



# THE RED & WHITE

OCTOBER 2024

## A LETTER FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

### Dear Vicksburg Schools Families,

As we head into the fall months, I want to take a moment to reflect on the wonderful start to our school year. It has been heartwarming to see our students settling into their routines, engaging in new learning experiences, and building connections with one another.

Thank you to our dedicated teachers and staff for your unwavering commitment to fostering a supportive and enriching environment. Your hard work is evident in every classroom.

And thank you to our community for all your support. It was wonderful to see so many of you at our annual Community Tailgate. Seeing everyone come together to celebrate and support our district was truly inspiring. Events like these remind us of the vital role we all play in our students' success.

Let's carry this momentum into the rest of the school year, continuing to support each other and creating memorable experiences for our students.

Together, we'll achieve great things!

In this month's Red and White you'll read about partnerships between 2 of our schools and how it's improving the year for all students involved. You'll also learn about ways you can help our student athletes play to their full potential.



Regards,  
**Keevin O'Neill, SUPERINTENDENT**

## Happy Homecoming, VHS! Support Your Bulldogs—Friday, Oct 4<sup>th</sup>

PARADE

FLOATS

FOOTBALL

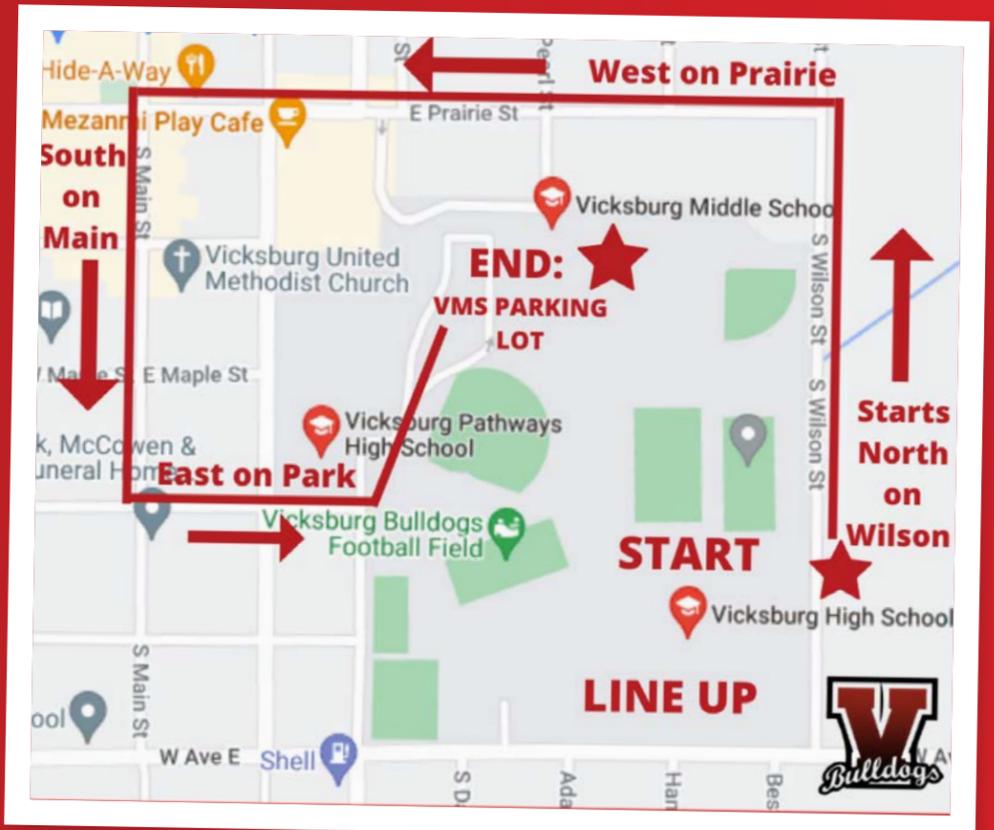
FUN

### Come see all the great parade entries!

The parade steps off from the VHS east parking lot at 5 p.m.—we recommend lining up in the **east parking lot at 4 p.m.** The parade starts North on Wilson, turns West on Prairie, turns South on Main, turns East on Park, goes behind the VAB, and ends at the VMS parking lot.

### Then, come cheer on the Bulldogs against Niles!

**Kickoff is at 7 p.m.** The top student floats and the homecoming court will be introduced at halftime—hope to see you there!



2024 Homecoming Parade Route

# Vicksburg Community Tailgaters Had a Blast!

Thank you to everyone who came out for the 2024 Vicksburg Community Tailgate! The support you showed our students and district is incredible! Thank you to everyone who attended. We gave away more hotdogs than ever before and had nearly 50 community and school booths all featuring great things.



## We need to give a big shoutout to our top sponsors:

### Our Bulldog Sponsors:

The Vicksburg Community Schools Foundation  
Frederick Construction  
Connections Community Church

### Our Red Sponsors:

Denooyer Ford  
Edward Jones  
Vicksburg Family Home Care  
Bulldog Lacrosse Club  
L & L Driving School

### Our White Sponsors:

Highland Financial Group  
ChapNaz Church  
Trust Shield Insurance  
Vicksburg Optometry  
The Mill - Paper City Development

And thank you to the dozens of other community partners and school groups who hosted booths and made this great event possible!

