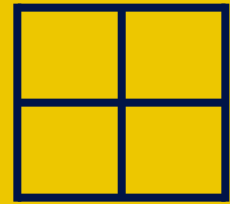


THE WHITNALL WINDOW



SPRING
23-24



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The Superintendent's Message

As we welcome the arrival of spring, we also welcome a season of new beginnings, growth, and transformation within the Whitnall School District.

At the forefront of these new beginnings is the ongoing search for a new Superintendent who will lead our district into a bright future. The School Board is diligently working to ensure that we onboard the right candidate who embodies our values and vision, and is ready to start their journey with us on July 1. Moreover, we are exploring potential transformation through the development of a facilities project. This initiative is essential for defining our future needs, engaging with our community, and gathering valuable feedback to shape the possibilities that lie ahead. Additionally, as we conclude our most recent five-year strategic plan, we are presented with a fresh opportunity for growth. Through setting rigorous goals for excellence in teaching and learning, we aim to empower every student to reach their full potential and become positive contributors to both local and global communities. Amidst these changes, it is important to recognize the daily efforts of our incredible educators. They are the driving force behind the transformations happening in our classrooms.



Just as spring showcases the awe-inspiring splendor of nature, the Whitnall School District is poised to embrace the opportunities that lie ahead. Together, we will navigate this season of growth, transformation, and new beginnings, ensuring that every member of our community thrives.

Thank you for your continued support and dedication to the success of our students.

#whitnALLIN

“What inspires you about America?” Essay Winner

Lena Dropp, Whitnall Middle School 7th grader, achieved the outstanding accomplishment of taking 2nd place in District 4’s VFW-sponsored youth essay competition Patriot’s Pen this past winter. Lena’s submission crafted a response to the prompt “What inspires you about America?” Her entry offered a touching reflection on the principles that make America a beacon of hope and opportunity. Through her insightful writing and heartfelt convictions, Lena captured the essence of what it means to be inspired by the United States.

As Lena continues to chart her path as a writer and a scholar, her success in the Patriot’s Pen competition will serve as a lasting reminder of the power of youth to articulate their vision for a better tomorrow.



The Milwaukee Rep Performance

In a captivating display of talent and thought-provoking theater, Maya O’Day-Biddle, a junior at Whitnall High School, delivered a standout performance in The Milwaukee Rep’s production of “What the Constitution Means to Me” this spring. The production, renowned for its improvisational nature and provocative themes, invited cast members to engage in dynamic debates about the relevance of the Constitution and the merits of its existence versus abolishment.

With a commanding stage presence, Maya breathed life into her character, captivating theatergoers with her impassioned arguments. Her portrayal in “What the Constitution Means to Me” was nothing short of transformative, shining a spotlight on her exceptional talent as a performer.

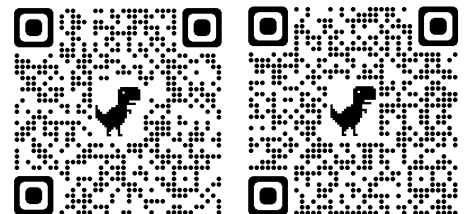


Activities & Athletics

Boys Basketball Conference Champions **Boys Swim & Dive** Austin Archiquette: State Qualifier in Diving, 16th Place • Elias Argyres: State Qualifier in Swimming • Vincent Clementi: State Qualifier in Swimming • Mason Moore: State Qualifier in Swimming • Caleb Schutten: State Qualifier in Swimming **Cheer** State Qualifier, 3rd Place in Large Group Non-Tumble • State Qualifier, 3rd Place Stunt Group (Juliana Bocek, Riley Clark, Carmen Hernandez, & Eniya Stubblefield) **Dance** State Qualifiers, 5th Place DII Poms **DECA** Lanie Acevedo: State Qualifier, Marketing Management Team Decision Making & International Career Development Conference Qualifier • Kara Berquist: State Qualifier, Accounting Applications & International Career Development Conference Alternate • Elessia Holmes: State Qualifier, Marketing Management Team Decision Making & International Career Development Conference Qualifier • Norah Hooper: State Qualifier, Travel & Tourism • Emily Teixeira: State Qualifier, Sports & Entertainment **Gymnastics** Sectional Champions • State Qualifier, 3rd Place • Brynn Barth: State Qualifier in Bars & Vault • Lylah Bennet: State Qualifier in Vault • Ella Radke: State Qualifier in All-Around & Bars • Ava Shotola: State Qualifier in Beam, 5th Place **Wrestling** Faith Prizlaff: State Qualifier, 5th Place

