



THE

# RED & WHITE

MAY 2023

## A LETTER FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

### Dear Vicksburg Schools Families,

We are quickly approaching one of my favorite times of the year. The celebrations of our students' achievements are beginning and we are seeing our motto of 'Traditions in Excellence' in action.

Soon the class of 2023 will be heading out into the world. I take pride in knowing that we have prepared them for both college and careers and I can not wait to see the excellent things they are

going to accomplish.

At the same time, we are preparing for our other students to move up grades and move on to new schools. This is an exciting time for them all as we wrap up the last month of this school year. I am looking forward to all the end of year celebrations and events all of our buildings have planned.

In this edition of the Red and

White, you will meet our top 11 students from the class of 2023. You can also find information on our summer camps and classes for the entire community.

I hope you enjoy the May issue of the Red and White.



Regards,

**Keevin O'Neill, SUPERINTENDENT**



### Vicksburg Community Schools Foundation

## BOOKMARK CONTEST

#### Rules:

- All entries must be received by June 1st
- Entries must be original artwork
- Designs may be created using crayon, colored pencils, markers, or watercolor paint
- No computerized designs or copyrighted characters accepted
- Bookmark may be horizontal or vertical
- Winners will be judged on creativity, neatness, and originality
- 1 winner will be chosen from each of the following categories: Grades K-2, Grades 3-5, Grades 6-8, Grades 9-12, Adult
- Winning bookmarks will be printed with student name and age and be used for promotional purposes for VCSF
- Winners will receive several copies of their bookmark and recognition on our website

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Category (Circle One)

Email \_\_\_\_\_

K-2

6-8

Adult

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

3-5

9-12

Entries may be returned to any VCS school or mailed directly to:

VCSF  
301 S. Kalamazoo St.  
Vicksburg, MI 49097



Design in  
Outline  
Above



VHS  
CLASS  
OF

2  
0  
2  
3

4

TOP 11



Valedictorian

### Alyvia Bailey

*Alyvia is the Valedictorian for the class of 2023. She is a 4-year academic award winner, who took 16 AP classes at VHS. She currently has a 4.6 GPA and has already earned the AP Capstone Diploma. Alyvia is an Excellence in Education Award winner.*

*She is also a 3 time DECA state qualifier who is competing at the DECA National competition this spring.*

*Alyvia works two jobs and also runs the VHS student Instagram account.*

*Alyvia plans to attend Georgetown University to study political economics on a pre-law track.*



### Avery Barker

*Avery is a 4-year academic award winner, she took 12 AP classes and is a current AP Capstone Student. She also earned the Global Seal of Biliteracy*

*Avery played varsity volleyball, where she was team captain and was an all-conference honorable mention.*

*She received the Tennessee Explore scholarship to attend the University of Tennessee and was also accepted into University of Michigan. She is still deciding between the two schools and plans to become a dermatologist.*

IMPRESSIVE CREDENTIALS ✓

GPAS OF 4.3 OR HIGHER ✓

OVER 139 COMBINED AP COURSES ✓

**GET 20  
23  
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>



### Andrew Geiger

*Andrew is a 4-year academic award winner, who took 13 AP classes and is an AP Capstone Student. Andrew is an Excellence in Education Award winner.*

*He is involved in marching band and runs track and cross country where he served as team captain.*

*Andrew won the Hail Scholarship, receiving 4 years of tuition to the University of Michigan. He plans to study engineering.*





Salutatorian

Allison Bontrager

Allison is the Salutatorian for the class of 2023. She is a 4-year academic award winner with a 4.57 GPA. She took 16 AP classes and is a current AP Capstone Student. She also earned the Global Seal of Biliiteracy.

Allison participated in the Exposure Academy and is an Excellence in Education Award winner.

She plans to attend University of Michigan or Michigan State University to major in biochemistry and minor in Spanish while on a pre-med track.



Jackson Bowles

Jackson is a 4-year academic award winner, with a 4.55 GPA. He took 16 AP classes and earned his AP Capstone Diploma. He also scored a 1500 on his SAT. Jackson is an Excellence in Education Award winner.

