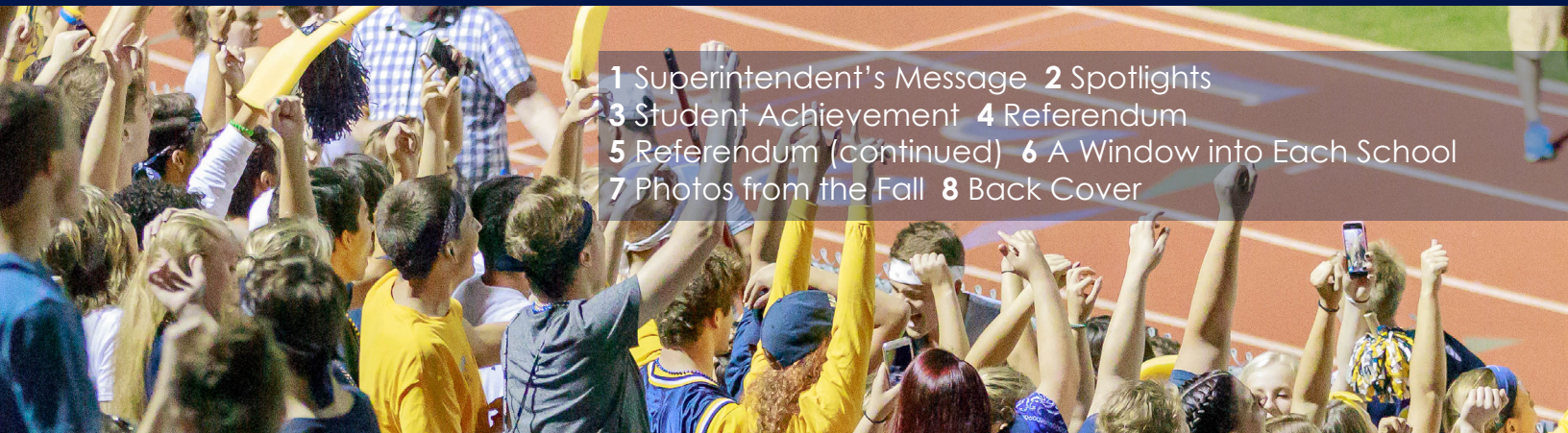
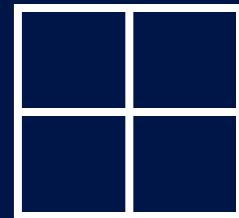


THE WHITNALL WINDOW

WINTER 2017



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THE SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE

As we enter 2018, I want to take a moment to express my heartfelt gratitude to all who help make Whitnall School District a great place to teach, learn, and work. We are a community with many gifts. I am grateful for the tireless effort given by our Whitnall Board of Education, district administrative team, educators, staff, families, and community members. Together, we provide our students with opportunities to learn and grow.

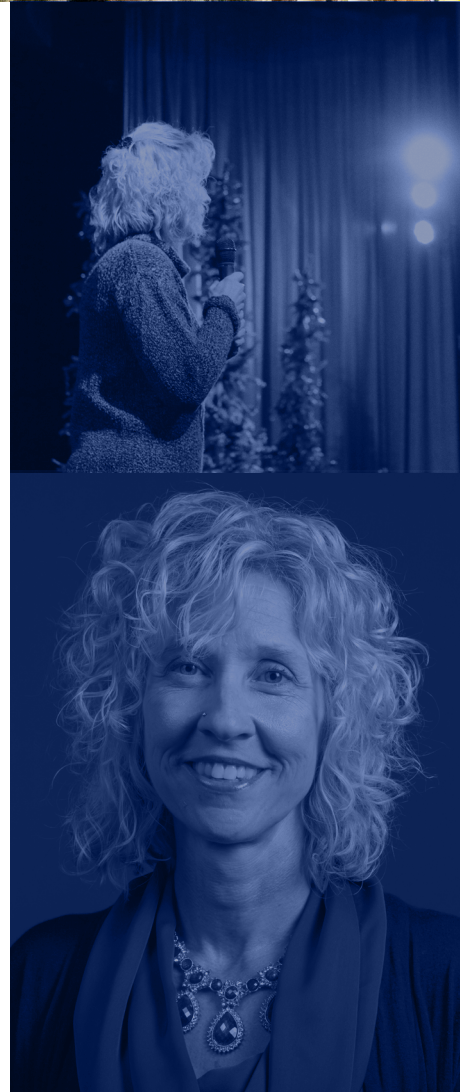
Our annual goals focus around four key areas of continuous improvement. One area I'd like to highlight is **Effective Communication**. Parent engagement is key to a child's education, and we have long benefited from the support of our HCE and EES PTOs. Just recently, WMS organized a PTO, and WHS holds regular parent informational meetings. This year, we also added a monthly Parent Learning Academy to provide opportunities for two-way communication with our district families on our educational priorities. Last spring, we initiated *The Connect* as a weekly e-newsletter to all district families, and it is available on our website for the community as well. This fall, the Whitnall website underwent a major transformation, which introduced a brand new look and better organization. We reinstated this community newsletter and have significantly expanded our social media presence. All of our 2017-18 annual goals can be found on our website.

