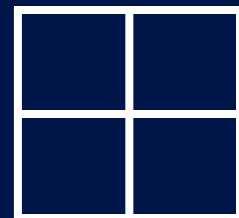


THE WHITNALL WINDOW

SPRING 2018



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THE SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE

Following the harrowing school incident in Florida, I have communicated several times to parents and students. While our focus at Whitnall is on learning, we make the physical and emotional safety of our students and staff a top priority. We also know that it is a priority for the community, based on the results of our referendum survey. The Whitnall Board of Education is committed to making the district a safe learning environment for all and has made safety and security a monthly agenda topic.

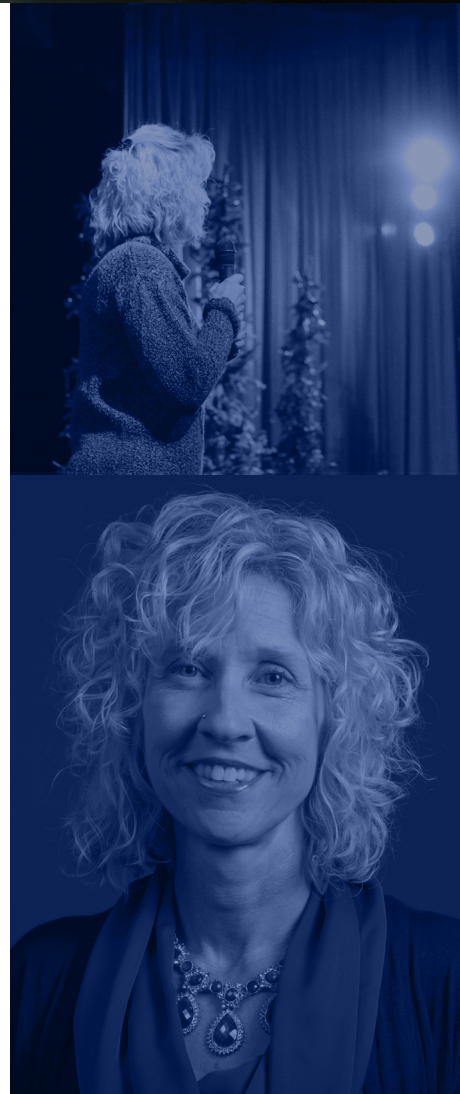
As a district, we work closely with a variety of law enforcement and safety agencies and have improved our secure entrances in addition to other precautionary measures in our buildings. We also regularly review our safety procedures and conduct safety drills with our students and staff. As social media has become an integral part of our lives, it has also expanded our arena to monitor for safety and suspicious activity. We continue to encourage all our stakeholders to "see something, say something."

In the wake of unfathomable events throughout our nation, there has been discussion around the direction of our country, society, and youth. In light of all of the uncertainty, I want to share with you two experiences that I had recently with Whitnall students. Our first graders at Edgerton Elementary invited me to speak to them about leadership and my job. Students asked questions, and we discussed the traits of a good leader. At the very end, one first grader raised his hand and asked, "So, what inspired you to become a superintendent?" What a beautiful question. Can you imagine if that first grader asked that of everyone he met? Later that same day, I heard one of our seniors speak as the Rotary Student of the Month and was amazed at her goals and passions, as well as her ability to articulate them. She referenced her experience participating in a courage retreat at school and talked about her desire to inspire others, both in her leadership roles in school and in her future career.

Every day, I am amazed and inspired by our learners. Observing our students in classrooms, hallways, concerts, on athletic fields, and in the community is heartening. We should all be proud of our youth and optimistic about the future.

Lisa L. Olson

Dr. Lisa L. Olson, Superintendent



HOW MIGHT WE ENGAGE LEARNERS IN A WAY THAT FOSTERS INNOVATION, RISK-TAKING,
AND EXPLORATION TO ATTAIN PERSONAL LEARNING GOALS WITHOUT THE FEAR OF FAILURE?

