

# Ram Announcer

FEBRUARY 2021

[www.g-aschools.org](http://www.g-aschools.org)



## Homecoming 2020

Plans for the Future see pages  
4-11 for details



# SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE

RAM Parents and Community Members:

It feels great to finally get a RAM Announcer in your hands. Our school life turned upside down last March, almost a year ago. And while we are not back to complete normalcy by any means, there is learning going on both in school and virtually, and our athletic teams have been approved to begin their competitions. We have worked hard to meet our students needs, families' needs and the needs of our staff. None of this has been easy. However, I see a light at the end of the tunnel for several reasons:



Most importantly, because schools are following strict mitigation protocols, we are not seeing the corona virus spread among our staff and students. Yes, we still have an instance where we may need to quarantine an individual or small group of individuals because someone brings it in from outside school. However, because we work quickly to isolate/quarantine, the possibility of spreading is significantly decreased. The CDC considers schools one of the safest places for children to be.

Protocols: frequently washing of hands, hand sanitizing before walking into a classroom, washing down student spaces every hour at the secondary level, frequently at the primary level, mask wearing with breaks throughout the day, keeping students in cohorts wherever possible, such as on the playground, having teachers move rooms instead of students, and social distancing to the greatest extent possible throughout the building and during all activities.

The other is that our staff have received their first vaccine. While it will take a while before all our students receive theirs, as production increases, so will our community's opportunity to get more and more of us vaccinated.

Schools are finding ways to be more "normal" even if we still wear masks! Inside this edition of the RAM Announcer you will see many pictures of happy students and staff. A HUGE thank you goes out to our students. They have done so well at following our safety protocols, as a preschooler all the way up to our seniors. They just want to be in school, be with their teachers and their peers. We appreciate our parents/guardians checking to make sure their children are not ill before coming to school. This is also key for keeping our doors open now and through the end of the school year.

I am truly grateful for the hard work of our teachers this year. Their commitment to learning despite the pandemic is truly heroic. All year we have asked each other and our families for flexibility and grace; all year you have given it.

With much gratitude,

Wendy Maynard-Somers

wendy.somers@garams.org

## *Galesburg-Augusta Community Schools Welcomes New Board Members at their January 18, 2021 Regular Board Meeting*

Krista Simmons

Abby Calala

Jessica Eberstein

**We also thank our former Board Members for their years of service:**

Carolyn Martin

Stephanie Knoblock

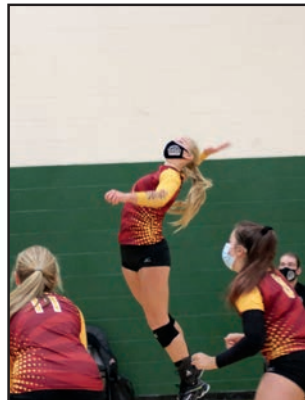
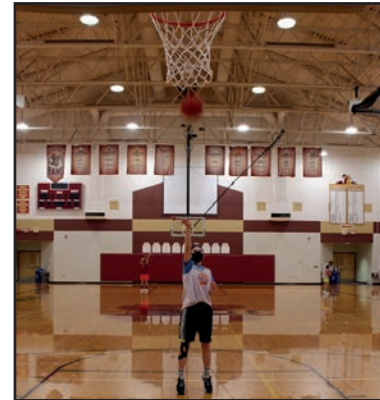
Archie Silkworth



### *Our Administrative Team*

Back Row (L to R) Brian Dolph, Christie Robinson, Shaun Sportel, Jamie Korinek

Front Row (L to R) Shana Wiese, Wendy Maynard-Somers



## Healthy New Year's Resolutions for Kids

Nancy Saline BSN RN

School Nurse

Hi Everyone,

My name is Nancy Saline and I am the School Nurse for Galesburg-Augusta and Parchment Schools. I live in Mattawan with my husband, my dog Eema, and my cat Bayla. I have three grown kids—a biologist, a Navy sailor, and a junior in college. I have two bachelor's degrees—one in Public Relations and Communication and the other in Nursing. I am currently in my last class for my Master's in Nurse Education degree. I am very excited to be able to assist where and whenever I can, so do not hesitate to contact me at my office at North Elementary in Parchment (269-488-1400), or Galesburg-Augusta Primary (269-484-2218).