If you are interested in coming out and supporting our spring sports (baseball, girls soccer, girls tennis, golf, softball, and track and field), please reference the athletic calendar through the QR code on the left. Girls Soccer does require tickets to attend their games. All tickets for games are cashless and need to be purchased online using Ticket Spicket. You can access Ticket Spicket through the QR code on the right.

Go Falcons!



Ekphrastic Poetry Competition Honorable Mention

A triumph of creativity and poetic expression, Sarah Freek, a sophomore at Whitnall High School, has been awarded Honorable Mention in the Woodson Art Museum's annual Ekphrastic Poetry Competition. Presented in collaboration with the Wisconsin Fellowship of Poets, this esteemed competition celebrates the intersection of visual art and poetry, challenging students to craft original poems inspired by artwork images from the Woodson Art Museum's collection. Sarah's remarkable achievement comes as a testament to her poetic prowess and artistic sensibility. Her poem, titled "The Hawks of Slumber," serves as a captivating exploration of the themes and imagery evoked by Will Barnett's "Study for the Dream."



As an Honorable Mention recipient in the Ekphrastic Poetry Competition, Sarah's achievement highlights the exceptional caliber of artistic talent present within the halls of Whitnall High School. Her recognition serves as an inspiration to her peers and a testament to the power of art to inspire, provoke thought, and spark creativity.

The Hawks of Slumber

Deep Saxe shades of midnight,
bleeding through chillingly raw panes,
will certainly ignite
pure terror inside veins.

Shadows of dark pacing,
blood-curdling screeches and squawks-
pull back the draping,
reveals mobs of ravaging hawks.

Nothing can ease such torture:
Why must it always transcend
this sleeping horror?
Hallucinations won't end.



4 | ALL IN APPLAUSE

“All in Applause” operates on a simple yet powerful premise: members of the Whitnall community are invited to nominate Whitnall staff who exemplify the “all in” quality, demonstrating unwavering dedication, excellence, and commitment to their roles within the district. Each week, deserving nominees are recognized and celebrated for their outstanding contributions to the Whitnall community.

This program serves as more than just a platform for acknowledging exceptional individuals; it is a reflection of the district’s core values. Through “All in Applause,” staff members and parents are empowered to express their gratitude and appreciation for the tireless efforts and achievements of their colleagues and peers. Below are those who have been awarded the “All in Applause” recognition for the school year so far.



Katie Kuntz
HCE 5th Grade Teacher



Aaron Bieniek
EES Math Coach



Maddy Smith
WMS Special Education
Teacher



Nancy Sarnow
WHS Math Coach



Jenell Swick
HCE 5th Grade Teacher



Patty Rytman
EES Administrative
Assistance



Dan Lambert
WMS Special Education
Teacher



Katie Rios
WHS Library Aide



Mary Henderson
HCE 2nd Grade
Teacher



Lisa Olson
Superintendent



Julia Zarletti
EES 5th Grade Teacher



Dawn Jones
WMS Administrative
Assistance



Jessica Wagner
WHS Music Teacher



Amy Gelhar
HCE Art Teacher



Jessie Olin
EES Health Room Aide



Reid Jolin
WMS Social Studies
Teacher



Kelly Witz
WHS School
Psychologist



Laura Buelow
HCE 1st Grade Teacher



Josie Dombrowski
EES Kindergarten Teacher

The Whitnall School District would like to extend our warmest congratulations to the staff listed below on a well-deserved retirement. Your commitment and professionalism have not only contributed to the success of the Whitnall School District but have also left a lasting impact on everyone around you.

