fame is dedicated to recognizing outstanding athletes, coaches, and supporters who have played a pivotal role in shaping Whitnall's rich athletic history. It's a yearly tradition that allows us to celebrate and inspire continued support for our athletic programs from alumni and the Whitnall community.

Our Hall of Fame honors individuals across three nomination categories: Athletic Achievements: Recognizing former student-athletes who excelled in sports at Whitnall High School. Coaching Successes: Honoring former coaches whose leadership and dedication have left a lasting impact. Distinguished Service and Contributions: Celebrating those who have made invaluable contributions to Whitnall athletics.

#### Congratulations to our 2024 Inductees:

James Blackburn | Coach | Boys and Girls Cross Country & Track and Field Kevin Oelstrom | Athlete | Boys Cross Country & Boys Track and Field | Class of 2003 Emmy Salviski | Athlete | Girls Swim | Class of 2003

These individuals were celebrated with an announcement at halftime during our Homecoming football game, and their formal induction ceremony followed the next morning. During the ceremony, we heard heartfelt remarks from both the nominators and the inductees, highlighting their incredible contributions. The ceremony concluded with the unveiling of the updated Hall of Fame display, located at the athletic entrance of Whitnall High School.

Thank you to everyone who joined us in celebrating our inductees and honoring Whitnall's athletic legacy. We encourage you to visit the display at an upcoming event and experience this celebration of Whitnall pride and tradition. For more information on our Hall of Fame recipients and to read about past inductees, visit the Hall of Fame page on our website. Nominations for next year's Hall of Fame class will open on January 1, 2025.

Congratulations once again to our 2024 Hall of Fame inductees—James, Kevin, and Emmy! Thank you for your remarkable contributions to Whitnall athletics!



#### **National Honor Society**

On October 15, we were honored to induct 47 exceptional students into the Charles B. Whitnall Chapter of the National Honor Society! This national organization, is built upon four core pillars: scholarship, leadership, service, and character. Each inductee has shown an outstanding commitment to these values through their academic and personal achievements.

To be considered for the NHS, students must maintain a minimum 3.5 GPA after four semesters of high school and complete an application process. As part of their application, students write an essay detailing how they embody NHS's core values. A team of staff members carefully reviews each application, selecting those who will join this esteemed organization.



We are incredibly proud of these students for their dedication and hard work. Congratulations to our newest NHS members on this well-deserved achievement!

#### COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT | 9

#### WHS DECA "Trick or Can" Food Drive

Whitnall High School's DECA chapter recently concluded its annual "Trick or Can" Food Drive, and this year's theme, "Be the 1," truly motivated our community to shine! Through the combined efforts of students, families, and staff, we are excited to share that a remarkable total of 3,351 non-perishable items were collected.

These donations will be provided to the Hunger Task Force, ensuring that families in our area receive the support they need during the upcoming holiday season. This annual drive not only raises essential food items but also fosters a spirit of generosity and community involvement among our students.



A heartfelt thank you to everyone who participated, donated, and supported this meaningful initiative. Together, we've made a significant impact, proving that when we come together, we can truly "Be the 1" in helping those in need!

#### Whitnall Middle School Veterans Day Program

On Friday, November 8, Whitnall Middle School proudly hosted its annual Veterans Day program, "A Salute to Our Veterans." This cherished event brought together students, staff, families, and nearly 100 veterans from our community to honor the brave men and women who have served in our armed forces.

The morning began with a heartfelt ceremony, featuring guest speakers and local veterans who shared their experiences and insights. Following the ceremony, students and attendees participated in breakout sessions designed to deepen their understanding of veterans' sacrifices and discuss ways to support them within our community.

A complimentary lunch is also provided for all attendees, offering a chance for connection and conversation with our community's veterans. This special day not only paid tribute to our veterans but also strengthened the bond between our school and the community.

In conjunction with this program, WMS holds a student-led fundraiser each year to support a veteran-focused organization. This year, our students chose Canine Companions, an organization that provides service dogs to veterans free of charge.

We're grateful for the incredible support from the Whitnall community and look forward to this meaningful tradition that continues to bring us closer to our veterans and honor their legacy.



#### WHS & Youth Apprenticeship Program Trades Day

On November 6, Whitnall High School, in partnership with the Youth Apprenticeship Program, hosted its annual Trades Day, drawing over 800 students from more than 15 area schools.

The event featured 60 booths where students explored a wide range of trade careers through hands-on demonstrations and interactive displays. Attendees had the opportunity to learn about dual enrollment programs at Milwaukee Area Technical College (MATC) and Waukesha County Technical College (WCTC), highlighting educational pathways that align with their career interests in the trades. Trades Day provided an invaluable experience for students, offering insights into future career opportunities and sparking inspiration in the next generation of skilled professionals.