The following are a few New Year's Resolutions for kids!!

1. Keep my room clean and in order.
2. Brush my teeth twice a day and wash my hands regularly throughout the day, especially after using the bathroom.
3. I will not tease my pets, or other people's pets—and I will keep my hands and face away from their mouths and face.
4. I will drink more water and less pop and other sugary drinks.
5. I will be more active throughout the day and limit electronic use to a minimum of a few hours a day.
6. I will listen more and be mindful of others.
7. I will always wear seatbelts in a car and a helmet on my head while riding bikes, skateboarding, skiing, or snowboarding.
8. I will be considerate to others and appreciative of what I have.
9. I will be helpful more often at home and at school.
10. I will never give out personal information such as my name, age, address, or picture to strangers or over the internet.

### **Be Healthy in 2021**

**A Healthier You**—make healthy food and drink choices, be active daily, wash your hands often and get enough sleep.

**A Healthier Family**—spend more time with your family, support physical activity together, keep your pets healthy, safe, and loved, be nice to each other and practice good manners such as please and thank you.

**A Happier Home**—reuse and recycle, make sure smoke alarms and carbon monoxide batteries are changed regularly, keep medications away from children, keep cleaning supplies away from children, and have a fire safety emergency plan.

### **Studying Facilities so ALL Students Succeed: a journey of study and hope for our G-A Family**

G-A spent many months seeking feedback from our school community on ways to positively shape the extracurricular experiences of our students; we know that students who are engaged stay in school and graduate with the life skills that will ensure their success in the world of work, community and home.

The input we sought pertained to our district's strengths, challenges, and hopes and vision for the future. We held 13 meetings with parents, staff, business owners, coaches and administrators. We received feedback from 185 individuals and 95 staff and parents responded to our survey.

Out of this work we created 2-4 year priorities. One of those priorities was to ensure that our facilities could support all that our students need from us and all that we want to provide to them to ensure a well-rounded education at Galesburg-Augusta Community Schools.

The following bond project was developed with the help of 30+ community members who recommended to the Board of Education that is the right next step for our students and community.

Should you have questions about the scope of the project or any other details, please do not hesitate to contact the superintendent, Wendy Maynard-Somers.

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**Galesburg-Augusta Community Schools  
2021 Bond Proposal  
Frequently Asked Questions and Answers**

**Q: What is included in the bond proposal and how much will it cost?**

Answers:

- **Additional classroom space at the Primary School**

Our Primary School in the district has shown the strongest enrollment increases in the past four years. Our kindergarten numbers can sometimes be as high as 90 five year olds! Additionally, families appreciate our preschool offerings. Attendance in preschool has been shown to impact the long term success of students.

To improve student growth and achievement, G-A has also:

- reduced class sizes from 27/28 students in a classroom to 19/20 in all grades K-4
- added more specials (art, music, STEAM, PE)
- added special education classes as needs have grown; we added an Early Childhood Special Education classroom.

All of these needed additions for classrooms caused us to run out of room. In the fall of 2019, we temporarily moved our 8th graders to the High School allowing us to move 4th grade to the Middle School until we could get additional funding to add a wing of additional classrooms for four 4th grade classrooms so that they can rejoin their elementary peers. This would also allow us to return 8th grade to the Middle School.

This will also give back much needed space at the high school.

- **Security Vestibule for the Learning Center around the back of the Primary School**

Currently all preschool and day care students have to enter the front of the building and walk all the way through to the back of the Primary School. Revamping the existing parking lot to make a loop in the back to a secure entry vestibule, will help reduce the volume of cars in the front of the building each morning and allow these families to drop off and pick up their children more quickly and more safely.

- **Building and refurbishing current spaces to add STEM/STEAM opportunities**

STEAM stands for: Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Math

Experience with STEAM classes is critical for today's students no matter what career path they follow. Every field now utilizes one or more of these five (5) areas of knowledge and skills to provide services and products for consumers. G-A has been building K-12 courses and experiences to ensure every one of our students gets STEAM experiences.

STEAM courses are group-oriented and problem solving experiences. Students examine real world problems and develop engineering process-focused solutions. We need a classroom at the Primary School to allow for this type of work.