As you embark on this new chapter of your life, we want to express our deepest gratitude for your years of service. While we will miss your presence, we are excited for you to enjoy the relaxation, adventures, and new opportunities that retirement brings.

Please know that your legacy will continue to inspire us, and your contributions will be remembered fondly. We wish you nothing but the best in your retirement years. May they be filled with joy, fulfillment, and endless possibilities.



Jane Borchardt- 26 years

Julie Cook- 34 years

Linda Drost- 28 years

James Frami- 44 years

Robin Latus- 26 years

Nancy Sarnow-36 years

James Weber- 4 years

JANE BORCHARDT | Whitnall Middle School | 7th Grade Math | Joined Whitnall in 1997

It doesn't seem that long ago that I was welcomed into the Whitnall School District. After starting my teaching career with MPS in 1993, I was fortunate to join Whitnall in 1997. I am excited, yet nervous, to end my 31 year career as a teacher. Through the influence and leadership of Whitnall's talented and dedicated staff, I have grown as an educator and as a human being. I will take with me countless memories of HCE colleagues and families after teaching Grade 4 for 10 years. More memories were made with WMS colleagues and families while teaching Math at Whitnall Middle School for 17 years. I am proud to say that I am a Whitnall Teacher and I am grateful for the many years I spent at Whitnall. Instead of saying goodbye, I'd rather say, "Until we meet again."



JULIE COOK | Whitnall Middle School | Eighth Grade Social Studies | Joined Whitnall in 1990

"I want to express my gratitude to all that I have worked with. Working alongside you at the Middle School for 33 years has been a pleasure. I will miss my colleagues and students, but I am looking forward to new adventures."



LINDA DROST | Whitnall Middle School | Eighth Grade Social Studies | Joined Whitnall in 1995

"I am so deeply grateful to have spent 29 years out of my 40 year career in education at Whitnall Middle School. I am honored to have served the amazing students and families within the Whitnall community, and I have such gratitude for all of my colleagues throughout the years. The connections with students, comradery with my fellow teachers, and those amazing 'a-ha' moments are what will fondly be remembered as some of the most special moments of my career. I am looking forward to the next part of my journey in which my husband and I will watch our amazing daughters take on their own careers and futures. While closing one door feels bittersweet, I am greatly looking forward to all the future has in store!"



NANCY SARNOW | Whitnall High School | Math Coach | Joined Whitnall in 1989

"It has been a pleasure and privilege to work with so many wonderful teachers and students during my 34 years at Whitnall. The students kept me young and the teachers kept me grounded. Over the years, I have had approximately 3500 students. Their impact on my life has been profound, and I can only wish that I made a small difference in theirs. The exceptional staff at Whitnall is the main reason I stayed for 34 years. I am grateful for the friendship and guidance, especially those in the math department.



It's hard for me to just walk away from teaching, so I have decided to continue my involvement at Whitnall by substitute teaching next year."

Setting the Stage

Did You Know?

The state imposes “revenue limits,” which dictate how much money districts can spend on day-to-day operations. No funding is included for major facilities needs such as renovations/additions or the maintenance of large items (roofing, HVAC equipment, etc.). Any funding needed over the revenue limit is expected to be derived from referendums; it is up to local taxpayers to fund their schools’ major facilities needs.

Why Now?

The district continues to be fiscally responsible and has been able to pay off our 2018 referendum debt 14 years earlier than planned, saving taxpayers \$2.6M in interest costs. During that same time period, the mill rate has continued to decline. This financial position makes the timing right to consider undertaking significant projects to address our facilities needs, while keeping the mill rate close to our current mill rate. If we do not address the needs now, we will spend millions more in future years, due to inflation.

How Did We Get Here?

In 2017, an outside firm conducted a thorough assessment of our buildings and grounds, which formed the basis for our long-range facility master planning. The successful 2018 referendum was only the first phase of implementation, and many needs remain throughout our aging buildings. Over the past six years, the district has invested \$5.3M in operational dollars to maintain our buildings and address priority projects. However, many of the needs are too costly to be addressed through the district’s operational dollars and require funding through a capital (facilities) referendum.

