



THE

RED & WHITE

JANUARY 2024

A LETTER FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

Dear Vicksburg Schools Families,

I hope you had an enjoyable holiday break and a happy start to the new year.

I am very much looking forward to the great things ahead in 2024.

I am hopeful our teachers, staff and students had some time to relax and unplug during our break and we can come back to school re-energized and excited to tackle the rest of the school year.

For the past 2 months I have been meeting with my new Superintendent Student Advisory Board and we have been laying the ground for some exciting student leadership opportunities this year. I am excited to see their goals for our district come to life.

In this Red and White you'll read about some of the opportunities our students have taken part in to help prepare them for their future. You'll also see ways that

our generous students and community have given back to those in need this past holiday season.

Please enjoy this issue of the Red and White and I hope you have a wonderful 2024.



Regards,
Kevin O'Neill, SUPERINTENDENT

Junior Achievement Titans Compete at WMU

Congratulations to our VHS business students who traveled to WMU for the Junior Achievement Titan Business Simulation Competition.

One of their teams took 2nd place

JA Titan is a simulation-based program where high school students compete as business CEOs, experiencing firsthand how an organization evaluates alternatives, makes decisions, analyzes the outcomes of those decisions, and then strategizes what to do next. With a focus on financial literacy and insights into the workforce, JA Titan brings business economics to life.



Reality Fair at Vicksburg High School

Vicksburg High School students got a taste of reality at the Reality Fair by Kalamazoo RESA Career Connect.

They first chose a job, which listed the median income for that profession in the state of Michigan.

Students then went from booth to booth and had to decide where they lived, what kind of transportation they used, where they shopped, and even what they did in their spare time.

Each item they checked took money from their budget.

They also had to spin the "wheel of fate" and pick one positive life event and one negative event and then budget for those expenses.

It gave students an eye-opening look at the real world and how budgets work.



Curiosity Grant Open to Student Applicants

The Vicksburg Community Schools Foundation is now accepting Curiosity Grant applications from students!

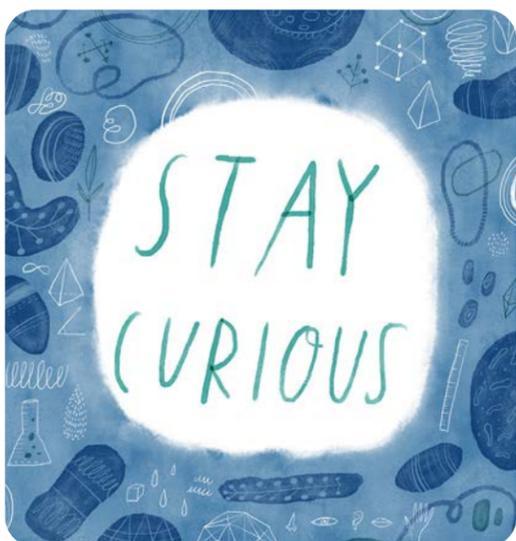
The grants are designed to help fund something the students are curious to learn more about.

Examples of previous grants have been: Kindergarten students wondering if flower seed will grow in sidewalk cracks, starting a Japanese club at Vicksburg Middle School, creating an illustration club at VMS, insect

preservation for a VHS student, Earth Day plants for the Lighthouse team at Sunset Lake, and injection molding supplies for robotics.

Individual students must submit an application form. They may get assistance from an adult but the idea and plan need

to be theirs. Applications can be found on the VCSF page of the district website.



**NOW ACCEPTING
CURIOSITY GRANT
APPLICATIONS!**



The grants are designed to help fund something the students are curious about.



Scan to apply!

The Gingerbread Man Hunt Continues

An Indian Lake Elementary tradition for more than 30 years: The Gingerbread Man Hunt!

Every year, the kindergarten classes read the Gingerbread Man book and create their own. Then the gingerbread man jumps out of the oven and runs through the school leaving a trail of destruction and some clues for the students to help track him down.

This year they found him in the reading room and saved Dr. B who was tied up by the mischievous cookie!



Vicksburg Pathways Celebrates 250th Grad

It's an exciting time for Vicksburg Pathways High School!