The theme for the 2017-18 school year still holds true: **Proud History, Bright Future**. On December 18, the Whitnall Board of Education passed a resolution for a referendum to be on the April 3 ballot. Using community feedback and survey results, the referendum scope was determined. There is more information later in this newsletter, and there will be much more communication related to the referendum in the near future.

I am continuously amazed by the efforts to not only focus on the academic needs of our students, but also the social and emotional needs. Whitnall School District is committed to educating the whole child, and this is evident in each of the decisions we make, whether in conference rooms, classrooms, or the board room. Have a happy and healthy 2018!

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?

Spotlights

alumni



A Whitnall alumna will go down in history at the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh. Sam Mentkowski, who graduated from Whitnall High School in 2012, will leave Oshkosh as the program's best receiver of all time. In a recent interview, Mentkowski credited coaches at Whitnall with encouraging him to pursue football. He was more committed to baseball during his time in high school, but coaches at Whitnall saw a great future for him in football. Looking back, Mentkowski can see the coaches were right to aim him in this direction. Mentkowski went on to say, "[Being at Whitnall] definitely helped me when I came to [Oshkosh]."

staff



Cody Smith, a teacher at Whitnall High School, was selected by the Wisconsin Society of Science Teachers for their New Teacher Award! He was nominated "because he is not just an excellent teacher; he is an inspiring teacher. He makes students feel that they are welcome, capable, and important." In addition to teaching biology, Smith coaches varsity football and wrestling, is a member of the school forest task force, and serves as a co-advisor for the science club.

Equally as integral to Whitnall's staff is Kim Thomas, a teacher at Hales Corners Elementary. Thomas has been a true leader in our journey towards personalizing learning. Of her experience, she had this to say: "My journey with personalizing learning started back in 2012 as a part of the Whitnall Innovative Education Team, which looked at how our education system could be improved. In 2016, I—along with four other teachers—began providing fourth grade learners at HCE with personalized experiences within our curriculum. During that same year, I joined the Personalizing Learning Steering Committee, which involved educators from throughout the district in envisioning personalizing learning K-12. This year, I am personalizing learning in the fifth grade. I am committed to providing Whitnall students with the knowledge and skills they need to be collaborative and productive learners."



student

The Whitnall Park Rotary Club established a "Students of the Month" program starting in 2017-18, and Whitnall High School was selected for its inaugural year. Students attend the weekly club luncheons during their month, where they learn about the club's current service projects, themes, and issues. At the end of the month, each student presents to the club a summary of their high school activities, career aspirations, and future plans. The following students were selected in the first half of the school year. There will be additional students selected for January - May. This is an amazing opportunity for our students to learn more about the community and for the community to learn more about our students and district. From left to right: Emyli Kreiser, Kelly McElvain, Leena Meyers, Riley Nugent, Hailey Malloy, John Poulakos. Congratulations!



Student Achievement

Student achievement is often measured by a series of standardized test scores; however, those scores don't provide the whole picture of student achievement. It is critical to take a more in-depth approach. Whitnall is currently developing a student achievement dashboard and district report card to provide a road map of continuous improvement.

Last year, Whitnall High School tested 212 juniors for the ACT, a standard college entrance test and statewide standardized test. The average composite score was a 20.9, slightly higher than the state average. Further analysis provides us details on English, Reading, Math, and Science scores. Using this data, we can review and enhance our curriculum.



ACT also uses College and Career Ready (CCR) benchmarks in these four content areas and relates them to English Composition, Social Sciences, College Algebra, and Biology college courses. When a student meets or exceeds these benchmarks, there is a correlation to a high probability of success in college courses in the same subject area. Last year, 52% of Whitnall's juniors met either 3 or 4 of the CCR benchmarks. In addition, Whitnall juniors performed equal to or greater than the state average on all four of the CCR benchmarks.

In addition to the ACT test, juniors take the ACT WorkKeys, which assesses skills required for a majority of jobs in the workforce. Students are assessed in Applied Math, Graphic Literacy, and Workplace Documents. Based upon their score, a student is awarded a National Career Readiness Certificate that projects workplace success. A silver certificate signifies an individual is ready for 67% of jobs, a gold means a student is prepared for 93% of jobs, and a platinum reveals a learner to be fit for 99% of jobs. Last year's graduating class earned 124 silver and 47 gold certificates.

Like the high school, K-8 engages in state and internal assessments. Whitnall uses data throughout the school year to make adjustments to instruction and curriculum for our learners. As we continue to discuss student achievement data, it is important to look at test scores, but it is just as important to look at what makes up the test scores.

99% graduation rate | AVG GPA **3.2**
career ready seniors: **more than 50%**

157 students enrolled in advanced placement courses (most in recent history) | students in co-curricular activities: **60%**

district **"exceeds expectations"**

Referendum



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?

