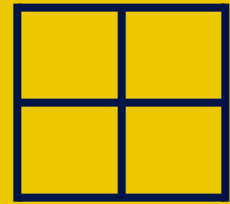


THE WHITNALL WINDOW



SPRING
2022



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The Superintendent's Message

In the last issue of the Whitnall Window, I reviewed the priorities that emerged from our 2017 Hopes for a Whitnall Graduate community survey and shared the progress that has been made on those priorities. We are eager to reengage the community in this work with another round of Hopes for a Whitnall Graduate. It's time to revisit the Whitnall community's expectations. Are they being met? Have they evolved? Are there *new* priorities? Please see the back cover for information on how you will receive the survey and for information on the 2022 Hopes for a Whitnall Graduate in-person event.



Soliciting feedback from the community in this way is an expansion of what has been occurring at the district level for the past four years through our employee leadership committees. In the beginning, these committees consisted of educators reviewing items such as our school calendar and our parent-teacher conferences structure. This has evolved to engaging *all* employee types in reviewing high-level district items such as compensation, professional learning, communication, and feedback/appreciation. These items emerged from our employee satisfaction survey, which is in its second year. The leadership committees oversee the employee satisfaction survey results and drive the related improvement efforts. On February 28, members of the leadership committees participated in a board meeting and board work session to share their work. We encourage you to watch the recording of that meeting on our YouTube channel!

Community members demonstrate that they value advancement when they join us in envisioning Whitnall's future. Our employees demonstrate that they value belonging when they work to create a unifying culture. And our collective willingness to engage in these conversations and implement new strategies demonstrates courage. We are proud to say that Whitnall actualizes its values of advancement, belonging, and courage.

Lisa L. Olson

Dr. Lisa L. Olson, Superintendent

#whitnALLIN

Board Goal

In our last issue of the Window, we shared the board goal for the 21-22 school year and provided some rationale. As a reminder, that goal reads as follows: *By the end of the 2021-22 school year, school board members will increase accountability to district constituents by tracking district performance on student achievement/success, employee engagement, and finances/budget as evidenced by each board member's competence in relaying detailed district data as well as strategic plan benchmarks.* To meet this goal, the board has been receiving more data reports around students, employees, and operations. These reports are archived on the Board Goal page of the district website. The community is encouraged to visit the page to see what data board members should be able to discuss competently. The reports are all linked, so community members may also explore the data themselves. Although the board goal is written as being specific to 21-22, the board members will continue to hold themselves accountable for knowing and being able to competently communicate district data. The board will continue to receive the current level of reporting and the archive of district data will continue to be maintained beyond the current school year.

Member Updates

There was a school board election on April 5 of this year. As a result, we are saying goodbye to one board member and welcoming a new one! We want to thank Steven Butz (left) for his contributions to the district as both an involved parent and a dedicated school board member. Steven was honored at the April 11 board meeting, and we encourage everyone to watch the recording on our YouTube channel to see what his fellow board members had to say about him and his time on the board (1:23:20). And at the April 25 meeting, Jason Craig (right) was inducted as our newest board member! Congratulations and welcome, Jason! We look forward to working with you!



Spotlight

Whitnall School Board member Quin Brunette was recently named Co-chair of the Southwest Wisconsin Schools Alliance (SWSA). SWSA is an organization that works with policymakers to advocate for sound public education policies. We wanted to congratulate him on this accomplishment and highlight some of his recent involvement. Within the past few months, Quin has participated in focus groups around the Whitnall Hall of Fame (more on this on page 6), volunteered for the high school's Pay Day event (more on this on page 5), and even took the Easter Bunny for a motorcycle ride through the Whitnall community! But Quin's involvement goes beyond the "fun" stuff. He serves as the Vice President of the board, the chair of the Policy & Legislative Committee, and he is a member of the Finance & Facilities Committee. Quin has achieved an impressive Level 3 status with the Wisconsin Association of School Boards. From legislative advocacy to bunny chauffeuring, Quin Brunette is all in.



Student Spotlights

Whitnall's Samantha Barth is finishing her final year as a high school student and youth apprentice. Through Whitnall's youth apprenticeship program, Samantha is gaining work experience as an engineering lab intern for Generac Power Systems. At Generac, Samantha works on building drawings, data acquisition, and supports the clean energy team in their quest to create a generator that operates off of solar energy. She does all this while continuing her education at Whitnall. While her classes at Whitnall have prepared her for the future academically, she credits her youth apprenticeship experience with giving her both technical and soft skills. Working at Generac has taught her how to use graphical programming systems, but it's also taught her how to communicate in a professional environment. Of her experiences, Samantha says, "I'm humbled to have the opportunity to receive an education, while gaining work experience. Without this opportunity, I wouldn't feel as confident heading to the Milwaukee School of Engineering next year to pursue a degree in Mechanical Engineering." We are so glad that Samantha has found success through our career and technical education program, and we wish her all the best on her journey to becoming an engineer.