Jackson earned 9 varsity letters in baseball, tennis, and clay target. He was named academic all-state in baseball and tennis.

Jackson is also a DECA state finalist who headed to internationals.

He plans to attend Purdue University in the engineering honors college.



Abigail Bush

Abby is a 4-year academic award winner, who took 10 AP classes. She earned the Michigan and the Global Seal of Biliiteracy.

She is involved in FCA, is the NHS vice-president and senior class president

Abby has been competing in gymnastics for 13 years; she is also a volunteer for the SPCA.

Abby plans to attend Notre Dame University where she will major in biology and minor in Spanish. She hopes to become a veterinarian.



Grace Cherette

Grace is a 4-year academic award winner, who took 10 AP classes, and is also an AP Capstone Student.

Grace played club and high school volleyball. She is also a volunteer for South County Community Services.

Grace plans to attend Lake Michigan College first and then transfer to an undecided university to major in chemical engineering.

Introducing the Vicksburg High School Class of 2023 Top 11 Students! They are involved in everything from varsity sports to band and choir, most have jobs and even find time to volunteer. Congratulations on all of your hard work!



Cody Hatridge

Cody is a 4-year academic award winner, who took 11 AP classes. He is recognized as an AP Scholar with distinction, meaning he received a 3.5 average on all AP exams, with 5 or more exams. Cody earned the Global Seal of Biliiteracy.

He is a member of NHS, and the boys basketball team for 4 years.

Cody plans to attend Michigan State University, majoring in finance and attending the Spanish honors program.



Carter Mann

Carter is a 4-year academic award winner, who took 12 AP classes, and earned his AP Capstone Diploma.

He is involved in NHS, FCA, played varsity football, wrestling, and lacrosse. He also volunteers at youth sports camps.

Carter plans to attend Albion University to play lacrosse and major in biology or biochemistry. He then hopes to attend University of Michigan for dental school.



Chase Willcutt

Chase is a 4-year academic award winner, who took 10 AP classes.

He played varsity lacrosse the past three years and played hockey for the Southwest Michigan Blades for four years, where he was 1st team all-conference his junior and senior years.

Chase also volunteers for both hockey and lacrosse youth camps.

He plans to attend Western Michigan University to play lacrosse and major in biology. Chase hopes to then attend medical school to become an anesthesiologist.



Tucker Radgens

Tucker is a 4-year academic award winner, he took 13 AP classes, and is an AP Capstone Student.

He is in the marching band and was voted the best section twice.

He ran cross-country where he was all-conference three times and a two-time state qualifier. Tucker also runs track where he was named all-conference.

He plans to attend Michigan State University to study computer science.



## Senior Day of Giving

This year, Vicksburg High School hosted a Seniors Day of Giving for the class of 2023.

Students spent the day throughout the community helping with clean up projects and other volunteer jobs. They worked at our school grounds, the bus garage, at the Vicksburg Historic Village and homes around the community.

Thank you to all those who gave back to our great community and schools!



## Sports Physicals for Middle and High Schoolers

Vicksburg Middle School and High School sports physicals for the 2023-2024 school year will be held on May 31st from 5:30 until 7:30 pm at Vicksburg High School.

The cost per physical will be \$20 per athlete.

Sports physical forms may be found at [vhsbulldogs.org](http://vhsbulldogs.org) or they can be picked up in the office at either school.

All athletes for the 2023-2024 school year will need an updated sports physical dated 4/15/23 or more current to play sports.

Just a reminder, physicals must be uploaded online to [planeths.com](http://planeths.com).

Students login with their school email address and password: bigteams. Parents click "Sign up" and follow the directions. Or via your mobile phone: send a text to 69274 containing S44917 in the message for a quick account code.

Athletes can not participate in MHSAA sports unless their digital forms are complete.



### SPORTS PARTICIPATION PHYSICALS

For Middle & High School Athletes

Wednesday, May 31st

5:30 to 7:30pm

Vicksburg High School

\$20 per athlete

All athletes for the 2023-2024 school year need an updated sports physical uploaded to [planeths.com](http://planeths.com) in order to participate



# Control Freaks Robotics Team Finishes Strong



Our VHS Control Freaks Robotics Team had a great season with lots to be proud of.