Additionally, our High School Robotics program is currently located in a temporarily renovated maintenance barn because we have no adequate space. The new renovations and additions to the High School will provide both space for Robotics and other STEAM courses.

Did you know?

The growth in the number of STEM related jobs are projected to outpace all other occupations in the next decade. The US Bureau of Labor Statistics predicts that overall employment in the economy will grow about 7.4%, while STEM related fields will grow by 10.8%. STEM/STEAM college job holders earn between 20% and 30% more per hour than non-STEM employees. Unfortunately, in 2018, 2.4 million STEM jobs were projected to go unfilled across the U.S. Kalamazoo County sees the same gap in graduates' training and open positions.

G-A has a partnership with Eaton-Cummins Joint Venture (ECJV) to help build our students' knowledge and experience with this growing field. Having the right facilities to grow more STEM/STEAM programming will help us ensure *all* students receive this education before graduation, keeping the world of possibilities open for each of them. We are also adding coding courses with the help of grants through Amazon.

- **Adding a multi-purpose instructional facility area at the High School**

Adding a multi-purpose facility will increase opportunities for our students both during the academic day, and for after school events and practices. The space will be flexible and available for several student activities:

- marching band, flag corp, cheerleading practices, large group presentations, career fairs, art exhibits, large group projects, robotics competitions, and P.E. classes
- after-school programming including various sports team practices such as wrestling and softball/baseball in early spring (allowing students to get home much earlier than currently), youth programs (4-H, boy/girl scouts, Girls on the Run, I Run Too, MYWAY)
- other community uses
- the space could afford us the opportunity to host more and/or larger sports tournaments (helping raise athletic revenue to go back into their programs)

Vital programs such as sports, music, speech, theatre, debate, band, where young people learn life skills, can be powerful and life-changing. Clubs and sports serve as a powerful academic motivator for students who would otherwise underperform in the classroom. Our goal is to increase the number of students participating and therefore, the number of students attending school on a regular basis and graduating. Our G-A graduates will know that effort and hardwork pay off; they will practice self-discipline, be able to manage their time wisely and successfully work with other team members. *The majority of local businesses in southwest Michigan cite these soft skills as more important in a new hire than specific knowledge or technical training.*

- **Multi-purpose athletic facility for PE classes, track and field, marching band, flag corp, soccer, football and a community walking track**

*It has been approximately 20 years since G-A has had a competition track!*

Currently our students must travel to other districts' tracks for *both* practice and for *all* meets. With a new track facility, our students will have the opportunity to practice their skills on a daily basis and perform in front of their own community. Additionally, we do not get to take advantage of the income earnings potential from hosting home events; funds that could be used in our athletic and after-school programs for such things as two-way bussing and participation fee relief, uniforms, equipment.

- **Project Costs**

Project	Estimated Cost	% of total bond project
Primary School Classrooms	\$3.96 million	26.5 %
High School Multi-Purpose Instructional Area, Remodeling & Buses	\$6.37 million	42.5 %
Multipurpose Athletic Facilities	\$4.66 million	31.0 %
Total Cost:	\$14,990,000	

**Q: Why can't we renovate the current athletic facility at the Primary School?**

A: Our research concluded that it would require approximately \$3.4 million to upgrade the existing Maskill Field, including a new track and quality field that supports soccer, football and marching band. Further improvements would have to include restroom facilities, irrigation, improved drainage, sound, electrical/lighting, and ADA (barrier free) compliance. Additionally, other key drawbacks are the lack of a locker room facility for teams and the off-campus location, requiring busing of teams and the band from the High School to the Primary School for game days and we would not have the facility for our High School PE classes and clubs during the day.

**Q: Why does it cost so much to renovate and build these additions?**

A: Commercial building costs have greatly increased over the years due to rising material and labor costs. According to RS Means (Reed Construction Data), the Historical Costs Index for Commercial Construction in the Grand Rapids, MI region has increased the following: 2003 - 2018 (15 years): Increase of 173.9%.

**Q: How will this bond help academic achievement at G-A?**

A: Many experiences and new opportunities have already been mentioned above. Increasing the number of academic/athletic and after-school opportunities has been shown to positively impact students' interest in learning, encouraging them to stay in school and graduate! By upgrading and improving the learning environment, our students will be better able to learn the skills needed to be successful adults in our communities.

