



THE

RED & WHITE

NOVEMBER 2023

A LETTER FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

Dear Vicksburg Community Schools Families,

As we enter the season of Thanksgiving, I want to express my heartfelt gratitude to our dedicated teachers, staff, students and the community for their support and commitment to our district's success. Together, we can continue to make Vicksburg Community Schools an outstanding place for education and personal growth.

One of my goals for this school year has been to give a stronger platform to our students to share what they want to see at Vicksburg Community Schools. I am in the process of forming

a Superintendent's Student Advisory Board (SSAB) for the 2023-2024 school year. The SSAB will be comprised of approximately 14 to 16 students in grades 9 through 12 from both VHS and VPHS.

This advisory board is being established to create more student voice in Vicksburg Community Schools and provide an avenue for Vicksburg students to provide important input on issues facing our students and district.

I look forward to sharing more

information once our SSAB is formed.

In this Red and White you'll learn more about the new hands-on experiences and projects that are available to our students this year. More than ever, they are getting access to learn about potential future careers and educational opportunities. It's a trend we plan to continue.



Regards,

Keevin O'Neill, SUPERINTENDENT

VHS Homecoming Court Named



Presenting the VHS 2023 Homecoming Court!

King and Queen: Landon Troyer and Emma Steele.

Along with: Audrie Dugan, Sydney Glerum, Stella Reitenour, Peyton Smith, Logan Cohrs, Zac Post, Colin Schramer, and Chase Willmont.

Congratulations to you all!

Author Angeline Bouley Comes to VHS

Students at Vicksburg High School got a visit from a best selling author.

Angeline Bouley wrote *Firekeeper's Daughter*. The book has been selected as the Great Michigan Read title for the fall of 2023 and spring of 2024. Her book has been named one of TIME Magazine's top 100 young adult books of all time.

She talked to students about how the idea for her book, which is set in Sault Ste. Marie on an Ojibwe reservation, came to her while she was in high school in New Buffalo.

Bouley explained that she didn't act on her dream of becoming a writer until she was 44-years-old.

During her speaking event, she answered questions from students about the writing process and explained the ideas behind her book. It was an inspiring event that gave students an inside look at the writing and publishing world.



Walking the Dawgs Fundraiser

Vicksburg Middle School hosted their annual Walk in the Dawgs fundraiser and thanks to the generous community and local business partners they raised \$16,270.80!

Congratulations to the top grade winners:

- Maycee Miller, top 6th grade fundraiser and most donated overall!
- Charley Carter, top 7th grade fundraiser
- Noelle Germy, top 8th grade fundraiser
- Hailie Pike, top 8th grade fundraiser
- Peyton Slone, top 8th grade fundraiser

As part of the fundraising efforts, students walked laps around the VHS track.

8th graders walked 2062 laps or 515.5 miles.

7th graders walked 2603 laps or 650.75 miles.

6th graders walked 3010 laps or 752.5 miles.

Total laps walked by our students was 7,675 totalling 1,918.75 miles!

Great job by all our VMS Bulldogs!



Students Meet with Tillers International

The Vicksburg High School Animals and Plants class visited Tillers International to kick off their Back to the Future Project.

They will be designing a farm implement based upon traditional U.S. tools to solve a specific agricultural problem in the developing world. It's part of a new Project Based Learning opportunity for the class.

They learned some background information on international agriculture and the world food supply, then went to Tillers International where they toured their museum of antique American agricultural implements, and students began the process of designing their project.

After completing their design process, they will present their ideas formally to a panel of Tillers staff and board.



Work Based Learning Thanks Area Businesses

The Work Based Learning program for our students receiving services through the Southern Services Area has grown to new levels.

More businesses than ever before are opening their doors to students in need of work experience. We also have students working in some of our VCS buildings to gain valuable skills.

