



THE

# RED & WHITE

MARCH 2023

## A LETTER FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

### Dear Vicksburg Schools Families,

With spring sports starting and Spring Break just weeks away, I am beginning to look ahead to all things warm and bright. I'm finding it hard to believe this school year has moved so quickly and I am looking forward to the great things yet to come for our students.

Our buildings are all about to be busy welcoming in new students for next year. We are in the registration and enrollment process for our kindergarten and preschools right now, and our 5th and 8th graders

are beginning to prepare to transition to the middle and high schools.

As a district, we are continuing to work on our five year strategic plan. Our partners in this venture have recently completed interviews with student groups from the middle and high schools to gain valuable information about their experiences in Vicksburg Schools. We will be using that information, along with our parent and staff surveys to help shape the future of VCS.

In this edition of the Red and White you'll see how grants from the Vicksburg Community Schools Foundation are helping our students, as well as how you can support their efforts. And from cooking to basketball and reading, see how our students are finding success in recent competitions. Enjoy your spring break!



Regards,

**Keevin O'Neill, SUPERINTENDENT**

## An Incredible Season for VHS Basketball



The VHS Girls Basketball team was crowned Wolverine Conference Champs!

The team had an impressive,

school record 22-0 regular season to be named conference champions.

After an amazing season the lady

bulldogs fell in the District finals to a very aggressive and talented Olivet team.

Congratulations ladies on a

season filled with so many accomplishments. We are incredibly proud of you all!



# Hearty Hustle 5K Registration Now Open

Get Your Kicks for the 36th! Registration for the 36th annual Hearty Hustle 5K Race is now open!

All the proceeds from the fun community event benefit the Vicksburg Community Schools Foundation, which funds programs that would not otherwise be supported by tax revenues. Teachers and students directly benefit through educational, literary, scientific and extra-curricular activities.

The Hearty Hustle is taking place Saturday May 13th at 9am. It's \$30 to register and that includes

a 36th annual commemorative t-shirt. There is also a one mile fun run for the kids.

To be guaranteed a race t-shirt, registrations need to be in by April 28st.

You can register on the Vicksburg Community Schools Foundation tab on [vicksburgschools.org](https://vicksburgschools.org) or by scanning the QR code in the ad to the right of this article.

**GET<sup>20</sup><sub>23</sub>  
YOUR  
KICKS**  
*At the 36<sup>th</sup> Annual  
Hearty Hustle 5K*



Register Now Open!  
May 13th, 2023

<https://runsignup.com/Race/MI/Vicksburg/VicksburgHeartyHustle>

## Winter Homecoming Court Named



Congratulations to the Winter Homecoming Court!

Senior king and queen: Justin Plankenhorn and Faith Smith.

Junior prince and princess: Chase Willmont and Anna Bartholomew

Other court members:

Freshmen: Luke Deal and Kayla Chisholm.

Sophomores: Grant Balazs and Emma Vallier, Allie Spencer and Blake Sutherland.

Juniors: Jaxson Wilson and Sydney Taylor, Brooklyn Ringler and Drew Habel.

Seniors: JP Culver and Joanna Hassenger, Tristin Abnet and Cody Hatridge, Dalton Heath and MyKaila Scamazzo.





# Tobey Gets Top Spot at Battle of the Books



Congratulations to the Grand Battle winner of Battle of the Books!

The top team was the “Udderly Royal Cows” representing Tobey Elementary.

Team members Kinley Born, Caleb Byrne, Ean Najdowski, Flora Najdowski, Annabelle Simonds and Gabriele VanMaanen won with 85 points!

Second place was the “Nerd Herd” from Sunset Lake with 81 points. “Return to the Book World” from Tobey took third with 79 points.

It was back and forth several times through the competition and a very exciting battle!

This is the second year Vicksburg Community Schools has run the Battle of the Books program. More than 100 4th through 6th graders competed as part of 22 teams from 3 school districts.

They read 12 books over the last few months and answered some very tough questions at the first battle to make it to the grand battle where the top 8 teams faced off.

Great job to all the teams involved!

# Better Business Bureau Scambusters at VHS

Is it the real deal or a scam? Our Vicksburg High School students learned some important lessons about common scams and how to avoid them, thanks to the Better Business Bureau of Western Michigan.

The BBB stopped by our VHS personal finance classes with their Scambusters presentation to help educate students on the types of online and phone scams that happen every day.

Students had to decide if a scenario was real or a potential scam. The BBB then gave them common red flags to watch out for.