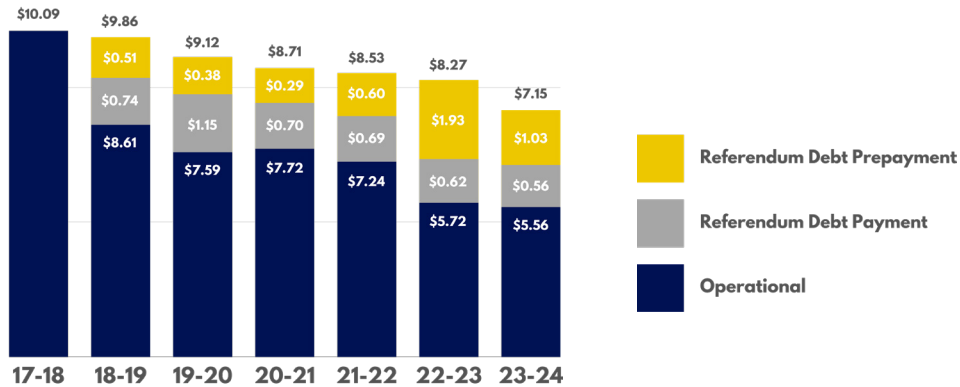
Our buildings are aging, with many portions being 50-years old or more. Numerous spaces and systems require updates due to age, changes in educational delivery, or both.

- Some school restrooms do not comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
- Single-pane windows and exterior walls at the high school are not energy-efficient.
- Generators in each building are too small and outdated.
- Mechanical systems (including boilers, chillers, and air handling units) are outdated.
- The high school science wing was built in 1967, and the layout creates teaching and learning challenges as well as safety concerns.
- The high school gym bleachers are aging, not ADA compliant, expensive to maintain, and create safety concerns.
- High school kitchen equipment is from the 1950s and is failing.
- The high school auditorium has torn curtains, aging sound and lighting, and lacks ADA access to the stage. HVAC equipment in the auditorium is from 1966.
- High school locker rooms date to the 1960s, have poor ventilation, and have a configuration that does not allow for adequate supervision.
- Edgerton’s K4 and K5 classrooms lack succinct educational space and are much smaller in comparison to the Hales Corners Elementary spaces added in 2018.
- Edgerton’s gym and cafeteria share a space, which creates scheduling conflicts, requires daily setup and take down of tables, and does not allow the entire school to assemble.
- Sections of Hales Corners Elementary that date to the 1950s do not have air conditioning
- Single-pane windows and exterior walls are failing in the 1950 wings of Hales Corners Elementary and need to be replaced.
- All buildings have 30+ year old roof sections that need replacing

The Whitnall High School pool structure is failing. As a part of the 2018 referendum, the community approved the short-term solution of replacing the pool liner. Now, that liner is nearing the end of its service life and could fail at any time. When the liner fails, Whitnall will no longer have a pool.

The Finances

When Whitnall residents passed a \$16.1 million dollar referendum in April of 2018, the plan was to pay off that debt by 2038 (in 20 years). However, due to strategic planning, we will be paying off that full debt by the end of the 23-24 school year. That will be 14 years earlier than planned, saving taxpayers over \$2.6 million dollars, while reducing the overall mill rate!



Watch your Mailbox!

At the end of April, you will receive a survey about a potential November 2024 referendum. The survey will identify needed projects at all four buildings. Please complete the survey before it closes on May 15 to ensure your voice is heard!



Community Tours

On Monday, April 29 and Tuesday, May 7 the Whitnall School District will be holding tours of Edgerton Elementary School and Whitnall High School to provide community members an opportunity to familiarize themselves with the buildings, their needs.

We encourage all community members to attend one of these tours, especially if you were not able to make it to the Focus Group Presentations that were held in February. Please see the tour details below.

Monday, April 29

5:30 PM- Edgerton Elementary School
6:30 PM- Whitnall High School



Tuesday, May 7

5:30 PM- Whitnall High School
6:30 PM- Edgerton Elementary School

Stay Connected

If you want to stay up to date on this journey, be sure to check the Referendum 2024 page of our website, which will be continuously updated. Simply type in whitnall.com/referendum2024. If you have any questions or wish to request more information, we have established a dedicated email account for referendum related inquiries: referendum2024@whitnall.com. We also encourage you to attend or watch our school board meetings. All meetings are live streamed and saved on our district YouTube channel.

