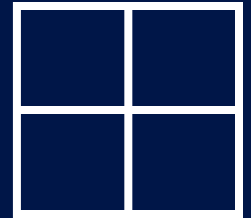


THE WHITNALL WINDOW

SUMMER 2020



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THE SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE

When school buildings closed last spring, there were many unexpected challenges, which required us to reallocate our time and efforts. As a result, we did not publish a spring 2020 issue of the Whitnall Window. But we are excited to be back on schedule and to offer you our summer 2020 issue!

This summer has been dominated by a singular endeavor--reopening. Over the past few months, we have surveyed, consulted, and planned. We surveyed students, parents, and staff. We consulted with public health experts, legal counsel, and other school districts. And we planned two separate models simultaneously. One model was fully virtual (Model B), and one model was in-person with a virtual learning option (Model A). We communicated our preference for Model A, but emphasized that the district's reopening would be driven by the best information, not by the most popular opinion or by the desire for a fast decision. We waited until August 17, as we continued to survey and consult and plan.

On August 17, the school board unanimously voted to begin the 2020-21 school year with Model A. We are happy to be moving forward with a model that allows for choice. Every Whitnall parent has the option to do what they believe is best for their family. But we cannot ignore that this situation is ever-changing; whether better or worse, the situation will not always reflect the conditions of August 17. Therefore, we have created a dashboard and established a medical advisory committee, so that we may continuously monitor the health and safety of our students and staff. Of course there is much more to this story, and we encourage you to read more on the Reopening Fall 2020 page of our website.

I hear the many concerns, questions, thoughts, and fears. Often, I have the same concerns, questions, thoughts, and fears. How do we balance ensuring the health and safety of our staff and students with providing the best educational experience? There is nothing right or easy about having to make trade-offs, especially when the stakes are so high. But one thing I know for certain is that relationships will see us through. Being a community will see us through. As we have planned, we have heard one sentiment expressed again and again--we're all in this together. We're all in.



Lisa L. Olson

Dr. Lisa L. Olson, Superintendent

MEG ZEI
EDGERTON ELEMENTARY PRINCIPAL

“Greetings Whitnall! I am honored to be named the new principal at Edgerton Elementary School. I have been an educator for twenty-four years with experiences as a teacher and administrator. Most recently, I served as the principal of Bose Elementary School in Kenosha for thirteen years. I hold a bachelor’s degree in French and education from Carroll University and a master’s degree in school leadership from City University, Bellevue, WA. Being an elementary principal has been a joy! I pride myself on the relationships and trust I developed with the students, staff, and parents of Bose. My hope is to do the same at Edgerton. I strive to be approachable, caring, and compassionate. And I am always seeking what is best for students. I reside in Greenfield with my husband Tim, my daughter Alicia (10), and my son Miguel (8). We are all looking forward to being a part of the Whitnall learning community.”



VIRTUAL LEARNING & TECHNOLOGY PICK UP

In mid-March, Whitnall had to quickly transition to a fully virtual environment, due to the pandemic. We would like to thank our staff, students, and parents for their adaptability and perseverance. School through a computer was brand new for all of us, and there were certainly unforeseen challenges. One of those challenges was that, in order to do school through a computer, every student needed a computer of their own. So our first order of business was distributing technology. A special thank you to the staff members who helped with technology pick up!



FOOD SERVICE

When the school buildings were closed, one service that could not stop--not even momentarily--was school meals. Considering the number of students that rely on free meals and the increase in unemployment among families, we were committed to providing meals to any child that needed them, whether they were a Whitnall student or not. Our incredible food service employees prepared and cheerfully distributed the meals daily. For their hard work and kindness, the food service employees were celebrated by families and district leadership on “School Lunch Hero Day.” There were signs, costumes, flowers, and many smiling faces. It was SUPER!



JENNIFER GENNERMAN
DIRECTOR OF ADVANCEMENT AND ANALYTICS

Jennifer Gennerman will join our district level leadership team with the title of Director of Advancement and Analytics. Prior to coming to Whitnall, she served three years as the Director of Continuous Improvement and Assessment at West Bend Joint #1 School District. She has also served as a Special Education Teacher, Instructional Coach, and Data and Instructional Specialist for the Muskego Norway School District.



Jenn received her bachelor’s degree in education from UW-Oshkosh and a master’s degree in education (with a literacy emphasis) from Carroll University. As a lifelong learner, she has experience and licensure in the areas of reading, curriculum, and instruction.

High student achievement and strong community support are two reasons Mrs. Gennerman is excited to join the Whitnall team. She is an enthusiastic leader with a passion for data, continuous improvement, and technology integration. In this new role within the district, Jenn will focus on ensuring that our data systems are used to the fullest capabilities and that there are strong processes in place to provide clean information for staff to use for instructional planning. While overseeing the technology department, Jenn will work with all departments to guide continuous improvement efforts for the system. She plans to take advantage of the nice walking trails with her family and three dogs, two of which are gentle giants. If you see her, please say “Hi”!