Researchers have followed adults who participated in high school athletics and after-school programs. They found that those adults exhibit goal setting, perseverance, communication skills and far greater confidence in themselves and their futures. Our Board of Education's goal is for *more* students to participate in after-school activities by creating spaces to add programs and allow existing programs to have the flexible space to thrive.

**Q: Our community passed a no-mill increase bond proposal in 2016. So why do we need another bond proposal in 2021?**

A: As a result of community support, the district was able to completely renovate the middle school, install updated technology devices and infrastructure across the district, increase the safety of schools through changes to exterior doors and entryways, replace the gym roof at the high school and make other needed roof repairs. Success of the 2016 bond project addressed many significant needs of the district. However, the Board of Education knew that it would not address all of the district's future needs. Therefore, we have continued to engage our stakeholders. Multiple meetings and surveys were conducted to evaluate future needs and assist the Board in creating a 3-5 year plan. This \$14.9 million project is a direct result of that work and would allow G-A to continue to increase programming for students and the facilities needed to support their learning.

**Q: I heard that the Board reduced the tax levy in 2019 to 5.5 mills. So how much of a millage increase will this be since the last bond proposal in 2016?**

A: At their regular meeting in June of 2019, the Board passed a resolution reducing the number of mills levied against property owners from 6.0 to 5.5 mills. The Board was able to do that because the economy in Michigan and Kalamazoo County has improved after the recession. It has also done better during the pandemic than any of us thought would occur. We have seen lower interest rates and increases

in property values. This has helped the district pay down its debt sooner. Homeowners' recent tax bills have reflected this decrease. *This proposal is a .72 mill increase above the 2016 millage request.*

2016 Ballot Proposal	6.28 No Millage Increase
2018	6.00 Debt Millage Reduction
2019	5.5 Debt Millage Reduction
2021 Ballot Proposal of 1.5 Mill Increase	7.0 Debt Millage Increase

**Q: What is the millage increase that is on the ballot? How would our millage rate in G-A compare to other districts our size?**

A: The district will be asking the community to support a 1.50 mill increase to property taxes in order to address facility needs, bringing our debt levy millage to a total of 7.0 mills. This will allow us to raise \$14,990,000 to increase programming and improve facilities for our students and community for many years to come. The comparison below of surrounding area districts illustrates that G-A currently is second to the bottom for debt leverage out of 15 districts.

DISTRICT	2015 DEBT MILLAGE	2020 DEBT MILLAGE
Lawton	9.10	9.60
Parchment*	9.59	9.01
Otsego*	7.50	8.49
Kalamazoo	6.95	8.20
Paw Paw	8.20	8.20
Portage*	5.80	7.35
Climax-Scotts	7.20	7.30
Plainwell	7.46	7.28
Mattawan	7.24	7.00
Schoolcraft	7.50	7.00
Vicksburg	6.85	6.60
Gull Lake*	4.82	6.31
Colon	5.60	5.60
<b>Galesburg-Augusta</b>	<b>6.28</b>	<b>5.50</b>
Comstock	5.00	5.00
<b>Median</b>	<b>7.2</b>	<b>7.28</b>
<b>Mean</b>	<b>7.06</b>	<b>7.23</b>

**Q: What impact will this bond request have on the average property tax owner?**

Home Value	Millage Increase	Annual Increase	Monthly Increase
\$50,000 Taxable Value \$100,000 Market Value	1.5	\$75.00	\$6.25
\$75,000 Taxable Value \$150,000 Market Value	1.5	\$112.50	\$9.38
\$100,000 Taxable Value \$200,000 Market Value	1.5	\$150.00	\$12.50

**Q: Why do we need new buses?**

A: School buses are expensive, approximately \$100,000 per bus. The district has purchased one new bus annually for the past few years. However, the fleet is aged (average age is over 11 years) and has high mileage (average is over 121,000 miles). From an operations standpoint, it costs significantly more to maintain older, high-mileage vehicles. Utilizing bond funds to purchase three buses eliminates a significant impact to our general fund, leaving those funds for instruction and the operations of the district. It is important to point out that state statute requires us to pay back enough principal on the bonds to more than cover the cost of buses within a standard useful-life period.

