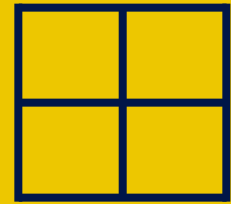


THE WHITNALL WINDOW



WINTER
22-23



CONTENTS

- 1 SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE

- 2 BOARD BULLETIN

- 3 ALL IN APPLAUSE

- 4-5 EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION

- 6 CURRICULAR UPDATES

- 7 PHOTOS

- 8-9 STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

- 10-11 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- 12 BACK COVER

The Superintendent's Message

As a school district, our paramount responsibility is serving students. We also have a responsibility to serve our employees, who carry out that service to students. And, being in the public sector, we have a responsibility to serve our community. I believe the best way to know how we are doing serving those groups is to hear from them directly. That's why we are engaged in a schedule of regular surveying of students, employees, and community members.



We survey students when we are unclear about something in particular. For example, we recently conducted a survey of high school students to gauge interest in future course offerings. But we also have implemented a recurrent and more general student survey. This fall, we began the Whitnall student engagement survey, which asks students in grades three through twelve to reflect on our district values of advancement, belonging, and courage. Please see pages eight and nine of this issue for more information on the Whitnall student engagement survey.

While the student engagement survey has just begun, we are in the third year of our employee satisfaction survey. This survey gives voice to all of our employees—teachers, custodians, administrative assistants, etc. We are encouraged by the most recent results; see pages four and five.

Last spring, we conducted a community survey, and we will be doing so again in May. This allows us to see if / how the community's priorities have shifted. The results from the spring 2022 survey are available on our website, and the results from the 2023 survey will be made available as well.

Whether we are hearing directly from students, staff, or the community, we value giving voice to those we serve, and we adjust our work accordingly. Thank you to any stakeholder who has ever added their voice to the collective conversation.

Lisa L. Olson

Dr. Lisa L. Olson, Superintendent

#whitnALLIN

Wisconsin State Education Convention

In January, four Whitnall School Board members attended the Wisconsin State Education Convention held by the Wisconsin Association of School Boards (WASB). Board members, superintendents, and school business officials from across the state came together to network and hear from speakers from across the country. There was a wide range of topics covered; there were sessions on conventional topics like school finance, literacy, crisis response, facilities, and there were more timely sessions like *Winning at Culture Rather than Losing to Politics* and *Successfully Navigating Book Challenges Using Policy and Procedure*. The photo to the right was taken at the convention and features (from left to right) Dr. Lisa Olson (Superintendent), Karen Mikolainis (School Board Member), Jason Craig (School Board Clerk), Quin Brunette (School Board Vice President), Jesse Stachowiak (School Board Treasurer), and Jon Duhr (Director of Business Services).



National Honor Society Induction

Also in January, board members attended the National Honor Society (NHS) induction. Students are inducted into NHS following an application process that involves confirming a minimum grade point average of 3.5 and sharing how they demonstrate the four pillars of NHS—character, scholarship, leadership, and service. Once inducted, students work to support the school and the community through service projects. At this year’s induction, the president of the Whitnall Park Rotary Club addressed the students and spoke about the importance of serving your community. Four board members attended to recognize the students and show their support. The photo to the right was taken at the induction ceremony and features (from left to right) Quin Brunette, Jesse Stachowiak, Nancy Zaborowski, and Jonathan Cagle.



School Board Election

This year, there are three school board seats available. We have six candidates running for these three seats. Please visit our website for a list of the candidates.

You can also watch our website and social media accounts for candidate profiles. Each candidate will answer the following questions: Why are you seeking election to the Whitnall School Board? What experience do you have that you believe will make you an effective board member? What personal connection / history do you have with the Whitnall School District?

Also, save the date for the candidate forum on Monday, March 6. The candidates will answer school board related questions in front of an audience. The forum will be live streamed and uploaded to the district’s YouTube channel, so any Whitnall community member can reference it at any time. The forum will begin at 6:30 PM and will be held in our Community Board Room.

Finally, don’t forget to vote! The election will be held on Tuesday, April 4.



Each and every day, our employees demonstrate what it means to be all in, and that deserves some applause. At the start of 2023, we introduced All In Applause, which asks Whitnall staff, parents, students, or community members to nominate our employees for online recognition. Each recognition is shared on social media, in our digital staff and family newsletters, and we would like to share the first five here. Join us in giving each of these Whitnall employees a round of All In Applause!