For more details on completed projects and current project needs, access our full Capital Improvement Plan through the QR code to the right.



Edgerton Elementary Food Drive

In an inspiring demonstration of compassion, the Student Council of Edgerton Elementary School recently spearheaded a food drive aimed at supporting families in need within the local community. With hearts full of empathy and a collective determination to make a difference, the students rallied their peers to join them in collecting packages of cereal and oatmeal, resulting in a remarkable donation of 405 items. From the very beginning, the EES Student Council members assumed leadership roles, taking charge of organizing, promoting, and executing the food drive with enthusiasm.

Beyond the numbers, the food drive served as an impactful reminder of the power of collective action to effect meaningful change and strengthen the bonds of community. Through their selfless efforts, the EES Student Council members demonstrated that by coming together and supporting one another, we can create a more compassionate world for all. Their legacy of kindness and service will not be forgotten.



Wisconsin Early Childhood Association Donation

In a significant boost to educational opportunities for young learners, the Wisconsin Early Childhood Association (WECA) has exemplified their commitment to nurturing future generations by generously donating \$15,000 to the Whitnall High School Childcare Pathway Program and Youth Apprenticeship Program. This substantial contribution not only underscores WECA's dedication to early childhood education but also serves as a catalyst for the growth and development of aspiring childcare professionals.

The donation comes at a pivotal moment for Whitnall High School, where the Childcare Pathway Program and Youth Apprenticeship Program are poised to provide invaluable hands-on experience and training to students interested in pursuing careers in early childhood education. With the support of WECA's generous contribution, these programs will be able to expand their offerings, enhance educational resources, and provide students with unparalleled opportunities for growth and learning.

3rd Annual Children's Art Day

In a kaleidoscope of colors and boundless imagination, the National Art Honor Society (NAHS) at Whitnall High School proudly hosted its 3rd Annual Children's Art Day. This vibrant event, which has become a tradition, welcomed budding artists from within our community for a day of creativity, inspiration, and artistic expression. Throughout the day, a series of engaging workshops and demonstrations offered children the opportunity to explore various artistic techniques and mediums under the expert guidance of the NAHS members.



Whitnall High School Red Cross Club

In a remarkable display of dedication and commitment to service, the Red Cross Club at Whitnall High School has achieved a monumental milestone, surpassing their initial goal of 325 service hours with a staggering total of over 500 hours. This extraordinary accomplishment not only demonstrates the unwavering dedication of the club's members but also solidifies their position as leaders in community service initiatives statewide.

The significance of the WHS Red Cross Club's achievement extends beyond mere numbers, as their exemplary service record places them among the top-ranking organizations in the state, surpassing both high school and university programs alike. With their remarkable accomplishment, they not only set a new standard for excellence in community service but also serve as an inspiration to other youth organizations across the region.

As they celebrate their remarkable achievement, the members of the WHS Red Cross Club serve as shining examples of what can be accomplished through passion, perseverance, and a shared commitment to serving others. Their legacy will endure as a testament to the boundless potential of youth-led initiatives and the enduring power of kindness and compassion to change the world for the better.



community community community

Whitnall High School Donation Drive

In a heartwarming display of community spirit and altruism, the Student Council of Whitnall High School launched their donation drive aimed at making a tangible difference in the lives of those in need during WHS' annual "Gives Back Week." The WHS Student Council, along with the support of Whitnall Middle School, rallied their fellow students, teachers, and the wider community to join hands in this noble endeavor. The outpouring of support resulted in the collection of over 500 personal hygiene products and gently used clothes items destined for The Milwaukee Rescue Mission and St. Vincent de Paul.

The overwhelming success of "Gives Back Week" speaks volumes about the character and generosity of the Whitnall students. Their commitment to making a positive impact on the world around them is truly inspiring. As the donated items find their way into the hands of those in need, they carry with them a message of compassion, dignity, and solidarity, reaffirming the belief that together, we can create a brighter future for all.