**Q: What is the long-term facility plan for the District?**

A: Following the completion of this project (May 2021 bond project), all our educational facilities will be in good shape and allow us space to grow programs for our current and future students. One facility that is not addressed in this project is our transportation depot, a building that does have significant needs. After analysis, the cost to replace the building and resurface the parking area would add significant cost to the bond issue. It was determined to defer this work to a later date. The Board will continue to work on its 3-5 year strategic plan for facilities. Priority will be given to quality maintenance of our current facilities and the increase in pride in attending G-A schools.

**Q: Why did we not just put up portables at the Primary School?**

A: In the spring of 2019, we did investigate the cost of adding portables to the Primary School. To purchase a used portable that would add three (3) additional classrooms would cost approximately \$400,000. The portables would be used and would lose value over time compared to brick and mortar. Three (3) would also be less than the true needs. The Board did not feel that was the best use of district funds in the long term. Thus, we moved 4th and 8th grades temporarily until a better solution could be found.

# 2021 BOND PROPOSAL



## VOTE MAY 4, 2021

## ABOUT **THE BOND**

On May 4, 2021, Galesburg-Augusta residents will be asked to consider a bond proposal to support Galesburg-Augusta Community Schools.

The district has convened many stakeholder meetings and surveys over the past 18 months to determine a 3-5 year plan that would allow the district to continue to improve the facilities that support our student educational programming.

## WHY **NOW?**

In 2015, the G-A community supported a no-mill increase that raised approximately \$10 million to do a complete renovation of our middle school and safety upgrades to our primary and high school. We all can feel very proud of what these changes have provided to students and families. This was a NO MILL increase at 6.28, and since then it's been reduced to 5.5 mills.

The current stadium is beyond its life expectancy and needs to be replaced to meet current and future programming needs. We have not been able to host a track meet in 20 years. The infrastructure does not meet ADA standards. Additionally, the ongoing costs to simply maintain the facility continues unless addressed.

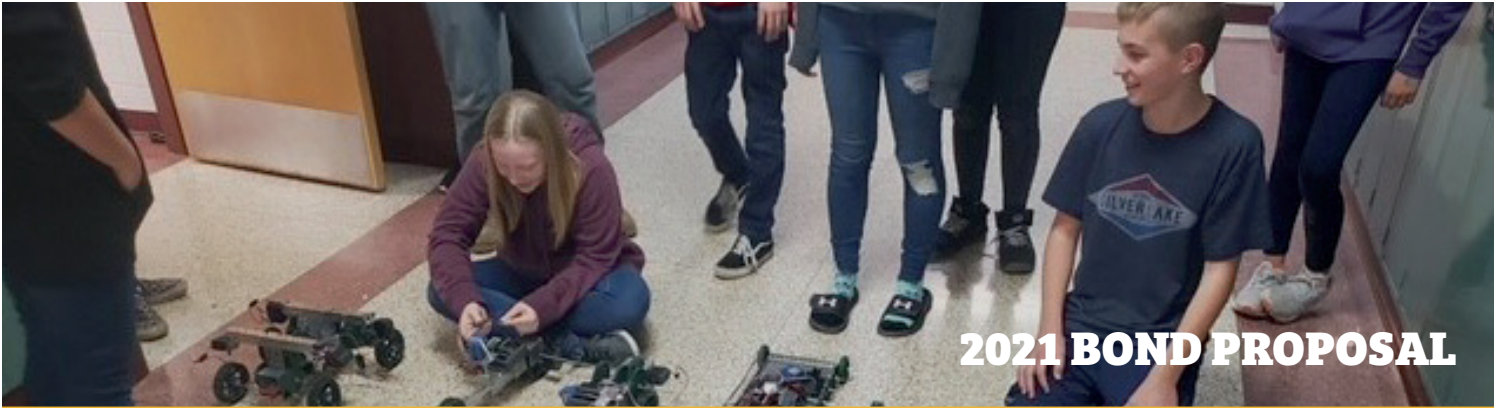
Space is very limited at our Primary School; we had to move 4th grade students to the Middle School and 8th grade students to the High School. This remains a temporary fix until we can raise funds to build additional classrooms.

Improvements will also increase the pride of our students and the community. A vibrant school community entices growth, stimulates the local economy, and keeps families in the district. This is critical for our small and family-oriented school district to survive and thrive!