Hales Corners Elementary Third Grade Teacher Lyn Lopez

Parents described Lyn as an “extraordinary teacher and person” and a “consistent positive influence.” They said Lyn “teaches with a steady combination of knowledge, experience, structure, and compassion.” They said that her frequent involvement in school functions, community events, and Whitnall youth sports programs shows that she is all in. A fellow Whitnall employee described Lyn as a “supportive team player” who generously offers her time and expertise. “She is always there to listen.”



Whitnall High School Technical Education Teacher Chris Jackson

A fellow Whitnall employee detailed all the ways that Chris is all in, saying “Chris lives in the district, has students in the district, and now teaches tech ed in the district. He is involved in a variety of Whitnall activities from coaching football to chaperoning field trips to advising SkillsUSA. He goes above and beyond, whether it’s constructing set pieces for theatre, helping physics students with race cars, building shadow boxes for student artwork, or helping with t-shirts for the dance team.” A parent described Chris as “everything you want in a teacher” and said that he is passionate about his craft and passionate about transferring his passion (and skill) to WHS students. “Chris meets each student where they are and is determined to make his course life changing for his students.”



Whitnall Middle School Spanish Teacher Amy Keup

A fellow Whitnall employee described Amy as an “outstanding educator and leader,” referencing how much time she spends making her lessons fun and engaging for her students and how she goes above and beyond as a mentor to other staff members, sharing ideas and connecting the dots. A parent mentioned Amy’s habit of sending quick, sentimental shoutouts to students and families when they least expect it. “She knows when a child or parent is in need of an uplifting comment and can always bring out a smile.”



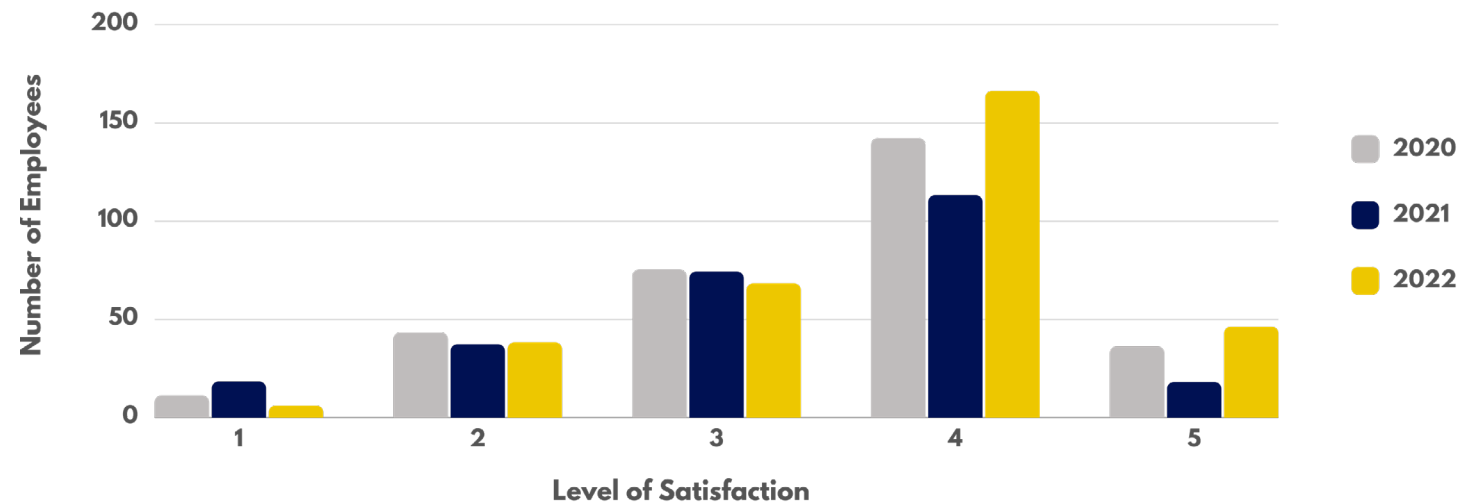
Edgerton Elementary 4K Teacher Amy Koenigs

A Whitnall parent nominated Amy for her “continued commitment to children, the school, and the community.” The parent mentioned the immense amount of love and patience that Amy puts into teaching. “We have counted on her to bring excellence to Whitnall, and she has never failed us.”