## New Kiln at Vicksburg Middle School

The Middle School Art department is enjoying their new kiln, thanks to a Bardeen Grant from the Vicksburg Community Schools Foundation.

The new kiln has allowed them to create vibrant colors on their pottery.

6th grade students have been making drupe bowls decorated with the imprints of their favorite toys and other items from their childhood.

Thank you to the VCSF for providing these amazing opportunities for our students.



## WMU Students Donate Backpacks to VCS

Thank you to the WMU College of Education and Human Development for their generous donations!

They held a backpack, winter gear and supply drive and donated dozens of backpacks filled with hats and gloves to our schools.

Each bag also contains a handwritten note from the WMU student hoping to be a future teacher.

Our VCS students in need were so excited to receive the very sweet care packages!





## Black History Month at Indian Lake



Indian Lake second graders were hard at work researching famous Black Americans for Black History Month this February.

Students chose a person to research, collected notes, created a writing piece, and ultimately published a slide show.

At the end of February family members were invited in to view the slide show and learn about these amazing Black Americans at a "Black History... Still in the Making" Event.

You can see just how proud the student were of all their research and hard work!

## Lions Club Offers School Eye Exams

Thank you to the Lions Club for bringing Project KidSight to our schools.

The free eye tests can help identify a number of eye issues in just a few seconds. Entire classes can be screened in minutes! The Lion Club volunteers have been making their way through our schools the last few months and we really appreciate them making sure our students' eyes are in good shape.

Thank you for this important service.



## Lily Pucket Takes Third in Baking Competition



Congratulations to Vicksburg High School senior Lily Pucket who took 3rd place at the Kalamazoo RESA Career Connect Culinary and Baking regional competition at the end of February.

Lily competed in the baking portion of the competition and had to bake and decorate multiple desserts, including a pie, cake and muffins.

She's the only representative from Kalamazoo County to qualify for the state competition in April.

Great job, Lily, and good luck at state!



# Indian Lake Peer Mediators Spread Peace

4th & 5th grade students at Indian Lake are working to help create positive conflict resolution and make their school a better place.

Their Peer Mediation program helps to resolve disputes and conflicts through the help of a neutral third party, known as a mediator.

This year, the peer mediators are taking time during recess to help stop any issue before they become bigger. They also hold session for students who might need a little extra help

Peer Mediation gives students the opportunity to become leaders in the area of peaceful conflict resolution. Ms. Richeson, Indian Lake's school counselor, has been meeting with the Mediators on a weekly basis in order to guide them through interactive training to help the students gain confidence in their abilities as a mediator.

As an evidence-based restorative practice, peer mediation helps improve the school's overall climate and culture for students, staff, families, and the entire Vicksburg community.



# Something's Cooking at Sunset Lake Elementary

Students in Kellie Hillsburg and Kristina Newhouse's second grade class at Sunset Lake recently made some fun snowman pancakes!

It's part of a monthly project they are working on.

They first had to write out the recipe and then help make their snowmen creations, followed by decorating time, and finally a review of the recipe and a write up of what they would do differently next time.

Each month the students work on a new recipe and by the end of the school year they will have their own cookbooks.





## Sensory Paths Help Students Focus



Thanks to a Bardeen Grant from the Vicksburg Community Schools Foundation students at Sunset Lake Elementary have new sensory paths to help them focus and get a little energy out in a productive way.

The paths encourage students to be active on their way to class, using activity maps and colorful pathways throughout the hallways. These activities can help prepare their brains to learn.

Two paths are currently set up and two more will be soon!



## First Graders Go On Field Trip to Family Fare

First graders in Jill Braman's class at Sunset Lake took a special field trip to Family Fare for a lesson on economics.

The students have been learning about consumers, goods and services. They took their lesson out into the world to see first hand how items are bought and sold.

They class got a tour of the grocery store and got to learn about each department. Each student had clipboards and had to record the items they saw that correspond to their vocabulary words.

Family Fare also provided them with some special treats for making the trip. We want to thank them for being such great community partners and for making the lesson on economics so meaningful!