Diving into Curriculum Improvement

Keeping our teaching materials fresh and effective is a crucial part of providing authentic and engaging lessons for our students. In order to make our learning experiences better, we use a Curriculum Review Cycle to assess current curricula and work to make adoptions that will enhance student learning.

This spring, we've embarked on the exciting journey of revamping our K-8 Science and Social Studies curricula, ensuring that it's tailored to meet the needs of our students. We're working to provide impactful experiences as our students explore the wonders of the natural world and delve into the intricacies of human societies.

Here is a glimpse of what we have been doing behind the scenes to prepare for a potential adoption of new curriculum resources.

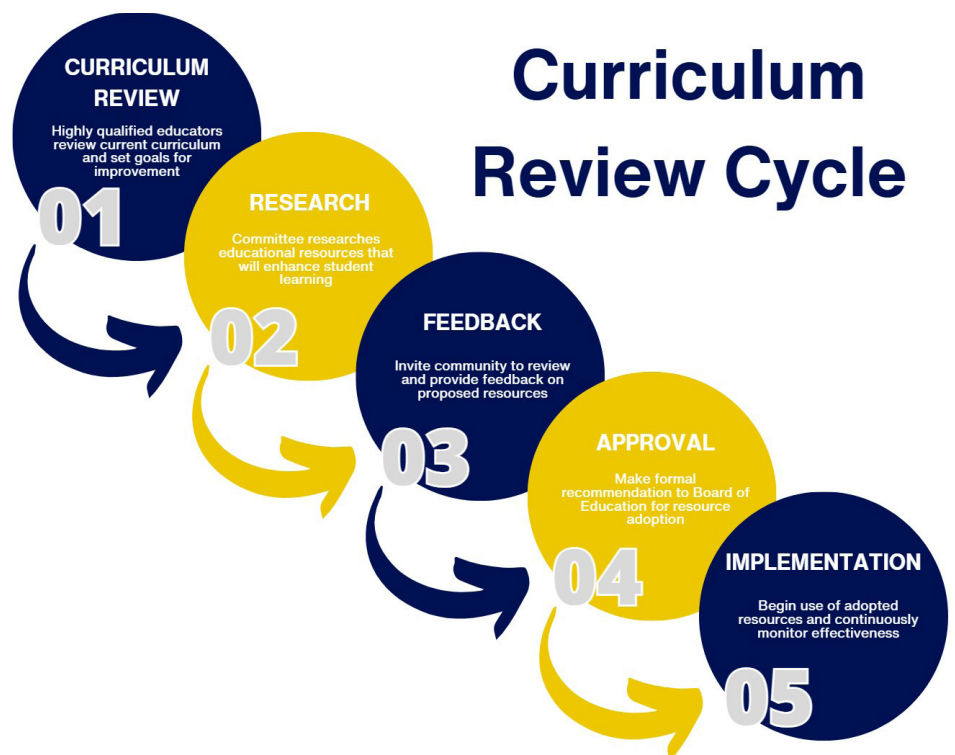
Before we can dive into selecting new educational resources, we must first review the current curriculum and re-reviewed the Wisconsin State Standards to ensure we have solid guidelines for what to look for in the new resources. Once we have completed the review, we assembled teams of highly qualified educators and administrators that are experts in their fields to help us identify where changes should be made to allow for more impactful learning opportunities.

With our teams in place, we will dive into reviewing the materials from various companies looking for what will best meet our needs. For example, in Science, we're exploring interactive textbooks, hands-on experiments, and engaging digital resources. Whereas, in Social Studies, we're considering immersive historical narratives, multimedia presentations, and digital resources to enhance engagement.

After research and deliberation, our teams will meet with the top three educational companies whose materials seem to be most aligned with our needs to discuss at length the benefits of their resources. During this step, we will also invite the community to hear about our potential selections and provide critical feedback.

Once we've made our final selections, the next step is to prepare a formal recommendation to present to the Board of Education for approval. Upon receiving their endorsement, we'll proceed with implementing the chosen resources in our classrooms. Throughout this process, we'll remain vigilant, monitoring the effectiveness of the materials to ensure our students receive the highest quality education possible.

