



Winter 2021

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Wooster City School District

Inspiring World-Class Academic Achievement

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Message from the Superintendent



Hello Wooster School District families,

I'd like to thank you for so warmly welcoming me and my family to the community during my first year as superintendent. I've had the opportunity to meet many of you, but if we haven't yet crossed paths, I look forward to learning more about you and your experiences at Wooster when we do.

During this season of gratitude, I, like many of us, have been reflecting on what I'm thankful for, and that includes the support I've seen parents and staff offer our students. Our community has worked to-

gether to make the first trimester a success and we couldn't do it without each and every one of you.

Our children have been in school each day learning and our teachers have been afforded the opportunity to utilize the instructional strategies that are best for our students this year. While it will undoubtedly take time for students to get back to where they were academically pre-pandemic, we will remain diligent in our efforts to address learning gaps in creative, engaging ways. Our team of staff is dedicated to assessing individual student's needs and creating interventions to get those that need assistance back on track.

All in all, our students are returning to a sense of normalcy and taking part in time-honored

school traditions, like football playoffs, conference championships, great band shows and the drama production of "Mamma Mia!"

As always, the health and safety of our community is our top priority. We will remain diligent in our combined efforts to protect our students, staff and families at every turn. Our board of education is establishing monthly protocols at our regular meetings to ensure we remain proactive. We are committed to our efforts of transparency and proactive communication and will continue to update our community. I am heartened, again, by the level of support I've seen from those in our community when it comes to the health and safety of our students.

I am also grateful for the patience and understanding our families continue

to show as we deal with our busing shortages. I know that hearing from us in the mornings and having to make last-minute changes to your families' schedules is less than desirable, but we will continue to work to hire additional drivers and do everything we can to make transportation as non-disruptive as possible.

Starting in a new position is never easy, but with your support, I've been made to feel that I am part of the Wooster community. I've greatly enjoyed the work I've been doing thus far and look forward to all that we will continue to accomplish together. I have much to be grateful for, and that is thanks, in no small part, to all of you.

Gabe Tudor
Superintendent
Wooster City Schools



Calendar of Events

Dec 20-31

No School – Winter Break

Jan. 3

School resumes

Jan. 14

No School – Teacher
Inservice

Jan. 17

No School – Martin Luther
King, Jr. Day

Feb. 7 & 9

WHS PTC, 4-7 PM

Feb. 8 & 10

EWMS PTC, 4-7 PM

Feb. 18

End of Second Trimester
(Grades K-4) (55 days)

Feb. 21

No School – President's Day

March 1 & 3

Elementary PTC, 4:30 – 7:30
PM

March 4

No School – Release Day for
Parent-Teacher Conferences

March 11

End of the Third Quarter
(Grades 5-12) (46 Days)

Apr. 11-15

No School – Spring Break

May 26

Last Day for Students

End of the Fourth Quarter
(49 Days)

End of the Third Trimester
(62 Days)

May 27

Teacher Workday or Make-up
Day 1

May 30

Memorial Day

May 31

Teacher Workday or Make-up
Day 2

June 1-3

Make-up Days 3-5

June 5

Graduation Day

June 6-10

Make-up Days 6-10

Wooster City Schools Helped Students Gear Up for the 2021-2022 School Year

This past summer, the Wooster City School District offered programming at no cost to parents for rising K-4 students to help them prepare for the 2021-2022 school year.

The Elementary Summer Program immersed students in a culture of literacy and a review of critical mathematic standards through a hands-on learning experience. Programming was established with the goal of building confidence and reinforcing skills to ease the transition into the new school year. Beyond these summer learning sessions, Wooster City Schools also partnered with the Wayne County Public Library in an effort to encourage students to continue their reading journeys throughout summer break.

The summer programming was comprised of three two-week sessions for students in grades 1-4 that took place in June and July and served approximately 125-140 students each session. Additionally, there was a weeklong session in August dedicated to rising kindergarten students, which served approximately 40 students. Students who participated in the programs followed a condensed schedule similar to a regular school year, with each day beginning at 8:45 a.m. and ending at 12 p.m. Transportation was provided each day and students were given breakfast and lunch breaks.