Matthew Peterson is a senior at Whitnall High School. Through leadership and service efforts, he has distinguished himself as both an involved student and community member. Matthew is president of the student council, captain of the boy's varsity tennis team, captain of Mu Alpha Theta (Math Honor Society), and recently choreographed and starred in Whitnall's spring musical, Legally Blonde. He is a member of RedGen (a mental health awareness club) and a member of the National Honor Society (NHS). In addition to his co-curricular involvement, Matthew has earned the distinction of being a High Honors Student for his stellar academic record and has earned the distinction of being an AP Scholar with Honor for his performance on college-level exams. Outside of school, Matthew has achieved the rank of Eagle Scout following thirteen years of scouting and has led a service project to create a "Dragonfly Pollinator Garden" at a local park. He has done countless service hours through scouting, NHS, and Feeding America. Matthew will be continuing his studies at the University of St. Thomas this fall. He will be majoring in neuroscience with a minor in chemistry and hopes to do research on neurochemical pathways. Matthew will be following the pre-med track, which will take him to medical school following his undergraduate studies. Thank you for all of your involvement, Matthew! Through your leadership and service, you have certainly made an impact here at Whitnall.



Staff Spotlight

Joanna Schrader is Whitnall's Early Childhood Teacher. She comes from a family of educators; her mother worked at the public library and her father is a retired school psychologist. As a child, Joanna loved helping her parents in both settings, and she knew from an early age that she wanted to work in education. Joanna joined Whitnall in 2007 as a K4 special education teacher. In 2010, she took over the district's self-contained Early Childhood program. The Early Childhood program is a half-day program for three-year-old students with identified disabilities. Joanna co-teaches with a Speech/Language Pathologist to provide students with a language-rich environment. They serve students with a wide variety of disabilities including physical limitations, intellectual disabilities, speech/developmental delays, autism spectrum disorder, and more. Joanna is responsible for evaluating new students, writing Individualized Education Plans, and designing and implementing specialized instruction based on each student's individual needs. Joanna helps families transition into the school setting and connects families with community resources. When students transition from the Early Childhood program to K4, Joanna works closely with the K4 teams to ensure smooth transitions for each student. The Early Childhood program gives our community's unique learners a wonderful start in building independence and learning to love school. Joanna says, "I love watching my former students go on to be successful learners as they progress through the grades." Outside of her work at Whitnall, Joanna volunteers as a Court Appointed Special Advocate for children in foster care. Thank you for all that you do here at Whitnall and beyond, Joanna. We are so lucky to have you!



Gifted & Talented

In working toward the comprehensive learning goals in our strategic plan, we have been improving our identification process and programming for Gifted & Talented [GT] students within the district. Those identified as GT meet criteria in at least one of five nationally recognized areas: general intellect, specific academic area, creativity, leadership, and visual & performing arts. Our work is guided by the National Association of Gifted Children's [NAGC] Standards for K-12 GT Programming.



Throughout the 2021-22 school year, we conducted a review of the current state of GT programming by engaging a variety of stakeholders including GT students, their parents/guardians, teachers, school counselors, and building administrators. The review identified some strengths and areas for improvement. Included in the strengths, students reported feeling welcomed and supported in their classroom settings amongst peers and staff who provide opportunities to deepen learning in areas of interest.

To build on our strengths and address our areas in need of improvement, we have developed four main priorities to guide our work over the next few years. Special attention will be given to improving our identification process for students who qualify for GT programming. We will finalize and begin implementing a standardized GT program review cycle to ensure that the needs of our advanced learners are being met districtwide. As we continue to work within curriculum review cycles, we will ensure that resources address advanced learners, and we will provide intentional professional learning experiences for our educators in order to maximize their expertise in supporting our students identified as GT.

From the review process, one major conclusion stands out: Whitnall is currently positioned to enhance its practice in regards to Gifted & Talented identification and programming across all grade levels. Teachers are eager to learn, students are eager to learn, and parents are eager to be involved in that learning.

Career & Technical Education

Three years ago, Dr. Lisa Olson and four other area superintendents had the foresight to expand career and technical education offerings, including adding more experiential learning opportunities through a Youth Apprenticeship [YA] program. We know that experiential learning prepares students for their futures because it is the application of what they've learned in our classrooms, it builds soft skills that employers are looking for, and it makes their resumes more robust. Through YA, we see students gain confidence, and they have more clarity about their post-secondary plans. Over the last three years, we have increased the number of YA students from 32 to 89! These students work in a variety of fields including health science, marketing, manufacturing, IT, graphic design, accounting, and the trades.