Referendum (continued)

history

In August of 2015, a Facilities Needs Advisory Committee was formed. The committee was tasked with reviewing past referendums for areas of improvement. After a year of meeting, the Facilities Needs Advisory Committee presented **their recommendations** for future referendum success to the board. In August of 2016, the board approved the district requesting proposals from architectural firms. That fall, the Finance & Facilities Committee reviewed proposals, interviewed firms, and gained board approval for Bray Architects. In December of 2016, Bray began their study of our facilities needs. Throughout January, the district held focus group meetings centered around facilities needs. In April, the district continued involving the community with “Community Update” meetings, where we informed and listened to our stakeholders. In July of 2017, Bray presented their completed **facilities study** of all four of our buildings to the board. This fall, we sent a survey to everyone in the district. The survey asked respondents to prioritize our facilities needs and to indicate the level of referendum they would support. In November, **the results of that survey** were presented to the board. After careful consideration of those results, a referendum question was created and approved. The referendum question is featured on the previous page.

The items in bold are available on our website!

projects by building

WHITNALL HIGH SCHOOL

- Renovate technical education, art, and business spaces
- Improve infrastructure
- Replace roof
- Update for ADA compliance
- Repair pool
- Fix flooding problem

EDGERTON ELEMENTARY

- Upgrade electrical
- Improve fire alarms
- Update for ADA compliance

WHITNALL MIDDLE SCHOOL

- Improve infrastructure
- Update for ADA compliance
- Renovate science spaces

HALES CORNERS ELEMENTARY

- Enhance site drop off and pick up
- Improve infrastructure
- Demolish a section and create addition
- Upgrade windows and doors
- Renovate
- Update plumbing, HVAC, and electrical

To continue following our journey towards improving our facilities, be sure to visit the Referendum 2018 page on our website. There, you can sign up for an email list that will receive frequent updates!

A Window into Each School

WHITNALL HIGH SCHOOL

A student's success – today and in the future – is top priority for Whitnall High School. We recognize that each student is an individual with unique talents, specific needs, and unbounded aspirations. To help a student develop their talents, address their needs, and build their aspirations, we are focusing our efforts into personalizing education, while raising the bar for all students. We have introduced new seminar courses, providing interdisciplinary learning opportunities to students that are relevant and interest based. Additionally, structural changes will be coming, beginning with the next school year, to provide our students with service learning opportunities tied to a career pathway. Daily, we promote academic excellence and empower students to achieve their maximum potential within a safe, nurturing environment.

unique talents
specific needs
unbounded aspirations



inspirational
excitement
building community



making a difference
involvement
learning



try everything
fearless
take a risk



At Edgerton Elementary, we value community service. On December 20th, after organizing a toy drive, students brought over 300 new gifts to Children's Hospital. One student commented, "I enjoyed giving to people who won't be home for the holidays. We got to bring a bit of holiday joy to where they are." Edgerton is making a difference in the community in other ways as well. Students are involved in cleaning up our local parks and the Whitnall School Forest. Revitalizing the forest has been a major service-learning project. Our students are removing invasive species and planting indigenous wildflowers. Our involvement in the forest aligns with what students are learning in science and social studies. Our students are certainly developing their roles as active and important members of the community!

EDGERTON ELEMENTARY

WHITNALL MIDDLE SCHOOL

Whitnall Middle School has embraced a new class: Advisory. Advisory kicks off each day by building community, setting a positive tone, increasing student excitement about learning, and improving academic and social skills. To accomplish these things, Advisory follows a specific format. We begin by gathering together in a circle to greet one another. Every day, every child hears his or her name spoken by a classmate in a friendly manner. Next, students share interesting news with each other. During sharing, our learners have a chance to feel that their ideas are valued. After sharing, there is an activity, which unites the group, promoting cooperation and problem solving. Finally, we send the students off with an inspirational "morning message." Every day, Advisory serves as a reminder that our school is a safe place where every person's feelings and ideas are important!

Are you willing to try everything? When the school year began at Hales Corners Elementary, we challenged our students with this question. We hope that they will be fearless! Being willing to take a risk in the classroom shows that you are taking responsibility for your learning, just like working with others in your class or across grades shows that you respect what others have to share. An environment of *try* is in every classroom at HCE. Since it's our motto for the year, we sing the song "Try Everything" as a school community, each time we gather together. Imagine seeing over 625 students and all of our staff singing and, simultaneously, reminding each other that: when you try everything, you may fall; but you get up and try again.

HALES CORNERS ELEMENTARY



innovating

taking risks

exploring



**PROUD
HISTORY
BRIGHT
FUTURE**

THE WHITNALL WINDOW

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www.whitnall.com

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
Stephanie Richter | Treasurer | Hales Corners | Since 2010
Nancy Zaborowski | Member | Greenfield | Since 2008
Jon Jones | Member | Franklin | Since 2014
Currently, there is one vacant seat.

THE WHS SPRING MUSICAL! The Addams Family

A New Musical Comedy

March 9, 10, 16, 17 at 7:30 PM
March 11 at 2:00 PM

Adults \$12 | Students/Seniors \$8

We hope everyone had **happy holidays** and a pleasant start to the new year! We are now officially in the 18 part of the 2017-18 school year!



Newsletter feedback?
Send to
lpeaslee@whitnall.com

Follow Us on Social Media!



@whitnallschools for all three!