We can't wait to see you next year!

## Give Back to VCS By Filling Up Your Gas Tank!

Our Vicksburg Johnny's Markets location, at the corner of Highway and Richardson, will be giving 1 cent per every gallon of gas sold at each purple Giving Pump branded dispenser to Vicksburg Community Schools!

Look for the Purple Giving Pump logo to make sure you're at the right pump!

**This year the Giving Pump will run through October 31<sup>st</sup>.**

We are so thankful that Shell and Johnny's are teaming up with VCS to kick off the school year with such a great fundraiser.

This year, nearly 7,500 Shell stations across the U.S. are participating in this two-month Giving Pump initiative to support 552 local charities, schools, and organizations!



The Giving Pump



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**Look for the Purple Giving Pump logo to make sure you're at the right pump!**

# VHS Student Athletes Power Up for Play

Vicksburg High School student athletes are looking for help powering up before their games and practices!

Last year, the athletic department launched the Bulldog Fueling Station pilot program. The room at VHS started with money left over from grants from the United Dairy Industry of Michigan and the United Way. Generous Hands helped to initially stock the shelves for the 2023-2024 school year, but this school year they are in need of assistance.

Student athletes visit the Bulldog Fueling Station for protein

packed snacks and healthy carbs help them before practices and games. It's essential nutrition to help them play their best.

*"Many of our student athletes have lunch at 11 a.m., and by 3 p.m. they're out of energy and need help powering up for their games."* said VCS Athletic Director Michael Roy.

"The Fueling Station has provided them with much needed energy to get through workouts and excel at games and matches."

The Fueling Station costs more than \$10,000 each school year to keep stocked. The athletic

department is seeking sponsors to make sure it stays stocked.

The VCS School nutrition team can purchase the items needed in bulk at a discounted rate, so monetary donations and sponsorships would be best for their program.

Those interested in helping sponsor the Bulldog Fueling Station can email VCS Athletic Director Michael Roy at [mroy@vicksburgschools.org](mailto:mroy@vicksburgschools.org).



## KSO IN YOUR Community



An evening of music & community celebration with a Kalamazoo Symphony quintet and your local Vicksburg students!



**Thursday, Oct. 10, 2024**  
**Vicksburg Performing Arts Center**  
 Pre-concert activities at 6 p.m. | Concert begins at 7 p.m.

Get to know the KSO, and share what makes your community special  
 KSO musicians step out of the concert hall and into your neighborhood to perform FOR you but also WITH you!

Join us for a collaboration that puts Vicksburg in the spotlight  
 A combination of classical music, student performances, and musical storybooks that highlight both Kalamazoo and your community. Come early for pre-concert activities for all ages, and make lasting musical memories!



Register online - pay what you can!  
[KalamazooSymphony.com](http://KalamazooSymphony.com) | 269.349.7759  
[bit.ly/Community-Vicksburg](http://bit.ly/Community-Vicksburg) OR scan the code



## KSO Quintet Is Coming to Vicksburg

Musicians from the Kalamazoo Symphony string quintet are coming to Vicksburg to perform a special Musical Storybook Concert on Thursday, October 10 at the Vicksburg High School Performing Arts Center.

This is a KSO community outreach concert and we are very excited that Vicksburg was selected to host!

The evening begins at 6 p.m. with an instrument petting zoo and student art show. At 6:45 there is a short pre-concert with Vicksburg Strings students. At 7 p.m. the concert begins, which will feature Tobey Elementary Principal Mike Barwegen as a narrator and some VCS student singers.

The concert will end at about 8 p.m. and will be fun for the whole family.

**Please use the QR code to register online.**

It is a "pay what you can" event, and no one will be turned away if they can not pay.

## VHS and Sunset Lake Elementary Students Are Teaming Up for Fun

A new partnership between Sunset Lake Elementary and VHS is creating positive connections for students at both schools. The schools have started partnering this year to bring more joyful play to the Sunset Lake playground. The program's objective is to create a win-win experience for both the Sunset Lake and VHS students through positive relationships and creative playtime.

Eleven VHS students take the bus over to Sunset Lake every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. They spend time on the playground for parts of recess with first through 5<sup>th</sup> graders, and even join the 4<sup>th</sup> graders in the lunchroom.

Sunset Lake Student Behavior Coach Amanda Lewis helped develop the VHS Playground Peer Program with high school SEL Coordinator Lauri Gordon.

It has led to less conflict and more play during recess time at Sunset Lake. The elementary students have role models to look up to and to help organize their games on the playground. While the VHS students have a chance to act like little kids again and play for part of their day.



## Bus Safety Is Very Important at Vicksburg Community Schools

This year, since our annual Bus Safety Fair was rained out, our Transportation Team brought buses to every elementary school to provide hands-on safety lessons.

Then lessons were geared towards our preschool through first grade classes.