While YA offers experiences beyond the trades and beyond our classrooms, we can't forget to highlight the growth of our career and technical education [CTE] offerings right here at Whitnall. In addition to offering a variety of trades classes that now begin at the middle school level, we have a highly successful CTE student organization—SkillsUSA. Our SkillsUSA students have earned thirteen medals and were recently crowned state champions in four different events! Our state champions will be competing at nationals this summer in Atlanta, GA. Beyond courses and co-curriculars, students also have opportunities to participate in special events like Manufacturing Day, Transportation Day, and Trades Day. Students can even extend their experiences beyond the school year and participate in the Summer Trades Camp.

We look forward to growing the YA and CTE programs even more. For YA, more hiring events are being held and there are plans for a business simulation called "Business World" for the 22-23 school year. If you are an employer who would consider taking on a Youth Apprentice, please contact Tom Hermann, Consortium and Youth Apprenticeship Coordinator, at thermann@whitnall.com. With CTE, we are seeing increasing interest and enrollment in our trades classes, and we hope this leads to even more offerings, more involvement, and more success!

Pay Day

On April 12, all of our juniors participated in Pay Day. Pay Day is a personal finance simulation that gives students a taste of real-world expenses. Each student was given a paycheck based on a career they chose for themselves. Then came bills, loan payments, and even unexpected expenses from the "fate" booth. Pay Day is a great way for students to practice the important life skills of money management and budgeting. We first offered Pay Day in 2019. We are so glad the event is back and this will be an annual event, so every class will eventually participate in the Pay Day experience!

A huge thank you to all of our business and parent volunteers who ran the booths. This event would not be possible without their help and expertise. All of the organizations and businesses that contributed are listed below.

TriCity National Bank
Benefit Realty
Forward Financial Group
Holz Motors
Aetna
WestPoint Financial Group

Smart Living
Root River Realty
Plum Tree Apartments
Sara Deacon Coaching
Whitnall Park Rotary
Greenfield Chamber of Commerce

Joe Krolikowski Agency
Keller Williams Realty
Clavette Insurance Agency
Syn-City Service
Park's Edge Preschool
Hales Corners Chamber of Commerce



Athletic Hall of Fame

Whitnall High School is pleased to announce the creation of an athletic Hall of Fame. The Hall of Fame intends to honor the outstanding athletes, coaches, and supporters who have been instrumental in building Whitnall's outstanding athletic tradition. There will be an annual celebration recognizing inductees. Please visit the Hall of Fame page on the Whitnall High School website for criteria, for information on the nomination process, and to complete a nomination form. To navigate to the page, go to Activities > Athletics > Hall of Fame. The deadline for nominations is July 1, 2022.

Legally Blonde

The Whitnall Theatre Department's production of *Legally Blonde: The Musical* ran April 29 through May 1. It was an incredibly fun yet surprisingly heartfelt show that featured the many talents of our high school students. There was singing, acting, dancing, and some impressive costume changes! We can't wait to see what the theatre department has in store for the 2022-2023 season.



Spotlight

Throughout his time at Whitnall, Danilo Jovanovich has helped the boys basketball team become one of the state's top contenders. During his high school career, the team has won back to back conference championships and a regional championship. This season, Danilo was one of the state's top scorers, averaging 28.7 points per game and scoring over 660 total points. There were three separate games where he scored over 40 points! Danilo also averaged 11.8 rebounds per game, making him the only player in the state of Wisconsin to average in the top 15 for both scoring and rebounding. This year, Danilo was AP First Team All-State, WBCA First Team All-State, Milwaukee Journal Sentinel First Team All-Area, Woodland Conference First Team, a Mr. Basketball Finalist, and the unanimous Woodland Conference Player of the Year. When asked about coaching Danilo, Coach Riesop said, "He has been a joy to coach throughout the past four years. He is humble, hardworking, and a model student athlete for the younger players in our community. He should be commended not only for what he does on the court, but also for his ability to lead." Next year, Danilo will be attending the University of Miami on a full ride scholarship to play basketball. Congratulations, Danilo!



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Hopes for a Whitnall Graduate

Community members will receive a postcard in the mail with a code to complete the online survey. Parents and staff will receive a link to the survey via email. The survey deadline is June 15. The Hopes for a Whitnall Graduate in-person event will be held on Tuesday, July 12, 6:00 - 7:30 PM at Whitnall High School. Participants will review the survey results and discuss next steps for the district. Please visit our website or social media to sign up.

Newsletter feedback?
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lvasquez@whitnall.com

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