Just before winter break, their 250th graduate got to ring the bell.

A huge congratulations to Allison Bowlds who wrapped up her 3 years at the school.

Allison has plans to work full time and continue her art business doing commissions for art and design.

We are so proud of you, Allison!



Indian Lake Giving Tree

Great job to the students and community at Indian Lake Elementary!

They filled their giving tree with bows this holiday season and donated to a number of local organizations.

For every donation, students got to add a decoration to the tree.

They collected items for Generous Hands, Senior Services and the Animal Rescue Project along with gift cards for Indian Lake families in need.

We are proud of their efforts to help those in need in our own community.

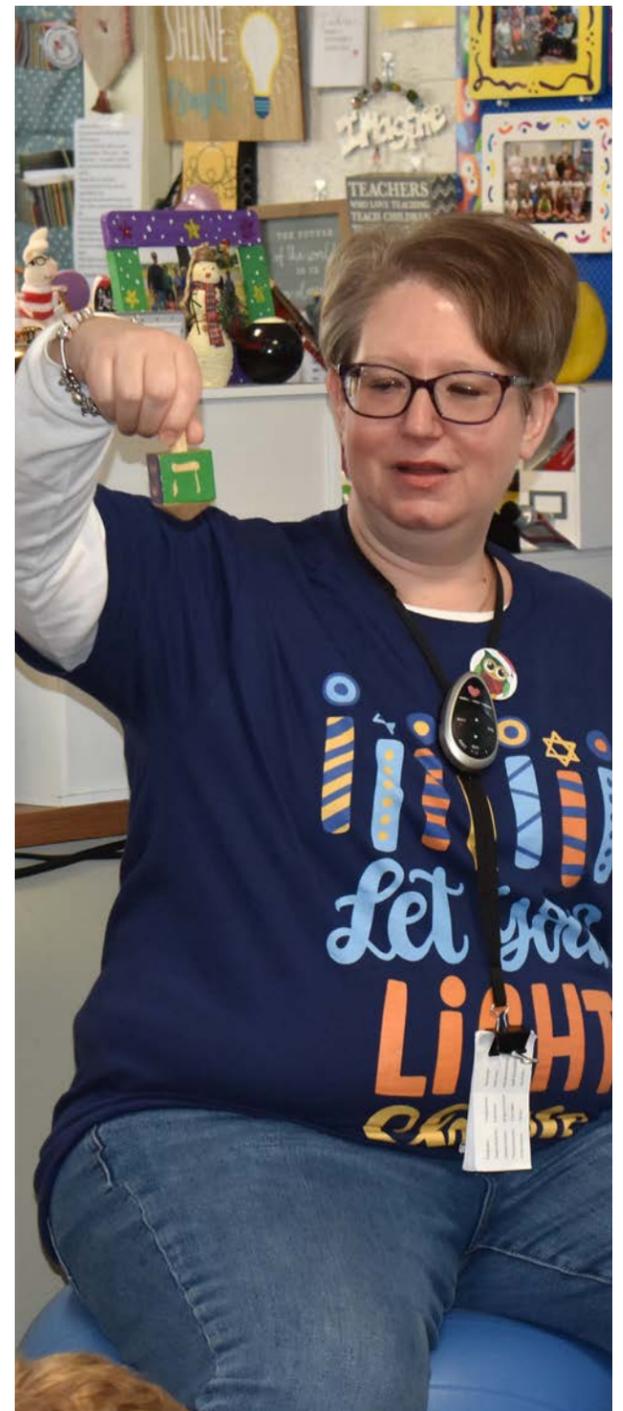


Learning About Hanukkah

This holiday season, all the first grade classes at Tobey Elementary came together into one to learn about Hanukkah with teacher Michelle Wester.

It was part of their lessons on different holidays celebrated around the world.

They read a book about the origins of the holiday, learned about the menorah, and used their math skills to learn and play dreidel.



Celebrating Reading at Indian Lake Elementary

Readers at Indian lake Elementary have been working hard!