Students in grades 5-12 also had the opportunity to take part in summer learning. With support from the local Boys & Girls Club of America, students could sign up for microsessions in subjects including 5th-8th grade math, as well as Algebra I and geometry, and 5th-8th grade English language arts, in addition to ELA I and ELA II. Students were also given the option to participate in Boys & Girls Club activities after the sessions for an additional cost.

While the 2020-2021 school year was one like no other, the Wooster City School District made it a priority to set students up for success in the new year and provide opportunities for learning and growth throughout the summer months.

Wooster City School District Facilities Master Planning

With multiple new housing projects in the works, job growth and census data showing a 4% population increase, the city of Wooster is expanding.

Along with this growth, the city is also confronted with the challenge of addressing aging facilities. Every school, apart from Wooster High School, falls under the Ohio Facility Construction Commission's (OFCC's) two-thirds rule. This rule states that when renovation cost exceeds two-thirds of the cost of new construction, a new building should be built. Parkview, Melrose and Kean Elementary Schools were all built in the 1950s and 1960s, while Cornerstone Elementary School is almost 100 years old. As they are now, the buildings are not energy efficient and require long-term maintenance in order to meet 21st century learning requirements.

To address the need for improved school facilities and respond to the expectation of increased student enrollment, Wooster City Schools is in the process of finalizing a Facilities Master Plan. The plan will serve as a guide for assessing the need for facility and capital improvements, and for future new construction. The Wooster City School District will create this Facilities Master Plan with professional consultation from the OFCC, GPD Group, the City of Wooster and the Business Advisory Council Facilities Master Planning Committee.

Already, the district has concluded a series of initial community engagement sessions to gather feedback on three proposed

options. The Facilities Master Planning Committee is currently meeting several times a month to develop a final plan that will be presented to the Wooster community for their input. Community members can view the Facilities Master Planning Notes and community feedback on the Wooster City School District's website.

Included for consideration during the Facilities Master Planning process are the locations of proposed buildings. Though locations

will vary based on final recommendations, the district considered a proposed land swap with the Noble Foundation earlier in the year to support further expansion. Wooster would have acquired 32 acres north of our high school stadium in exchange for the 29 acres adjacent to Kean Elementary on Old Man Road.

The proposed land swap was recently

canceled. The cancelation of the land swap does not change the need for the master plan, nor does it change the fact that the plan will include locations around the high school campus, as the district still has access to land that can be developed.

The committee aims to present one final plan by the April board meeting. Action on the plan will start once the Board of Education and community determine it is appropriate. We are grateful to be in the position we are due to the support of the Noble Foundation and other community partners throughout the years!

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Wooster City School District

Bus Driver Recruitment

As you may or may not be aware, some of our buses have fallen behind on their routes this year, causing delays in student pick up and arrival to school. Though not ideal, this is a reality of the challenging times we are in. School districts across the state are facing severe staffing shortages, specifically in substitute support and bus drivers.

Our transportation department has displayed tremendous dedication and resilience to ensure our students are safely transported to and from school and extra-curricular activities each day, often working extended hours and

multiple shifts.

Adhering to scheduling is our transportation department's highest priority. However, due to the limited number of drivers available, delays may continue to occur on occasion until we are able to secure additional support. We ask for your continued patience and understanding as we work through these scenarios and greatly apologize for any inconvenience, now and in the future.

Additionally, if you or anyone you know may be interested in joining the Wooster City School District as a bus driver, please consider

applying on our district website (under the DISTRICT tab, select EMPLOYMENT). Driving a school bus is an excellent part-time opportunity for those who have retired or are otherwise looking for flexible work.

Further, the district will assist you in procuring all needed licensure requirements.

Our support staff, including those who operate our buses, is integral to the success of Wooster



City Schools. If you have additional questions regarding transportation, please contact the transportation office at 330-988-1111 ext. 1600.

Edgewood Camp Nuhop

This year, 6th and 7th grade students had the opportunity to continue the tradition of attending Camp Nuhop. At Camp Nuhop, students get to experience the joys of being outdoors and learning in a different environment. This three-day, two-night camp teaches students about geology, weather and survival skills, and gives them the opportunity to participate in the high ropes course and giant swing. Trevor Dunlap and his team of directors and counselors do a phenomenal job of meeting students where they're at and providing an outstanding experience for all. A special thank you goes out to the Wooster Board of Education for paying entirely for the trip for all our students! We are thankful for this partnership for our students!