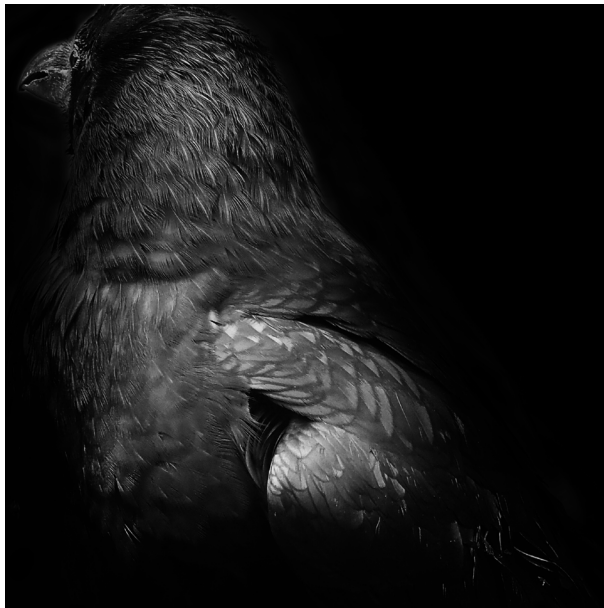
Student Spotlights

Leena Meyers



Each year, the Alliance of Young Artists & Writers runs a program called The Scholastic Art and Writing Awards. Their aim is “...to give those high school students who demonstrate superior talent and achievement in things of the spirit and of the mind at least a fraction of the honors and rewards accorded to their athletic classmates for demonstrating their bodily skills.” –Maurice R. Robinson, Founder. Around 350,000 works are entered by students each year. Works are judged first on a state level and can receive honorable mentions, silver keys, or gold keys. For Wisconsin, 386 works (out of 3,754 entries) receiving silver and gold keys have their work displayed in the Milwaukee Art Museum from Feb. 3rd to March 18th and were recognized in a ceremony there. Those who receive gold keys advance to the national level of judging. If chosen, their works receive national medals in New York City. Whitnall senior, Leena Meyers, was awarded two honorable mentions, one silver key, and two gold keys this year. To the left is Leena with her science teacher, Jessica Tasev, at the ceremony. Below are Leena’s two gold keys from this year!

#WhitnallPride



Grace, Ayla, Lily, and Hailey

Because bathrooms tend to have negative messages written on the walls, these middle school learners took it upon themselves to add a large, positive message. Now, whenever someone enters this bathroom, they are reminded that, “One kind word can change someone’s entire day.” This project was part of their Girl Scout Silver Award. Awesome work, Grace, Ayla, Lily, and Hailey! Thank you for keeping Whitnall kind. We are so proud of you!

#WhitnallPride



Student Achievement

Throughout the course of every school year, districts continually collect, analyze, and respond to a variety of data sets and indicators. Some of these data sources are publicly very familiar, while others are less-known outside of the educational setting.

Wisconsin State Testing

Whitnall School District, like all public school districts, is subject to external testing measures, which are mandated by the state of Wisconsin. For many years, students in both elementary and secondary grades participated in what was known as the Wisconsin Knowledge and Concepts Examination (WKCE). When the WKCE was found to be lagging in rigor compared to other states' testing measures, the test began to undergo changes. During the 2015-16 school year, Wisconsin rolled out a new assessment called the Wisconsin Forward Exam. The Forward Exam is designed to gauge how well students are doing in relation to the Wisconsin Academic Standards. These standards outline what students should know and be able to do in order to be college and career ready. The Forward Exam is administered online in the spring of each school year at:

- grades 3-8 in English Language Arts (ELA) and mathematics,
- grades 4 and 8 in Science and,
- grades 4, 8, and 10 in Social Studies.

Accommodations and supports for students with disabilities and/or English language learners are built into the system so that the progress of students can be accurately measured. The Forward Exam is a customized assessment with innovative item types that includes test items reviewed and approved by Wisconsin educators.

The ACT exam has long been familiar to many as a college entrance exam. Many states, including Wisconsin, now require the ACT suite as part of the state testing system. As of 2015, all 11th-graders now take the ACT exam in Wisconsin, as well as the ACT WorkKeys examination. The ACT Aspire Early High School exam is administered to 9th and 10th graders throughout the state, and serves as a prediction tool for future ACT performance.