The team was presented with an award for Gracious Professionalism at their last competition. The award was given to them because they impressed the judges and fellow competitors with the way they carried themselves and worked with others!

Overall, they placed 8th out of 40 teams in a tough competition.

Way to go, Control Freaks Robotics Team!

# Summer Times 2023 & Sizzling Summer Camps

Register Online at [vicksburgcommunityschools.org](http://vicksburgcommunityschools.org). Click on the Departments tab, Community Education, and then “view class offerings.” Register your child their incoming grade level for the 2023/2024 school year.

### Volleyball Camp – VHS Gym

Skill building will be the focus of this 4 day co-ed volleyball training camp. Sign up now to bump, set, and spike your way into summer! Register by May 12th to reserve your t-shirt.

**June 12-15 | \$55**

Incoming 9th-12th: 9-11:30am

**June 12-15 | \$50**

Incoming K-5th: 12- 1:30pm

Incoming 6th-8th: 2 -3:30pm

### Tennis Camp - Tennis Courts

Take Advantage of summer and hit an Ace at the Bulldog Tennis Camp! Lace up your shoes, bring your racket and a new can of balls, and start swinging!

Both sessions meet Monday through Friday

**Session I – June 12-30 | \$55**

Register by May 15 to reserve your t-shirt

Beginners: 9am

Intermediate: 10am

Advanced 11am

**Session II – July 10-28 | \$55**

Register by June 9 to reserve your t-shirt

Beginners 9am

Intermediate 10am

Advanced 11am

### Theater Camp - VHS PAC

**June 19-23 | 9am-12pm | \$85 (includes camp t-shirt)**

Incoming 3rd-8th graders

Final performance on Friday, June 23 at 11:15am.

Early and late care available at \$5 per session. Enroll by June 9th.

Learn how to sing, dance, and act OR learn the ins and out of technical theatre. Vicksburg High School International Thespian Society students and director will put together a performance of Lights! Camera! Action! Musical Revue Featuring Songs From The Movies Of Today! This musical revue features favorite songs from the hit movies SpongeBob SquarePants, Finding Nemo, The Polar Express, Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory and Shrek.

### Bulldog Basketball Camps – VHS Gym

The camp focus will be on skill building and competition. T-shirt included if registered by May 19th.

**Boys– June 19-21 | \$40**

Incoming 3rd-5th: 9-10:30am

Incoming 6th-8th: 10:30 am-12pm

**Girls– June 27-29 | \$40**

Incoming 3rd-5th: 10-11:30am

Incoming 6th-8th: 11:30am- 1pm

### Mini-Cheer Clinic- HS practice field (VHS gymnasium if raining)

**June 26-28 | 6:30-7:30pm | \$40**

Girls 5 years old through incoming 5th graders

Register by May 26th to reserve your t-shirt.

Learn how to cheer on the Bulldogs at this 3 day camp! HS cheer coaches & cheer teams will teach a fun routine that includes jumps, tumbling, & age appropriate stunts. Families can check out the performance on the last day of camp at 6:45pm.

### Soccer Camp – VHS Stadium

Campers will be divided up by age group and will participate in activities and games covering various soccer skills. Register by May 26 to reserve your t-shirt!

**Co-ed | June 28-29 | \$40 (includes soccer ball & t-shirt)**

Incoming K-5th: 8-10am

Incoming 6th-8th: 10am-12pm

### Youth Football Camp – Stadium

**July 17-20 | Incoming 1st-6th | 9am-2pm | \$105**

Huddle up Bulldogs! Improve your offensive and defensive skills during this four day camp. Please bring a sack lunch and drink Monday-Wednesday. Lunch will be provided on Thursday, July 20. Includes 2 t-shirts when registered by June 16th.

### Team Football Camp- Stadium

**July 25-July 27 | Incoming 7th-**

**12th | 6- 9pm | \$45**

Includes 2 t-shirts when registered by June 23rd

### Robotics Camp - VMS Portable

Our programs offer an age-appropriate understanding of engineering for younger students. Each camper will learn valuable coding, problem-solving, and programming skills. Space is limited to 12 per class.