Follow our social media accounts to see even more! And please consider nominating a Whitnall employee for All In Applause. The nomination form is available on social media and on our website.

We have completed a third round of our employee satisfaction survey. The survey was conducted in November of 2020, November of 2021, and November of 2022. Administering the survey allows us to identify areas for improvement; administering the survey *continuously* allows us to measure our progress in those areas. The data analysis is done by an independent third party. In 2022, 338 employees completed or nearly completed the survey, resulting in a 91.10% response rate! The response rate was 71.79% in 2021 and 89.94% in 2020. In 2022, district employees reported an overall positive level of satisfaction working in the district (3.64), surpassing the overall level of satisfaction reported in both 2020 and 2021.



Among the individual questions, we saw lots of positive increases from 2020 to 2022. The chart below features some examples. Each of these items saw an increase that is considered statistically significant (greater than .05). *Please note that these were not the only items from the survey that saw a statistically significant increase.*

	2020	2021	2022
I would recommend someone to work in the district	3.08	3.07	3.45
I feel trusted and valued as an employee	2.78	3.01	3.35
I believe the district is headed in the right direction	2.85	2.95	3.29
I am able to establish and maintain a healthy work-life balance	2.93	3.32	3.43

When comments around work-life balance emerged as a trend in the previous years, the district held focus groups with employees to better understand the problem and to hear some possible solutions. Action was taken using the insight from those focus groups, and we are happy to see that that work seems to be having a positive impact. Not only has the work-life balance item seen an increase, but comments around work-life balance were no longer a trend in the 2022 results.

Out of the 53 survey questions, there were this many statistically significant decreases: **0**

One of the district goals in our strategic plan is to “positively impact communication, feedback, and professional learning so that we can enhance our workplace culture as evidenced by increasing an average of .5 in each of these areas in the employee satisfaction survey by the fall of 2023.” Below are three charts representing those three areas. Each chart shows the specific questions and the scores over time.

Communication

	2020	2021	2022
My supervisor provides clear direction when there is an identified problem or issue that must be resolved	NA	3.42	3.62
The district clearly explains reasons behind decisions on key issues	2.95	2.89	3.16
The district has clearly communicated performance expectations to employees	3.37	3.15	3.43
I have access to the appropriate administrator in times of uncertainty	3.34	3.53	3.80

Feedback

	2020	2021	2022
I receive useful feedback (other than that associated with performance reviews) from my supervisor or other leader	2.69	2.90	3.22
I receive non-monetary recognition for my contributions	2.62	2.75	3.08
I feel respected and supported in my work	3.26	3.35	3.65

Professional Learning

	2020	2021	2022
I feel the training I have received has supported my ability to successfully perform my job responsibilities	3.26	3.07	3.43
Professional development has helped me to better meet the needs of students	2.59	2.80	2.99
I have opportunities to learn and develop in ways that are relevant to me	3.33	3.02	3.25

On the previous page, we mentioned focus groups on work-life balance. Similarly, we held focus groups on communication and feedback. The survey responses allow us to track our progress, while the focus groups allow our employees the opportunity to clarify their numerical responses and to propose ways to progress even further. With this input, we’ve made changes that seem to be moving us toward and beyond our district goal!

To see even more results from the employee satisfaction survey, you can view the comprehensive summary on our website. Just scan the QR code to the right!



Introduction

Our district vision is that every one of our Whitnall graduates is prepared to realize their full potential and to have a positive impact on both local and global communities. In alignment with our vision, our district strategic plan explicitly includes key strategic objectives to develop a rigorous and viable curriculum in each academic subject area. By design, we will frequently review and evaluate our curriculum resources to ensure access to rigorous materials that our community has come to expect and that our students deserve.

