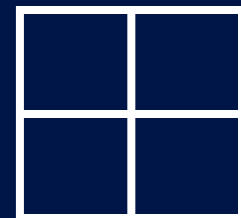


THE WHITNALL WINDOW

WINTER 2018



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- 3 Student Achievement
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THE SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE

Throughout the first semester of this school year, we have held various meetings to gather and share information related to grading and increasing academic rigor in the Whitnall School District. And while we are focused on continuous improvement, I have been reminded at these meetings by our students, staff, and parents that there are a lot of good things already happening at Whitnall that we must remember to celebrate.

The number one comment I hear (and I couldn't agree more) is that we have great teachers here at Whitnall; our teachers truly care and want to do whatever is best for our learners. We also have awe-inspiring students, committed parents, and a supportive surrounding community. We look on with pride as our WHS National Honor Society collects toys to support the Holiday Sharing Project and as forty students sign up for a new WMS math club.

I recently had the privilege of being a guest reader for some of our fifth grade classes. I read the book *All Are Welcome*, which celebrates diversity within schools. After reading the book, I asked the students questions about words that appeared, such as "community," "diversity," and "adversity"--words that we as adults often struggle to define. Their definitions of these words were amazing and captured how innate inclusivity and acceptance are. At Whitnall, we are working to make sure that our learners never lose that proclivity for making others feel like they belong. All are welcome. All are in.

So, while we work toward our future, let us also celebrate our history and our present. Let us celebrate our tireless teachers and our spectacular students for their giving spirits, eager minds, and open arms.

Lisa L. Olson

Dr. Lisa L. Olson, Superintendent



WE'RE ALL IN

At the end of October, we introduced our new tagline and logo by having an entire kickoff week. "We're All In" is our vision for the Whitnall School District. It may not be where we are, but it is where we are going. Join us on our journey to being all in.

Monday

On Monday of We're All In Week, we shared a video, which features students, staff, parents, and community members. In the video, members of the Whitnall community share what "We're All In" means to them. The video also serves as a nice look into a day in our schools. We encourage you to visit our Facebook page or our YouTube channel to watch the video.



Tuesday

On Tuesday of We're All In Week, we shared photos from the previous day when the ENTIRE Whitnall staff wore new We're All In apparel. With the photos, we shared a link to an online store where people could get their own We're All In apparel.



Wednesday

Wednesday of We're All In Week was Halloween. The District Office's collective costume was Scrabble, so...

Thursday

On Thursday, we looked beyond "We're All In" and introduced our full district prospectus with our vision, values, passion, and purpose. The prospectus was featured in the last issue of the Whitnall Window.



Friday

On Friday of We're All In Week, we announced our new hashtag.



Wisconsin School and District Report Cards

The Department of Public Instruction (DPI) released the 2017-18 state report cards on November 13, 2018. The DPI generates annually a school and district report card for every publicly-funded school and district in the state. The report cards are intended to help schools and districts utilize performance data to target their improvement efforts. Schools and districts receive a score for each of the following priority areas:

- **Student Achievement** proficiency in English Language Arts (ELA) and math on the annual state tests
- **School Growth** measured by year-to-year progress in ELA and math achievement
- **Closing Gaps** in performance between specific student groups (comparing English learners, low-income students, students with disabilities, and members of a racial or ethnic group with their peers)
- **On-Track and Postsecondary Readiness** showing reliable predictors of how many students are on track to graduate from high school and student readiness for post-high school success

Schools and districts are also evaluated on other factors such as chronic absenteeism rates and dropout rates. All of the scores are combined to create a composite score on a scale from 0 to 100. Based on its composite score, a school or district receives one of five rating categories, from Significantly Exceeds Expectations to Fails to Meet Expectations, as well as corresponding one to five stars.

Here is a summary of the Whitnall School District and building report card scores:

School Year	Whitnall District	HCE	EES	WMS	WHS
2017-18	80.3	84.6	86.5	72.0	80.1
2016-17	77.6	84.3	85.1	71.3	74.2

For 2017-18, the Whitnall School District received Exceeds Expectations or 4 Stars.

As a district, we are on a journey of continuous improvement. For more information on our journey, please visit our website and review our district goals and 45-day plans.

While we are happy with the data, we are even happier with the less measurable but more heartening commitment of our staff, students, and board. That commitment is what will move us forward still.