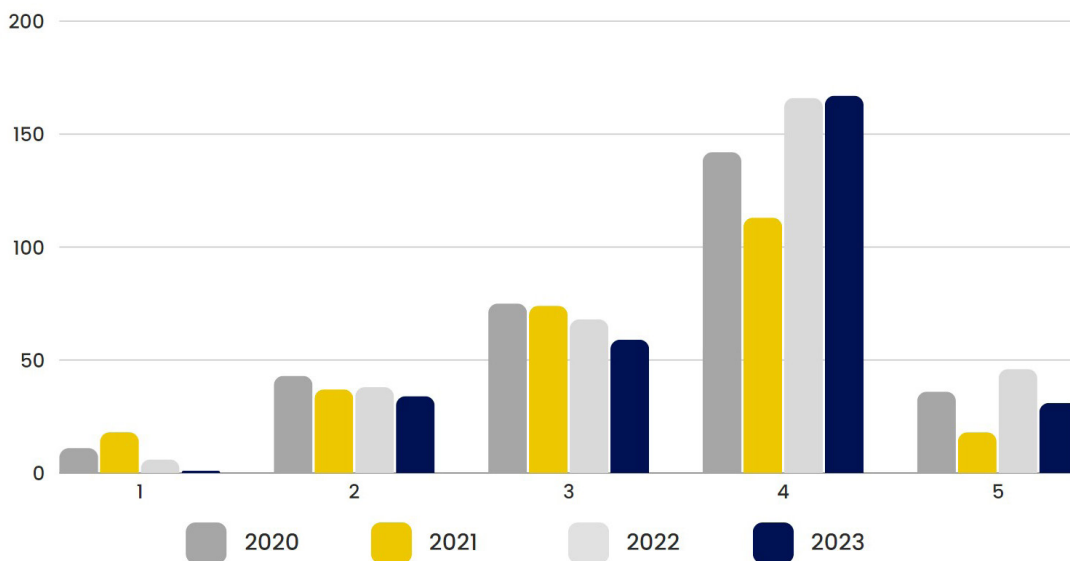
Together, we are shaping the future of education in our Whitnall community!



Fall 2023 Survey Results & Trends

In November 2023, Whitnall deployed a fourth round of our employee satisfaction survey to all employees. This survey, which has been sent out each November since 2020, allows us to identify areas for improvement as a district, as well as allows us to measure our progress in these areas over time. The data analysis is conducted by an independent third party and the results are then shared with us. In 2023, 307 employees completed the survey, an 82.30% response rate that allows us to generalize the results across groups. This response rate was a slight decrease from 2022, when 91.10% of employees responded, but was an increase from 71.79% of responding employees in 2021.

Overall, 97.7% of Whitnall employees reported a general sense of satisfaction with working in the district. Compared with 83.0% of employees reporting general satisfaction when the survey was first deployed in 2020, this is an increase to celebrate!



This year, we also measured our survey results against Goal 4 from our district strategic plan:

We will positively impact communication, feedback, and professional learning so that we can enhance our workplace culture as evidenced by increasing an average of .5 in each of these areas in the employee engagement survey by Fall 2023.

While we saw clear growth in each of these areas from our baseline in 2020 to our most recent survey in November 2023, we only met our goal of increasing an average of 0.5 in the area of feedback. We are proud of our growth in the areas of communication and professional learning and will continue working to improve our employee experiences in all areas to ensure Whitnall is a great place to work for all employees!

	2020	2023	CHANGE
COMMUNICATION	3.2	3.51	+0.29
FEEDBACK	2.86	3.43	+0.57
PROFESSIONAL LEARNING	3.06	3.31	+0.25

THE WHITNALL WINDOW

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High School Musical

Whitnall High School is putting on Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory. The performances are May 3 & 4 at 7 PM and May 5 at 2 PM. Tickets must be bought in advance; you can buy them by visiting whitnall.com!

Newsletter feedback?
Send to
blitza@whitnall.com

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@whitnallschools for all three!