K-3 Phonics

Our youngest Whitnall learners need a strong foundation in learning how to read and write. New Wisconsin English Language Arts (ELA) standards were released in 2020, which called for systematic and explicit phonics instruction, a method of teaching children to read by correlating sounds with letters or groups of letters. That was not well represented in our curricular resources at the time. Beginning last year, a phonics curriculum resource committee composed of classroom educators, literacy specialists, and administrators was formed. Our committee carefully reviewed current literacy research, vetted curriculum resources for their level of academic rigor, and made a phonics curricular resource recommendation to our board. In March, the board unanimously adopted the phonics committee's recommendation to use Sadlier's From Phonics to Reading resource for kindergarten through third grade students during the 2022-2023 school year. Immediately following the board approval, our educators have been working very hard to shift their instructional and assessment practices to provide effective phonics instruction. Additionally, our ESSER-funded literacy implementation specialists have been key in supporting job-embedded professional development for our educators over the past semester to ensure growth and achievement for all students and to equip our educators with knowledge of current best practices.

6-8 Mathematics

As stated in our district strategic plan, we are engaged in a continuous improvement process to increase the number of students who are proficient or advanced in the area of mathematics. Upon closer evaluation of our middle school data, the curricular resource, and educator instructional practices, it was evident that the 6-8 math curricular resource needed to be reviewed. A 6-8 math curricular resource committee was formed in the spring of 2022. Similar to the phonics process, research was conducted, resources that provided for rigor and best instructional practices were reviewed, and a board recommendation was made in May. The board adopted McGraw Hill's Reveal Math starting this school year. Our 6-8 math educators have been engaged in professional development since the beginning of the year and have continued to work as a team to ensure that all students' needs are being met.

K-8 ELA

While reviewing the updated Wisconsin ELA standards during our phonics efforts, we discovered that our current K-8 ELA curricular resources also required an update with a laser focus on academic rigor for all students. After the phonics approval in spring, we immediately began our next curriculum review. Since spring, our educators have been growing their knowledge of The Science of Reading. The Science of Reading is a body of research that informs how children learn to read and write, why some children have difficulty, and what instructional approaches are most effective. Our current curricular resource does not adequately address our students' academic needs and, therefore, our K-8 ELA curricular resource review committee proposed new resources at our February 13 board meeting.

For More Information

The recommendations to the board were made via presentations at the March 14, 2022 (K-3 phonics), May 9, 2022 (6-8 mathematics), and February 13, 2023 (K-8 ELA) board meetings. We encourage you to visit our YouTube channel and watch the presentations at those meetings to learn more!



ADVANCEMENT BELONGING COURAGE ADVANCEMENT BELONGING COURAGE



PROUD HISTORY BRIGHT FUTURE PROUD HISTORY BRIGHT FUTURE PROUD HISTORY



The district is pleased to share results from our first student engagement survey. The survey was given to all Whitnall students in grades 3 through 12. Student engagement, defined as an individual's interest and enthusiasm for school, is important because it impacts student behavior and academic performance. From 2018 to 2020, the district used the Developmental Assets Profile for one grade per level, but found that the data provided by the profile was not sufficient to help us determine student needs. Therefore, we developed the Whitnall student engagement survey to provide us with data around our core values of advancement, belonging, and courage and to help us determine how to maintain a positive school and district culture.

Each year, the survey will be given in fall, winter, and spring in order to determine changes in student perceptions over time. There are 33 questions in the survey. The first 31 questions, answered on a scale of strongly disagree to strongly agree, are categorized by our district values of advancement, belonging, and courage.

Advancement questions gauge student perceptions of academics, learning, and school and class expectations.

- My teachers expect me to do my best all the time
- My schoolwork challenges me
- My teachers meet my learning needs

Belonging questions gauge student perceptions about peer and adult relationships and the school environment.

- My teachers care about me
- I feel an adult listens to me when I have something to say
- I am happy to be at this school

Courage questions gauge student perceptions about school safety and conflict resolution.

- If I hear or see something dangerous at my school, I know who to talk to about it
- If I hear about a threat to school or student safety, I would report it to someone
- I feel safe at this school

The remaining two questions asked students to respond to "How likely would you be to recommend your school to someone else?" and "Is there anything else that you would like us to know?"

The survey was first given in October. We had 1,647 students complete the survey--a response rate of 87.14%!

District Top 3

	% of students who agree or strongly agree
If I hear about a threat to school or student safety, I would report it to someone	90.95%
My teachers expect me to do my best all the time	90.35%
My teachers care about me	89.98%

District Bottom 3

	% of students who agree or strongly agree
Students respect the school building and property	59.56%
Students at this school solve problems with other students by talking to them	56.71%
Students at this school treat all other students with respect.	54.10%

In looking at the scores by category (i.e. our 3 district values), advancement came out on top, with courage emerging as our value of focus. In response, the district resolved to review all physical safety measures and to facilitate more learning around psychological safety. Specifically, staff spent professional learning time on effectively supporting student relationships.