Increasing Rigor of Student Learning

As we continue to use a variety of student achievement data to determine next steps for our learners, the question of "rigor" is at the forefront of improvement plans. In order to provide appropriate challenges for a wide variety of student learning needs, post-secondary interests, and career readiness, we have been evaluating and adjusting programs at all levels.

As technology continues to influence and shape the workforce, schools need to be responsive to the types of employment that are and will (or will not) be available to our students. To this end, we have made a number of changes to our high school course guide.

For this year, some additions to programming include:

- Advanced Placement (AP) courses in Human Geography and Language & Composition (Students in AP courses have the option to take AP exams for college credits.)
- Transcribed courses in Communication Skills through MATC
- Multiple offerings in Building Trades, Manufacturing, and Design

The 2019-20 school year will also offer new courses and opportunities which include but are not limited to:

- Accelerated courses in Chemistry and Physics
- AP Physics C
- Expanded Career and Technical Education courses and experience opportunities
- Increased opportunities for apprenticeships and job-embedded learning

We will continue to study student data and long-range trends in the workforce to continually evaluate the effectiveness and relevance of current programs and courses and make adjustments as necessary. We welcome your thoughts or questions on our district programming at any time.

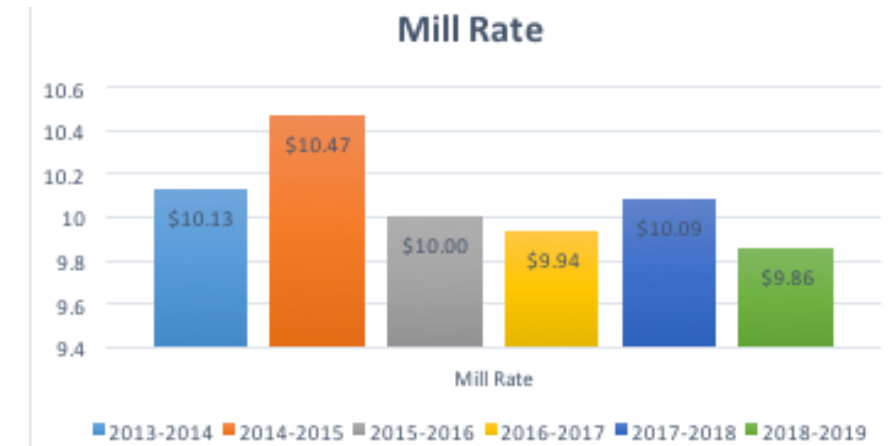
Groundbreaking

The day before Thanksgiving, we broke ground at Hales Corners Elementary. This was the official beginning of construction for all of our buildings. We had community members, board members, staff, parents, and learners at the groundbreaking. It was fitting that Thanksgiving was the next day, because we were feeling incredibly thankful for the Whitnall community and their support for our referendum.



Tax Levy

On October 22, 2018, the Whitnall Board of Education approved the tax levy for the upcoming 2018-2019 school year. The mill rate for the district is \$9.86 versus \$10.09 in the previous year. Mill rate refers to, on average across the district, how many dollars a taxpayer will pay in their school portion of their tax bill for every \$1,000 of property value. The school portion of one's tax bill can fluctuate from the average based on a number of factors including which municipality one lives in and where as well as the assessed value of one's home from one year to the next. The school district is able to report the average mill rate based on equalized values across the district as reported by the Wisconsin Department of Revenue.



During the process of setting the October levy as well as structuring our debt for the referendum, the following was accomplished:

- 1) The debt was structured in such a way that there is a "10 Year Cliff." There are larger payments in the first 10 years of the debt schedule and then a significant decrease in the second 10. This serves two purposes. First, it saves approximately \$117,000 in interest costs. Second, it provides future flexibility or property tax relief after 10 years instead of the traditional 20 years.
- 2) The District received a AA2 bond rating which is in the top 15% of school districts in the state. The difference between a AA2 and AA3 is about \$80,000 in additional interest costs if the lower bond rating had been applied. The overall interest rate over the course of the 20-year loan is 3.36% versus the projections of 4.00% from the spring of 2018.
- 3) Levying for \$2,100,000 in the first year of debt payments had two effects. First, it saves approximately \$90,000 in future interest costs that will no longer need to be levied for in the future. Second, it reduces yearly payment costs by approximately \$95,000 each of the first 10 years of the loan.
- 4) The overall interest rate over the course of the 20-year loan is 3.36% versus the projections of 3.91% from the spring of 2018. This netted out to interest rate costs that were \$2,217,327 less than projected in the spring of 2018.
- 5) There is a reduction in the mill rate from 2017-2018 even though we are levying a substantially greater amount in Year 1 than initially communicated due to a substantial increase in state aid.