### 10 | BOARD BRIEF

#### **Board Development with Dr. Pritzl**

The Whitnall School Board recently teamed up with Dr. Lee Pritzl from Elevated Performance 4U for a unique professional development series focused on enhancing team cohesion and leadership effectiveness. Through tailored activities and valuable discussions led by Dr. Pritzl, board members deepened their understanding of teamwork, integrity, and commitment to student success.

One of the most impactful activities was the "Board Integrity" exercise, where members assessed real-life scenarios of poor decision-making by other school boards, represented by drilling holes in a wooden board to symbolize the erosion of trust. In a powerful gesture, each board member signed a second, undamaged board as a pledge to uphold integrity moving forward. This exercise was turned into a beautiful piece of artwork and gifted to the

board by Dr. Reinke, showcasing their commitment to integrity. A special thank you to Chris Jackson, WHS Tech Ed teacher, for designing the artwork display, and senior Connor Andreshak for crafting it!

Reflecting on the session, Dr. Pritzl said, "It was rewarding working with a team of leaders who have different perspectives yet share the common ground of student success." Superintendent Dr. Brady Reinke added, "I'm incredibly excited about the dedication and effort our School Board is putting into refining their leadership and teamwork. The work they are doing, particularly through Dr. Pritzl's guidance is invaluable in maintaining a foundation of integrity and shared commitment to our students' success."

The Whitnall School Board is committed to continuous improvement and is eager to apply the insights gained through this valuable professional development experience.

#### **WASB Business Honor Roll Recipients**

The Whitnall School Board recently honored Pieper Power, Waukesha County Technical College (WCTC), and the Center for Healthcare Careers for their invaluable support of our schools, earning each organization

a place on the Wisconsin Association of School Boards' (WASB) 2024 Business Honor Roll.

The WASB Business Honor Roll highlights organizations that contribute resources or offer learning opportunities to benefit students and staff. Each of the honored businesses has played a vital role in supporting Whitnall students in their educational journeys.

These partnerships have provided unique opportunities for Whitnall students:

- **Pieper Power** organized a hands-on demonstration day focused on careers in electrical work and sponsored a student in the Youth Apprenticeship program.
- **WCTC** collaborated to establish Whitnall's CNA Lab, allowing 80 students this semester alone to complete certified nursing assistant training.
- **Center for Healthcare Careers** supported the development of a Medical Assistant Lab, enabling students to complete clinicals and certification exams, readying them for healthcare careers.

"These partnerships equip our students with the skills they need to succeed while addressing workforce demands," shared Superintendent Dr. Brady Reinke.

School Board President Cassie Rainer emphasized the importance of these community connections, stating, "The collaboration between our schools and local businesses is essential in preparing our students for future success. We are grateful for the ongoing support from Pieper Power, WCTC, and the Center for Healthcare Careers, which helps us create meaningful learning experiences for our students."



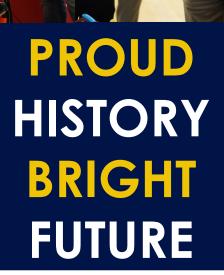






#### PHOTOS | 11

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## THE WHITNALL

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#### WSD Board of Education

Cassie Rainer Rachel Scherrer Karen Mikolainis Jason Craig Sarah Blonsky Quin Brunette Jesse Stachowiak President, Hales Corners Vice President, Hales Corners Treasurer, Hales Corners Clerk, Franklin Member, Greenfield Member, Greenfield



## **High School Musical**

Whitnall High School is putting on Little Women-The Broadway Musical. The performances are December 13 & 14 at 7 PM and December 15 at 2 PM. Tickets must be bought in advance; you can buy them by visiting whitnall.com! Our annual Senior Dinner will be hosted on December 12. To purchase a ticket for the Senior Dinner visit the high school website or stop by the high school main office during school hours to pay with cash or check. The deadline to purchase tickets is December 2.

## K4 Registration Opens January 2025

This year, priority registration will open on January 27, 2025. Families should plan to register online using the registration link on our website under "Families". Families will be asked to indicate their preferred session (AM or PM) on their child's registration. A lottery system will then determine the order in which placement requests will be considered for our AM or PM sessions of K4. The AM/PM lottery will be held on March 3, 2025. A waiting list will be created for the AM/PM preferences. For general questions please call 414-525-8411 or email kposs@whitnall.com.

Newsletter feedback? Send to blitza@whitnall.com

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