In addition to the Forward Exam in grades 3-8, ACT Aspire in grades 9-10, and ACT and ACT WorkKeys in grade 11, these other state assessments are also given:

- PALS: an early literacy screener required for all 4K - 2nd graders
- ACT ASPIRE: considered a "pre-ACT" test required for all 9th and 10th graders
- ACCESS: measures English language proficiency for English language learners
- Civics Exam: a graduation requirement comprised of the 100 questions from the US Naturalization Test

Local Assessments and Services

WSD also administers local assessments at various grade levels to determine how students are progressing in conjunction with state and or national standards, and this information, in combination with state and classroom performance data, is used to provide varied levels of service to students according to need. Students are offered interventions to address areas in need of support and extension opportunities when they are exceeding expected levels of performance. Students who need deeper levels of support may be referred for special education or gifted programming.

Beyond Test Scores: *Redefining Ready!*

In recognition of the fact that student achievement is more than a numerical score, the School Superintendents Association has launched a national initiative called *Redefining Ready!*, which introduces new research-based metrics to assess that students are college-ready, career-ready, and life-ready. *Redefining Ready!* acknowledges that students learn in a variety of ways and should be allowed to demonstrate their readiness in a manner which best suits them individually. The new readiness indicators, developed from research by world-class organizations, more accurately reflect the educational landscape of the 21st century. Multiple metrics include Advanced Placement courses, Algebra II, early college credits, industry credentials, attendance, community service, among others.

WSD is currently collaborating with other regional school districts to create a common understanding of *Redefining Ready!* metrics and will work to develop a unique district dashboard, which will define Whitnall's profile of a successful graduate. WSD curriculum, programs, courses, and career pathways will be developed and refined in accordance with the district dashboard. The Whitnall Board of Education has been learning more about *Redefining Ready!* and historical student achievement data at Whitnall. At each board meeting, we have dedicated time to review different achievement data and plan to have our district dashboard ready for the 2018-19 school year.

Referendum

The Question

Shall the Whitnall School District, Milwaukee County, Wisconsin be authorized to issue pursuant to Chapter 67 of the Wisconsin Statutes, general obligation bonds in an amount not to exceed \$16,160,000 for the public purpose of paying the cost of a school building and improvement program consisting of: District-wide infrastructure and building system improvements; updates for ADA compliance at Edgerton Elementary School; construction of additions for classrooms and a secure main entrance, site improvements and related demolition of portions of the building at Hales Corners Elementary School; science lab renovations and updates for ADA compliance at Whitnall Middle School; technical education, art and business education renovations, updates for ADA compliance, pool improvements and site improvements at Whitnall High School; and acquisition of related furnishings, fixtures, and equipment?

The Logo



This total referendum amount and correlating mill rate increase are a reflection of both 2015 referendum questions combined. ▶

The Comparison

	Unsuccessful 2015	Proposed 2018
??	2 Ballot Questions	1 Ballot Question
🏫	2 Schools Improved	4 Schools Improved
🧑🧑	678 Learners Impacted	2,523 Learners Impacted
💰	Total \$29,400,000* Mill Rate \$1.83*	Total \$16,160,000 Mill Rate \$0.53

The Investment

Referendum Amount:	\$16,160,000
Estimated mill rate impact (over 2017–18 mill rate):	\$0.53

Estimated tax impact on property with fair market value of:

\$100,000 Property	Annual Impact	\$53.00
	Monthly Impact	\$4.42
\$150,000 Property	Annual Impact	\$79.50
	Monthly Impact	\$6.63
\$200,000 Property	Annual Impact	\$106.00
	Monthly Impact	\$8.83

ASSUMPTIONS | Estimated Interest Rate of 3.5–4%, Mill Rate based on 2017 Equalized Valuation (TID-OUT) of \$1,636,387,500 with annual growth of 0.5%
Information provided by Robert W. Baird & Co. Incorporated

The Priorities

Based on community survey results and the facilities study completed by Bray Architects, three areas of priority were identified:

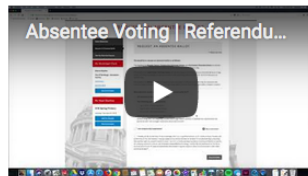
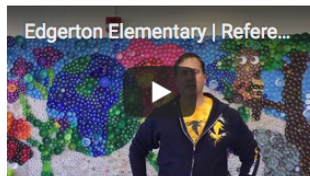
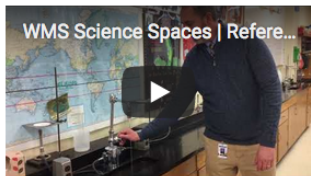
-  > SCHOOL SAFETY
-  > BUILDING SYSTEMS/INFRASTRUCTURE
-  > LEARNING SPACES

A majority of community survey respondents would support a referendum of \$16,250,000 or less.