Cornerstone PlayLab Celebrates Five Years

The Cornerstone PlayLab recently celebrated its 5th birthday, complete with a party for everyone who has loved and supported the PlayLab over the years. Attendees enjoyed a nature-themed story time and book giveaway, kid-centered yoga and a science demonstration on pollinators, as well as, cupcakes and a rousing rendition of “Happy Birthday” led by a 5-year-old attendee.

The planning, fundraising and building of the PlayLab was a three-year project led by Cornerstone parents who, with the help of volunteers, raised more than \$600,000 in private donations. Through careful management of the PlayLab’s endowment fund at the Wayne County Community Foundation, those donations continue to fund updates to the popular space.

Recent additions include a gaga ball pit and freshly painted picnic tables for the outdoor education area, enabling entire classes to easily move outside for lessons. The PlayLab Committee was also able to fund a training session for teachers on outdoor education, led by naturalists from The Wilderness Center. The committee set out to create an ADA-accessible space where kids could explore, play and interact with their natural environment. Today, the hundreds of pre-K to 4th grade students at Cornerstone and children from all over Wooster and beyond, are doing just that.



WHS Partners with Ashland to Offer College Credit Plus Classes

Wooster is proud to offer a range of College Credit Plus (CCP) classes. CCP is Ohio’s dual enrollment program that provides students in grades 7-12 the opportunity to earn college and high school credits at the same time by taking courses from Ohio colleges or universities. The purpose of this program is to enhance students’ career readiness and postsecondary success, while providing a wide variety of options to college-ready students at no, or limited, costs to students and families.

Wooster High School partners with Ashland University for in-house CCP courses offered at Wooster High School. Courses offered for college credit at Wooster include: College Composition I and II, Pre-Calculus, Calculus, Elementary Stats, Ecology, Biology and U.S. History. There are also online courses offered through Ashland that our students may enroll in. Additionally, we have a partnership with Stark State for computer science courses. See the WHS Guidance page on our website for more information.



Wooster's Elementary Readers and Writers Have Much to Celebrate

Wooster's elementary students have been working hard in both readers' and writers' workshops so far this year. Students have been not only working on building good reading habits but have been growing like beanstalks in word solving skills, comprehension and fluency skills, as well. To celebrate this work, many classrooms have hosted special events to recognize the hard work our readers have done. Readers shared their newly-developed skills with each other and special guests. Fourth grade students across the district were highly engaged in the mentor text, *The Tiger Rising*, by Kate DiCamillo, throughout their first reading unit entitled, *Interpreting Characters*. To celebrate finishing this text and the reading work

they accomplished, students enjoyed activities like creating soap carvings, participating in escape rooms and re-creating favorite scenes from the book.

Our elementary authors all focused on writing narrative pieces throughout this first part of the year. From learning to show and tell through drawings, labels, and beginning writing in kindergarten; to zooming in on small moments in first grade; to learning from the masters in second grade; to crafting true stories in 3rd grade; and finally, to writing a realistic fiction piece in fourth grade, our writers have been busy. To celebrate all of this writing work, many classrooms warmly welcomed families, other classes and guests into the classroom to share their "published" pieces. Students



enjoyed special refreshments and some classrooms even had dance parties.

students in action, please visit: www.youtube.com/watch?v=9_vgf4V0lzg

Celebrating our youngest learners is critically important. Recognizing the important reading and writing work that has been done throughout a unit always brings a sense of joy, validation and accomplishment not only to our students, but to our staff and learning community, as well. This has all been very evident by the celebrations held so far this year.

To view a slideshow of our



Wooster High School Students Qualify as Semifinalists in 2022 National Merit® Scholarship Program

Three Wooster High School students qualified as semifinalists in the 2022 National Merit® Scholarship Program. Early graduate **Sylvie Shaya** and seniors **Zachary Keating** and **Hayden Michel** are among the 16,000 semifinalists in the 67th annual National Merit Scholarship Program held by the National Merit Scholarship Corporation (NMSC).