Our transportation team members taught them about the danger zones around a bus, how to properly cross the street before and after getting on and off the bus, how to be safe passengers, and how to exit the bus in the event of an emergency.

It was a great refresher for those who have ridden the bus before and an introduction to the rules for our new bus riders.



# Ribbit! Ribbit! Fall Fun With The Vicksburg Schools Outdoor Education Center!

The Vicksburg Schools Outdoor Education Center has been very busy this fall. 3<sup>rd</sup> graders from each elementary school spent their days at the OEC learning about frog calls and how frogs find each other at night.

Kelly Sanchez's class from Sunset Lake Elementary first broke out

into small groups where they used various items provided to them to create their own unique "frog call" sound. Then when the class went out onto the grounds of the OEC they got to test out those calls.

One student would be blindfolded while the others in

their group would move around the area before making their frog calls. First they tested how long it took the blindfolded "frog" to find a single group member, and then they tested how long it took them to find their group when they all stood together.

The exercise was designed to

mimic frog calls at night and how the amphibians must work together to find each other. It's the type of hands-on lesson that becomes really special using the backdrop of the Outdoor Education Center.



## VHS Boys Tennis Honored Our Military

The VHS Boys Tennis Team recently hosted their annual Military Appreciation Tournament.

The tournament brought together talented high school tennis players for an exciting day of competition, with a unique focus on honoring and supporting our military.

The Bulldogs had a very strong showing against some powerhouse schools.

Jordan Diekman was champion at 2 singles.

Maddox Rosalin (1 singles), Caden Town (4 singles), Gio Gangloff/ Wes Post (1 doubles), Reese Brush/ Landon Enderich (3 doubles) all were runners up.

Congratulations to the entire team for their efforts to support our military community.



# VMS Students Learn About Precipitation

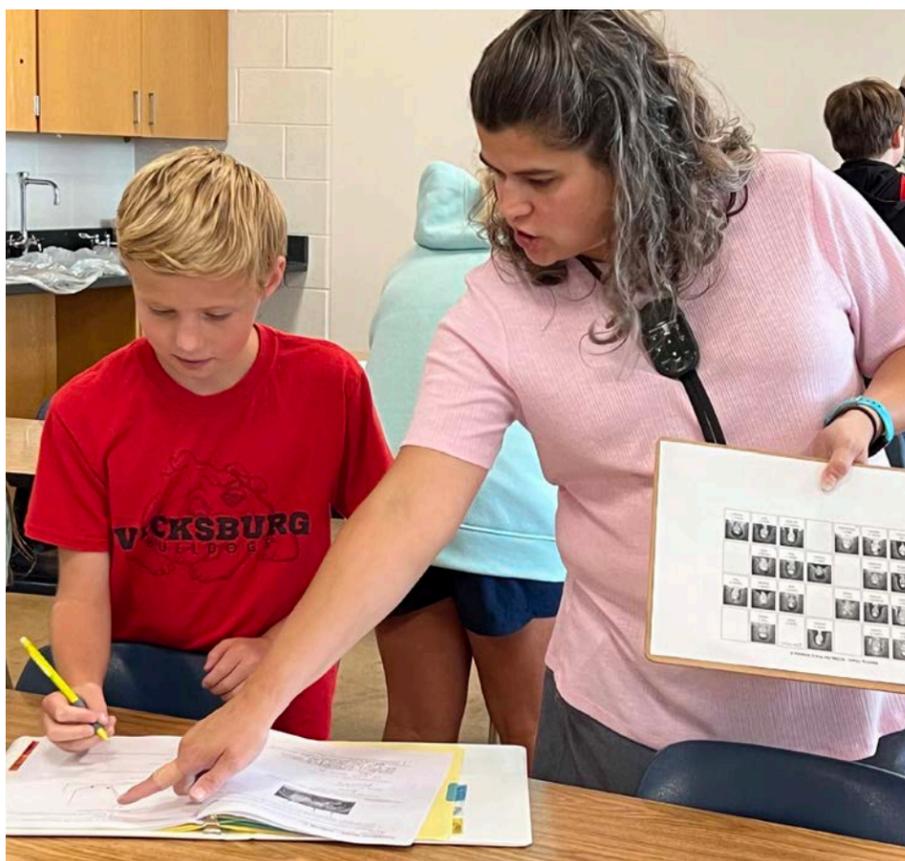


Vicksburg Middle School 6<sup>th</sup> graders got a hands-on lesson about how landscape and elevation affect precipitation levels.

The students in Mrs. Heeres' class made their own mountains and rainstorms for science.

They used foil to create mountains, covered it with plastic bags, and sprayed it with water to see how precipitation travels over different landforms and elevations.

After their simulated rainstorms, the students had to write about their experiments and what they witnessed in their manmade environments.



# Congratulations, Tobey Tigers—You Completed Your Summer Reading Challenge!

The students who completed all 8 of their weekly summer challenges had a Monster Mash party to celebrate all their hard work. In all, 58 Tobey Tigers completed all 8 challenges.

They enjoyed pizza, cake, dancing, and so much fun at their monster bash.

Great job to everyone who worked so hard over the summer!