**LEGO Camp– August 7-10 | \$65**

Incoming 3rd-5th | 6-8pm

**MS Robotics Camp | July 17-20 | \$75**

Incoming 6th-7th | 5:30-8:30 pm

### Lacrosse Camp - VHS Stadium

July 17- 20 | 6-7:30pm

Details coming soon

### Sanchin-Ryu Karate – VAB

Mondays June 12 - Aug 7 (no class July 3rd)

**Kids 4 to 14 years old: 6-7pm | \$40 (capped at \$80 per family)**

**Families (parents & kids) 7-8pm | \$80**

Karate for Kids - Children learn the art of Sanchin-Ryu which builds their personal safety skills and develops focus and discipline. Students are taught alternatives to fighting in a positive environment. Karate for Families- Set in a fun and informative atmosphere, this program allows parents to learn alongside their children.



# Excellence in Education Scholarship Awards

Congratulations to our 2023 Excellence in Education Student Scholarship Award Winners!

Allison Bontrager, Andrew Geiger, Jackson Bowles and Alyvia Bailey were designated in the top 2% of students in the county. They were honored at the reception and were also given the opportunity to honor the educators who have contributed to their success. Two of the students picked Amanda Szczesny as their significant educators, while the others picked Principal Adam Brush and Lucas Wolthuis.

Since 1986, the Kalamazoo County Excellence in Education program has become one of the most noteworthy, exciting and far-reaching recognition programs ever implemented in the Kalamazoo area. Each year, the Excellence in Education program holds a reception to reward students for their academic achievements and provide them the opportunity to honor those educators who have contributed to their success.



## Career Day Comes to Sunset Lake Elementary

Dozens of community members spent a day at Sunset Lake Elementary teaching students about their careers and answering questions about what the students need to do in order to pursue similar careers.

Lower elementary students had the opportunity to hear from nurses, a police officer, financial literacy coaches, landscape experts, a museum worker, an artist and more! The speakers moved between their classrooms for their presentations.

Upper elementary students were able to select the topics they were most interested in and then attend the presentations in small groups.

They met small business owners, a supply chain manager, a physical therapist, technology manager, customer service reps, a food marketing specialist, U.S. Marine Corp members, a credit union worker, a design engineer, a science educator from the Air Zoo, the director from Miller Auditorium and more!

The students were able to ask questions and then had to take notes about the requirements each job had. In the end, they learned so much about potential jobs they could do in the future and what paths they needed to take to get there.

Thank you to everyone who made this day possible for our students.





# New VHS Record Set for Boys 4x100 Relay



The boys 4x100 relay set a school record at their first meet of the year!

Congratulations to JP Culver, RJ Vallier, Alexander VanSweden, and Michael Wright!

Their time of 43.63 is a new VHS record!

# Third Graders Test Their Building Skills



Third graders from across the district have been working on a project while learning about hurricanes and other types of weather. During their spring visits to the Outdoor Education Center, they had to build a structure made completely of recycled materials, using only clay and tape to connect the pieces.

Their structures were then tested against certain levels of wind (both a box fan and a leaf blower!) and water to see how they held up to a hurricane type situation.

OEC teacher Kelly Christiansen had a lot of fun with the leaf blower testing out what the students built.





# Elementary Heart Heroes Raise Record Funds

Congratulations to the Heart Heroes at Indian Lake and Tobey Elementary schools. Both schools set records this year for the amount they raised for the American Heart Association!

Indian Lake raised a new record of \$14,622.04!

Tobey raised a new record of \$24,352.26!

All of the money stays within West Michigan American Heart Association programs.

Students from both schools worked on their heart healthy habits while getting donations from friends, family and community members.

Both schools will receive gift certificates for replacing and ordering new PE equipment as a thank you for their job well done!



## Tobey Tigers Learn to Practice NED

The Tobey Tigers had a special assembly and a visit from The NED Shows.

Their guest speaker talked to the students about the power of NED:

Never give up! Encourage others!  
Do your best!

The powerful lessons are something they are sure to carry with them.