Values

	agree or strongly agree	disagree or strongly disagree
Advancement	77.90%	22.10%
Belonging	74.57%	25.43%
Courage	72.60%	27.40%

Of the 1,647 students who completed the survey, 525 students left comments. District administrators read every comment several times and grouped similar comments into themes. Below are the most common positive themes and the most common negative themes.

Positive Themes



Negative Themes



Of the individual comments, the one below really spoke to us, as we believe it effectively and candidly speaks to the value of these surveys.

"...students often feel unheard. I think making sure the students feel their individual needs are met is the most important thing, and when they feel administration and teachers are hearing them, everyone gets along a little better. Building mutual respect between staff and students is definitely an area we can improve in. These surveys are a great start!"

For a more comprehensive look at the fall student engagement survey results, we encourage you to watch the presentation from the November 7, 2022 school board meeting. The recording of the meeting is available on our YouTube channel, and the presentation begins at about 13 minutes.

Realtor Breakfast

At the end of November, we hosted a realtor breakfast. We shared information about Whitnall, from basic facts to the features that make our district both unique and attractive to buyers. Then, we opened up the discussion and heard from the agents. What about Whitnall were they still unclear about? What are the most common questions they hear from clients about school districts? About Whitnall specifically? This ended up being a really positive and enlightening event. We believe the realtors walked away with a better understanding of our district, and we walked away with a better understanding of what is being said about Whitnall as families consider the area.



Public Official Breakfast

In December, we hosted a public official breakfast with the School District of Greenfield. We invited leaders and legislators to learn about the districts and their individual needs. Among the attendees were Greenfield's mayor, Hales Corners' village president, and state legislators Senator Julian Bradley, Representative Bob Donovan, and Representative Chuck Wichgers. Thank you to board members Kevin Stachowiak and Quin Brunette for attending as well!



Tyler Herro Jersey Retirement

At the beginning of February, Tyler Herro returned to Whitnall to have his high school jersey retired. Thank you to all the members of the Whitnall community who came to show their support, and thank you to the Miami Heat for joining us!



WASB Business Honor Roll

The Wisconsin Association of School Boards (WASB) has recognized five local businesses for partnering with Whitnall through our Youth Apprenticeship program. We recently presented the businesses with their WASB Business Honor Roll certificates. Thank you to Meineke in Brookfield, Grunau, NARI, Generac, and Creative Construction for providing our students with incredible opportunities!



Trades Day

Whitnall hosted Trades Day again this year! We welcomed students from ten area high schools and had our own high schoolers (and middle schoolers!) attend. This is a great opportunity for students to learn about careers in the trades, to try out some skills, and to connect with individuals with real-world experience.



Upcoming Events

Pay Day

Again this year, local businesses and parent volunteers will help us run our Pay Day event on April 18. Pay Day is a personal finance simulation that gives students a taste of real-world expenses. Each student is given a paycheck based on a career they choose for themselves. Then, they visit a series of booths and have to pay bills, make loan payments, and even cover unexpected expenses from the "fate" booth. This is a great way for students to practice the important life skills of money management and budgeting.

Spring Musical

Don't miss this year's spring musical, *Mean Girls!* There will be performances on May 5, May 6, and May 7. Watch our social media accounts and our website for ticket information. With this show, we are bringing back the senior dinner, which was a long-standing Whitnall tradition. Senior citizens in the Whitnall community will get dinner and a performance of *Mean Girls* for a reduced price. We are very excited about restarting this tradition!



THE WHITNALL WINDOW

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Jason Craig	Clerk, Franklin
Jonathan Cagle	Member, Hales Corners
Karen Mikolainis	Member, Hales Corners
Nancy Zaborowski	Member, Greenfield



The Whitnall Hall of Fame

We are currently accepting nominations for 2023 Whitnall Hall of Fame inductees. The Whitnall Hall of Fame honors impactful athletes, coaches, and supporters. If you would like to nominate someone, you can visit the Hall of Fame page on Whitnall High School's website. The nomination window closes on July 1, 2023.

Newsletter feedback?
Send to
lvasquez@whitnall.com

Follow us on social media!



@whitnallschools for all three!