The following is what we expect to be reported on property tax bills in the future due to the passage of the referendum with the assumption of property growth of 0.50% per year (2.83% growth in 2018-2019):

Years	Property Tax Bill (Referendum Only)	Net Impact	Total Mill Rate
2017-2018 (Base Year)	No referendum	NA	\$10.09
2018-2019	\$1.25	\$0.95	\$9.86
2019-2020	\$0.87	\$0.57	Unknown
2020-2021	\$1.03	\$0.83	Unknown
2021-2028	Between \$0.88 - \$0.90	Between \$0.58 - \$0.60	Unknown
2028-2029	\$0.54	\$0.24	Unknown
2029-2038	Between \$0.42 - \$0.44	Between \$0.12 - \$0.14	Unknown

Construction Schedule

- HCE** PRESENT – SEPTEMBER 2019
- WHS** FEBRUARY – AUGUST 2019
- WMS** MARCH – AUGUST 2019
- EES** JUNE – AUGUST 2019



Facility Projects Outside of the Referendum

A seminar room for the high school, a library for the middle school, and a Makerspace for the middle school (respectively).



Profile of a Whitnall Graduate: Focus Groups

As part of our continuous improvement journey, we are developing the Profile of a Whitnall Graduate to ensure that our graduates possess the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary for success after high school. There is a body of research that provides a foundation, but we know that each district is unique and we value the input of our Whitnall community. In June of 2017, we gave a quantitative survey related to this to our community. In order for us to obtain *qualitative* information and clarification, we are holding focus groups with Whitnall alumni, parents of Whitnall alumni, and the business and civic community. Parents of Whitnall alumni from the Classes of 2015, 2016, 2017, and 2018 will be receiving an email to forward to their child about the focus groups, in addition to information about the alumni parent focus group. You can also visit our district website; On the homepage, there is a link to more information and a place to sign up. Due to preparations and space, we are asking that participants sign up in advance. Location will be provided to participants after registering. If you have questions, please call the district office at 414-525-8411.

Whitnall Alumni Focus Group Dates (Classes of 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018)

Thursday, January 3: 11:30 AM and 5:30 PM

Wednesday, January 9: 11:30 AM and 5:30 PM

Whitnall Alumni Parents Focus Group Dates (Classes of 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018)

Monday, January 7: 6:30 PM

Whitnall Business and Civic Community Focus Group

Tuesday, January 8: 6:30 PM

Community Input

Our freshman learners have been working on a project for which they have to understand and then communicate Whitnall's identity. As part of their research, they interviewed parents, students, staff, and community members. It was a perfect example of all of our stakeholders coming together. It was a perfect example of #ALLIN. Among the community members interviewed? The mayor of Greenfield and one of our board members!



advancement

belonging

courage



**PROUD
HISTORY
BRIGHT
FUTURE**



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Whitnall School District
5000 S. 116th Street
Greenfield, WI 53228
414.525.8400
www.whitnall.com

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Jonathan Cagle | President | Hales Corners | Since 2014
Quin Brunette | Vice-President | Greenfield | Since 2012
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Nancy Zaborowski | Member | Greenfield | Since 2008
Jon Jones | Member | Franklin | Since 2014
Steven Butz | Member | Greenfield | Since 2018

**WE ARE WISHING
EVERYONE
A SAFE AND
HAPPY HOLIDAY
SEASON!**

In November, learners from the school districts of Franklin, Muskego, Oak Creek, Greendale, and Greenfield joined our learners at WHS for a Trades Apprenticeship Expo. Students not only learned about a multitude of trades, but got to try them out! We loved watching learners from all different districts come together to explore some exciting post graduation possibilities!



Newsletter feedback?
Send to
lvasquez@whitnall.com

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@whitnallschools for all three!