Thank you to these businesses for welcoming our students:

Sprinkle Road Auto

Hobby Sports

Yogis

Vicksburg Library

Rise N Dine

Roxie's

Main Street

Cove LakeSide Bistro

Vicksburg Hardware

Best Tire

H&B Market

Old Navy

Portage Library

Wee Care

Michelle's

Zeigler MotorSports

Pets Supplies Plus

MVP Pets

Hardings Westnedge and Woodbridge

Story Point

Curious Kids Daycare

Kids Court

Portage Public Schools

Celebration Cinema

Sunset Lake Elementary

Vicksburg Admin Building (VAB)

Tobey Tigers Make a Human Sundae

Tobey Elementary held a "Sundae Funday" as a special treat for their students for a very successful annual fundraiser, and principal Mike Barwegen got in on the sweet celebration.

The students turned Mr. B into a giant sundae, complete with whipped cream, sprinkles, chocolate sauce and a cherry on top, in honor of a huge success on their annual PTO fundraiser.

Between family donations and local business sponsors, the Tobey Tigers raised a whopping \$26,735!!

Congratulations and great job Tobey Tigers!



Equestrian Team Goes to State



Congratulations to the Vicksburg High School Equestrian Team on earning 4th place at the State competition! We are so proud!

Bulldog Golf Excels at Regionals and State



Congratulations to the girls golf team on a great season!

The team won the MHSAA Regional Championship and the

Dawgs had two of the top three scores. Regional Tournament Medalist Brooklynn Ringler (78) and 3rd Maddison Diekman (88).

The team then competed in the Division III State Tournament with the Bulldogs finishing 13th. Madison Diekman was low

scorer for Vicksburg at state with a 190, good for a 44th place finish.

Fire Fighters Visit Elementary Students

Students at Sunset Lake and Indian Lake Elementary schools both got visits from firefighters in honor of Fire Prevention Month.

Columbia Township Firefighter Joe Zirkelbach spoke to kindergarten students at Sunset Lake. He showed them his safety gear and talked about what they should do if they see a firefighter in the event of an emergency.

And a special thanks to Indian Lake Elementary School's evening custodian, Mr. Mike!

Mr. Mike is also a volunteer firefighter and first responder and he came to talk to kindergarten through second grade students about fire safety.



Bulldog Bash at Indian Lake Elementary

Indian Lake Elementary hosted their annual Bulldog Bash fundraiser walk recently.

The students completed laps around the track in exchange for donations from the community and local businesses. Thank you to all the great sponsors.

Together they raised more than \$8,000 to support the PTSO and their upcoming school events.



KRESA Career Connect Discovery Lab Pays a Visit to Vicksburg Middle School

Vicksburg Middle School was honored to be the very first stop for the Kalamazoo RESA Career Connect Discovery Lab!

The mobile classroom provided hands on experience while students learned about about the manufacturing process in addition to potential high school classes and future careers

They were able to explore careers in manufacturing, design, engineering, supply chain management and more.

They also learned about the classes they could take while in high school in those fields.

The Discovery Lab allowed them

to try out 3 different projects:

Students got to engrave a water bottle with their initials using a laser engraver.

They got to try out a welding simulator and were scored on their efforts.

And the students got to use coding to program a robotic arm to move mini boxes from a mini warehouse to the rest of the state.

Thanks again to the Career Exploration and Awareness team for bringing this awesome lab to Vicksburg. We look forward to more partnerships in the future.



Middle Schoolers at MICareerQuest Southwest

Vicksburg Middle School 8th grade students recently attended the MiCareer Quest Southwest event at the Kalamazoo Expo Center.

The event exposes students to a broad range of exciting, rewarding career opportunities. Students met with working professionals who have built successful careers in a variety of fields, and local employers highlighted careers within four high-demand industries: information technology, health

sciences, manufacturing, and professional trades.

Our 8th graders had the opportunity to touch, feel and work with the equipment, tools and technology used by people every day in a broad range of in-demand jobs, opening their eyes to opportunities for great careers in Southwest Michigan.

The goal is to connect classroom learning with real-world jobs and their requirements.