“Congratulations to Sylvie, Zachary and Hayden for being named National Merit Scholarship Program Semifinalists,” said Wooster High School Principal Dr. John Deuber. “All three students clearly demonstrate the dedication to academic excellence and enthusiasm for learning that we foster in our students. I wish Sylvie, Zachary and Hayden the best of luck as they continue on in the National Merit Scholarship competition.”

Over 1.5 million juniors from more than 21,000

high schools entered the 2022 National Merit Scholarship Program by taking the 2020 Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT®).

The three Wooster High School students will have the opportunity to continue in the National Merit Scholarship competition for some 7,500 scholarships worth about \$30 million that will be offered next spring. To advance to become a finalist, students must submit a detailed application including their academic record, participation in school and community activities, demonstration of leadership abilities, employment, and honors and awards received. Semifinalists must have an outstanding academic record throughout high school, be endorsed and recommended by a high school official, write an essay, and earn SAT® scores that confirm the student’s earlier performance

on the qualifying test.

“Sylvie, Zachary and Hayden join a prestigious list of Wooster students to receive such recognition,” said Superintendent Gabe Tudor. “All three personify the world-class academics that Wooster prides itself on. We are immensely proud of their successes and look forward to all they are sure to achieve in the future.”

The 2022 National Merit Scholarship winners will be announced in four nationwide news releases beginning in April and concluding in July.

Learn more about the National Merit Scholarship Program and NMSC by visiting www.nationalmerit.org.

For more information regarding the Wooster City School District, please visit woostercityschools.org.



Sylvie Shaya



Zachary Keating



Hayden Michel



Wooster Celebrates Recipients of Outstanding Staff and Teacher Awards

Wooster City School District is proud to announce the recipients of the Ralph R. and Grace B. Jones Foundation Outstanding Staff and Outstanding Teacher awards. The annual honors recognize those who make great and immeasurable contributions to students, families and the Wooster community. Ralph and Grace Jones started the Wooster Glass Company, where Ralph worked until his death in 2010 at age 94. The Foundation began presenting the Wooster City School's Outstanding Teacher Award in 2000 and the Outstanding Staff Member Award in 2017. Recipients are nominated by staff, students, families and community members.

The 2021 Outstanding Staff Member is **Vanessa Pidgeon**. Pidgeon has been with Wooster Schools since 2007 and now serves as head custodian at Wooster High School. Her nomination was due in large part to her work during the pandemic. A number of nominators pointed to Pidgeon's tireless efforts to ensure the students, teachers and staff were presented with a safe and clean learning environment.

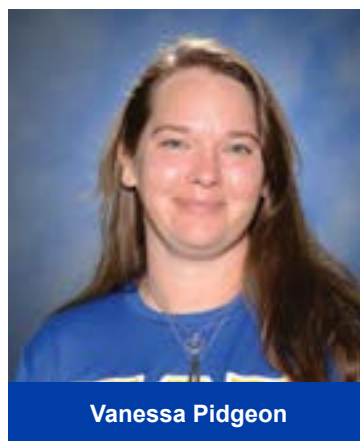
"Vanessa is truly amazing," said Wooster Superinten-

dent Gabe Tudor. "She takes pride in her work and is a fantastic role model for our students. She not only puts in the work in our hallways, but we also see her helping out at games and extra-curricular events. She is such a champion of our students, and we couldn't be prouder of having her in our ranks."

The 2021 Outstanding Teacher Award is presented to **Allison Bosley**, intervention specialist at Parkview Elementary School. Bosley has been with Wooster City Schools since 2008 and in her current role since 2012.

Bosley's nominators consistently commented on her ability to make everyone feel comfortable, as well as her dedication to being a staunch advocate for her students.

"Allison is a true professional when it comes to all she does for our district," Tudor said. "Like many of our teachers, she is willing to go above and beyond for everyone she works with. Allison went to great lengths during the pandemic to care for so many individuals, including showing up at their homes with materials they would need during virtual learning. She is an amazing asset for our students, families and



Vanessa Pidgeon

community."

Each Ralph R. and Grace B. Jones Foundation Award winner is presented with a plaque and an unrestricted \$5,000 check from the Jones



Allison Bosley

Foundation.

For more information on Wooster City Schools, please visit woostercityschools.org.

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