Over the eight weeks leading up to break, students in reading intervention tracked their progress towards their individual goals.

Before break they enjoyed a celebration of their sweet success with cake and fun activities for all those who were at or above their trend line.

All the hard work paid off and 76 students were able to celebrate their reading growth!

We are so proud! Way to go, Indian Lakers!



Teachers Kiss a Pig for a Fundraiser at VMS

Students at Vicksburg Middle School hosted a unique holiday fundraiser for South County Community Services.

They bought ornaments to decorate a tree and could designate which teacher they

wanted to "win" an opportunity to kiss a pig!

They raised \$188 and Mrs. Cubbage, Mr. Brussee, and Mr. Duncan had to pucker up for a cute little piglet during a special assembly!

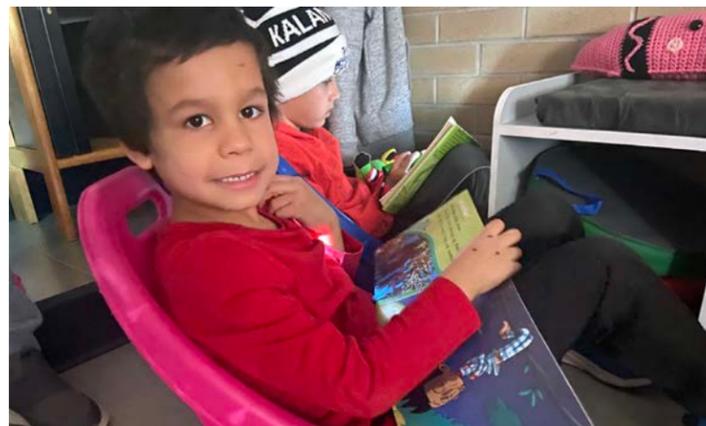


Flashlight Friday Reading Day at Sunset Lake

Flashlight Friday!

Students in Kim Parsons' first grade class at Sunset Lake Elementary brought their stuffed animals to school and got a special flashlight Friday reading day with them.

Look at all these engaged readers!



AIM Higher Gives Back to the Community

At Vicksburg High School they celebrated the 12 Days of Christmas by giving back to others.

AIM Higher and other students in leadership held theme days for the 12 days leading up to winter break, collecting items for the SPCA, Bronson's Children's Hospital, and the unhoused of Kalamazoo.

They would like to thank local businesses for helping to donate as well. Thank you to Biggby on Portage Rd., Biggby on Westnedge, Peace Love & Little Donuts, CHocolateA, Celebration Cinema, Vicksburg Athletics and the VHS Student Senate.

We are proud of all they did to help others in need!



Tobey Adopts Families for the Holidays

The elves at Tobey Elementary have been very busy this year working on their Offer a Helping Hand holiday collection.

This year, they adopted 41 families with a total of 109 kids and 64 adults!

The families provide wish lists with items like clothes, bedding and towels, along with toys.

This year more than ever, families wished for household items like laundry detergent and garbage bags.

Thank you to the dozens of local

businesses that adopted families and displayed gift tags for others to adopt. This massive project could not be done without community support!

Parent Organizer April Wilson and her right hand elf Chelsea Lawrence have spent the last month wrapping, shopping and organizing it all as the donations came in.

All of the gifts are delivered by Mr. B to the families. It's often done in secrecy to keep the Christmas magic alive.



VHS Competes at WMU Innovation Expo

More than 400 students from 14 schools competed at Western Michigan University's 2023 Innovation Expo!

The annual event at WMU's College of Engineering and Applied Sciences gives students the opportunity to present and pitch their innovative products, models and prototypes to industry judges.

Vicksburg High School brought 23 teams to this year's competition. Two of those teams took home honors.

3rd place- Candy Mover, Vicksburg CTE

Team members: Ian Wurfel, Garrett Wurfel, Landon Johnson, Noah Briggs

Most Popular- Dream works, Vicksburg CTE

Team members: Gavin Schiedel, Connor DeVries, Nathaniel Laham, Tyler Hawkins

For many of the students, this yearly event is their first hands-on experience with engineering and often leads to a college and career pathway.