DROP OFF, SEND OFF

At the end of the school year, students saw staff in person one last time before summer (and for the first time in a while) as they dropped off technology and picked up summer reading. It was a joyous hello again / goodbye for now. Even those wearing masks were smiling from ear to ear!



A LETTER TO THE CLASS OF 2020

Shortly after the school buildings closed, Superintendent Dr. Olson sent the following message to our seniors.

"While I am concerned about all of our students continuing their learning in this time of uncertainty, I have to be honest and say that I am thinking most of you, our seniors. You have worked hard for twelve years to get to this point, only to have it paused. Trust me when I say that I know how difficult it is to not have any answers right now. You may feel anxious or angry or disheartened. But I want to tell you that this situation does not invalidate all of your hard work. It does not erase all of your memories of Whitnall. And it will not rob you of the pride and celebration you deserve. The circumstances may be beyond our control, but I will do everything in my power to provide you with an end to your senior year that is as special as it was for the classes that came before you. Class of 2020, I am sure that I am not alone in my understanding that this closure affects you most of all. I am sure that I am not alone in offering my support. The Whitnall community is here for you--always will be."

SENIOR YARD SIGNS

To show support, the district--in collaboration with the Whitnall Falcon Booster Club--gave each senior a yard sign. When the seniors drove through to collect their signs, WHS staff members were there to cheer for them, even though it was pouring rain. Once the weather cleared up and the signs were in yards, seniors took photos with their signs and sent them our way. We loved seeing the pictures and seeing the signs throughout the community. Thank you to the Whitnall Falcon Booster Club for generously paying for the yard signs!



COMMUNITY SUPPORT

We would like to give a shoutout to all of the local businesses that showed their support for our graduates. These signs were all over the community. There were more than 170 of them! For a full list of the businesses that participated, visit the following URL: <http://bit.ly/f7U>. Thank you to the Hales Corners Chamber of Commerce for sponsoring this!



THE SENIOR SUCCESSION

As staff from all four of our buildings cheered them on, our 2020 graduates took a tour of their last twelve years. With their families, each graduate visited their elementary school, the middle school, and finally the high school, where their name was read, they got their diploma, and they walked across our outdoor stage. It's difficult to put into words or capture in photos just how special this experience was. The class of 2020 may have had a more difficult end to their senior year than any class before them, but we think their sendoff was the best yet. To see more photos, head to our Facebook page. To see a video of the Senior SUCCESSION, head to our Facebook page or YouTube channel. Thank you to Rhea Claire Photo for assisting with photography!



THE AVENT

On June 3, we live streamed the **Avent**, our virtual **a**ll-school **a**cademics, **a**thletics, **a**ctivities, and **a**ccolades event. This event honored the academic, athletic, and activity accomplishments of our students during the year as well as shared those accomplishments earned during the past four years. The awards show highlighted members of the class of 2020 by celebrating scholarships and senior athlete awards. You can watch the video on our YouTube channel!

GRADUATION

On July 25, Whitnall High School held a virtual graduation for the Class of 2020. The ceremony was live streamed and featured speeches from administration and students. There was also a virtual performance by the WHS orchestra! As was shared during the ceremony, the class of 2020 collectively earned over \$2.3 million dollars in scholarships. An impressive 78 students (more than 1/3 of the class of 2020) maintained high honors during their high school careers. High honors is a grade point average of 3.5 or higher.

Among the 202 graduates were our salutatorian and valedictorian. Whitnall High School's 2020 salutatorian was Anya Biehr (left). Anya earned 26.5 credits upon graduating with a 4.671 GPA. She will be attending Marquette University, where she plans to enter the Health/Medical Preparatory Program. Whitnall's 2020 valedictorian was Laura Boehm (right). Laura earned 27.5 credits upon graduating with a 4.718 GPA. She will be attending Brigham Young University to study engineering. Congratulations Anya and Laura!



Both Anya and Laura gave speeches during the ceremony. You can watch the full commencement on our YouTube channel!

WHS CAFETERIA, COURTYARD, AND COMMON AREA

We are so excited to unveil the new spaces at Whitnall High School! Over the summer, WHS got a new cafeteria, courtyard, and common area. More space, a more functional layout, and--perhaps most importantly--no more failing exterior walls. These are spaces that ALL Whitnall students will eventually use. And we plan to use them for community events as well. When we started this project back in November, we knew that we wanted extra space, but we had no idea that we would NEED extra space. We are happy that we will be able to offer our students and community safer gathering. Below are photos of the construction and the finished spaces!

CONSTRUCTION



THE FINISHED SPACES



ADVANCEMENT BELONGING COURAGE ADVANCEMENT BELONGING COURAGE



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HISTORY
BRIGHT
FUTURE**

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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



ANNUAL MEETING & BUDGET HEARING SEPTEMBER 28 | 6:30 PM | WHS AUDITORIUM

DUE TO STATE STATUTE, ATTENDANCE MUST BE IN-PERSON RATHER THAN
VIRTUAL. THIS MEETING WILL NOT BE LIVE STREAMED.

Newsletter feedback?
Send to
lvasquez@whitnall.com

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