Referendum (continued)

Virtual Tours

On February 15, February 20, and March 5, the Whitnall School District held informational sessions followed by tours. There is one more on March 22 at 6:30 PM in our Community Board Room. If you were unable to attend any of the past sessions and are unable to attend on March 22, you can visit our website for lots of information and for videos that serve as virtual tours. There is a video on the history of the referendum and a video on the tax impact of the referendum. You can then see the needs at each of the buildings and hear the proposed solutions. Finally, there is a video that walks you through the process of requesting an absentee ballot; voting falls on our spring break. Check out our referendum page at www.whitnall.com/referendum or scan the QR code to the right!



←
If you were on our referendum page right now, you'd be able to click on each of these videos and **learn, learn, learn!**

FAQ

Q: How long is the term of the loan?

A: Statutorily, a borrowing cannot exceed 20 years.

Q: What is Whitnall School District's current total mill rate?

A: The school district's mill rate for both debt and operations for 2017-18 was \$10.09 per \$1,000 of property value. This equates to an estimated \$1,009 on a \$100,000 property.

Q: If our current mill rate is \$10.09, that means, if the referendum is approved, the mill rate next year will be \$10.62?

A: We are expecting an increase in state aid (the money that keeps property taxes down) for 2018-19. Therefore, **if the referendum passes, we do not expect total district taxes to increase** beyond the current mill rate of \$10.09.

Q: How can I vote if I will be out of town on April 3rd?

A: To vote absentee, go to www.myvote.wi.gov. All the way to the right of the site's top menu is Vote Absentee. Click this menu item and follow the directions to request an absentee ballot!



Social Emotional Learning

The district identified social emotional learning as a priority for the 2017-18 school year. Within social emotional learning, we have been focusing on several key areas: moving pupil services staff to building assignments, trauma sensitive school training, mental health first aid training, and parent and staff outreach.

At the elementary level, we have a social worker at HCE and a school psychologist at EES. WMS has a social worker and school psychologist. WHS has a social worker. Together with the school counselors, these staff members address individual student emotional and school needs. They also work with homeless students, truancy, and professional development.

Two members from each school have participated in extensive trauma sensitive school training and are charged with assisting the district in planning for future implementation. These practices work hand in hand with teaching practices to meet all of the needs of our learners.

Death by suicide continues to be an issue for youth across our country. Whitnall now has fifteen staff members across the district who have completed mental health first aid training. This training arms staff with the skills to assist people who are developing mental health problems or are experiencing a mental health crisis.

Staff have had multiple opportunities to expand their knowledge of social emotional practices. All district staff received a half day introduction to trauma sensitive schools. In January, we offered a Parent Learning Academy session for staff and parents that included professionals from The American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, Mental Health America - Wisconsin, Red Gen, and Prevent Suicide Greater Milwaukee.

Social emotional learning will continue to be an area of focus as we finish the school year and prepare for 2018-19.

As part of our social emotional learning offerings, our schools have attended different retreats. Below are photos from Whitnall Middle School's **courage retreat and Edgerton Elementary's **kindness** retreat.**





innovating

taking risks

exploring



PROUD
HISTORY
BRIGHT
FUTURE

THE WHITNALL WINDOW

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www.whitnall.com

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Quin Brunette | Vice-President | Greenfield | Since 2012
Kevin Stachowiak | Clerk | Hales Corners | Since 2015
Stephanie Richter | Treasurer | Hales Corners | Since 2010
Nancy Zaborowski | Member | Greenfield | Since 2008
Jon Jones | Member | Franklin | Since 2014
Steven Butz | Member | Greenfield | Since 2018

UPCOMING CONCERTS Whitnall High School

Bands/Pops | March 22 | 7:00 PM
Choir | May 21 | 7:00 PM
Orchestra | May 23 | 7:00 PM
Band | May 24 | 7:00 PM
Jazz Band | May 30 | 6:00 PM

To the right is a picture of Dr. Olson speaking to Edgerton first graders about **leadership**! She referenced this day in her superintendent's message on the cover of this issue!



Newsletter feedback?
Send to
lpeaslee@whitnall.com

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@whitnallschools for all three!