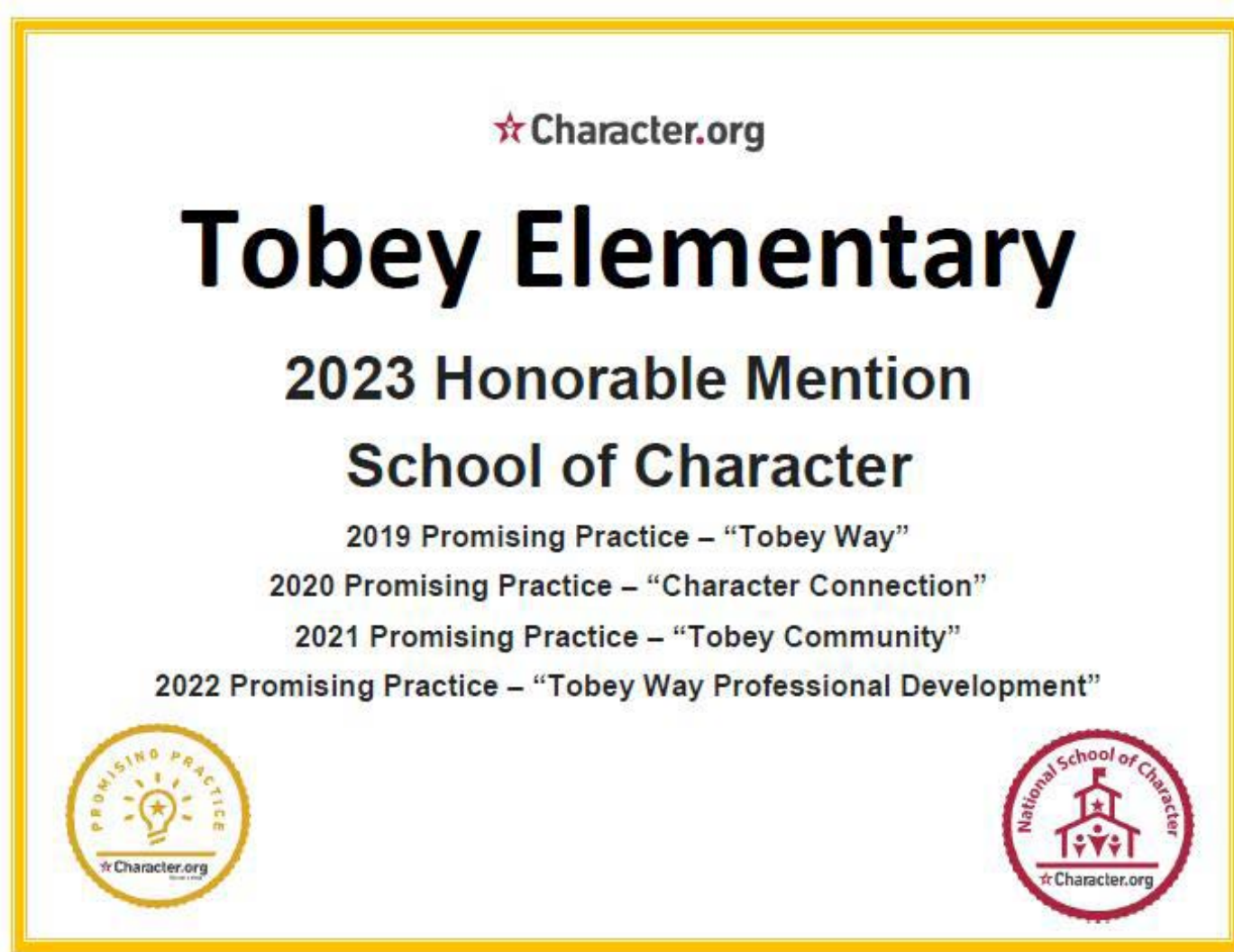




# Tobey Elementary Honored for Its Character

Congratulations to the Tobey Tigers for being named a 2023 Honorable Mention School of Character.

The Tobey Way and their other practices help set them apart! Way to go students and teachers!



Vicksburg Community Schools Proudly Presents:



March 11 at 7pm, March 12 at 2pm,  
March 17 at 7pm, March 18 at 2pm

Tickets:



## KINDERGARTEN

## KICK-OFF 2023!



Kick-off your child's kindergarten education with Vicksburg Community Schools!

### Kick-off Dates & Times:

<b>Tobey:</b>	April 4th from 6 to 7pm
<b>Indian Lake:</b>	April 6th from 6 to 7pm
<b>Sunset Lake:</b>	April 12th from 6 to 7pm

Parents/Guardians can meet the teachers, learn about the curriculum, transportation, food service & before/after school care.

**This event is for adults**

A meet & greet for students will be scheduled at a later date.



VCS is now accepting applications for the **2023-2024** school year for kids who will be 4 by September 1st.

Apply on the Community Education tab of our website today!  
Or scan here to download the application:



**Contact your school for more information:**

Indian Lake  
(269) 321-1400

Sunset Lake  
(269) 321-1500

Tobey  
(269) 321-1600