By increasing the number of opportunities students receive such as our STEAM joint venture with Eaton-Cummins, coding, and robotics programs, all G-A students will graduate with the skills needed to be successful adults in both their career and communities.

Additionally, the current low-interest rates allow the district to reduce borrowing costs which in turn reduces the rate for taxpayers.



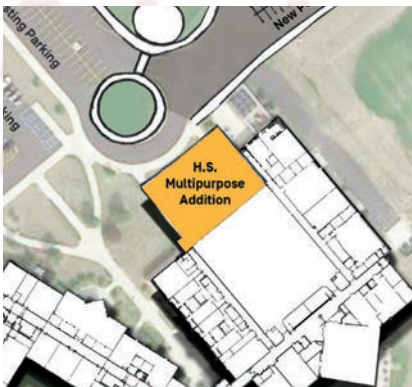


## FACILITY IMPROVEMENT **PROJECTS**



### **Primary School Addition | \$3.96 million**

- Construct four 4th-grade classrooms and a STEAM/project-based classroom
- Add a new secured entry vestibule at the Learning Center in the back of the Primary School
- Revamp existing parking lot for three-year-old Preschool and Wrap-Around Program creating a drop-off loop
- Remodel adjacent spaces affected by the new additions
- Upgrade technology for both projects
- Update equipment, furniture, and technology as needed



### **High School Multi-Purpose Addition | \$6.37 million**

- Add a multi-purpose instructional activity area allowing flex area for academics during the day, project-based learning, STEAM, alternative PE offerings, student performances, career fairs, robotics, drama, band, flag corp, sideline cheer, guest speakers, state testing, and community use
- The addition will eliminate late-night practices and provide space for adding tournaments and spring sport practices
- Remodel of existing spaces including weight room, team room, STEAM and Robotics
- Update equipment, furniture, and technology as needed
- Add three new buses to replace the older fleet



### **Multi-Purpose Athletic Facility | \$4.66 million**

- Add a multi-purpose athletic field for track and field events, PE classes, soccer, football, and community walking track. The facility will include bleachers, a press box, sound and lighting, ticketing space, restrooms, concessions, and storage
- Construct a new building for restrooms, concessions, storage, and ticketing
- Add new paved areas including sidewalks and required parking
- Construct Coach Maskill legacy area for past and future G-A athletes/teams. Community donations will be sought



# COMMUNITY **TESTIMONIALS**

**Keith and Carolyn Martin**  
We think this bond project will positively impact the Galesburg-Augusta community as a whole. The more positive and well-rounded our programs are for ALL of our kids, the better our community will thrive and blend as a whole into the healthy, in mind and in body, and caring people we all want to be among. And we need facilities that will best promote that kind of education.

**Monica Metty**  
By adding a multi-purpose space that can be used for both school-based and community-based clubs our students participate in, I think this bond project will positively impact the Galesburg-Augusta community as a whole. Having a space to meet will encourage more clubs and extra-curricular activities to start up or expand their growth. These programs supplement what students learn in the classroom and can be so instrumental in providing kids with team-based experiences and develop soft skills.

**Miranda Goodrich**  
A small part of the bond project is asking for three new school buses. As a part of the transportation team and a parent of GA students, the importance of getting new buses is huge! We are a small semi-rural district, and we travel many miles picking up and dropping off our students. The standard life of a school bus is 12-15 years under “normal” conditions. We currently have several buses over this standard, which requires more extensive and costly repairs to keep the buses safe and on the road for our GA students.





## 2021 BOND PROPOSAL

## QUICK **FACTS**



### TAX IMPACT

**+1.5 MILLS**

or \$6.25 per month for  
the average taxpayer



### FUNDS GENERATED

**\$14.99 MILLION**

for district improvements



### AREA MILLAGE RATES

**2nd LOWEST**

2020 millage rate out of  
15 surrounding districts

## VOTER **INFORMATION**

### Where to vote?

Visit [www.michigan.gov/vote](http://www.michigan.gov/vote) to locate your polling place or to register to vote.

### Who can vote?

Any registered voter living in the Galesburg-Augusta Community School district.

### Absentee voting:

Visit [www.michigan.gov/vote](http://www.michigan.gov/vote) to request an absentee ballot. Ballots will be available March 20, 2021.

### Reminder:

You are able to register to vote up until election day.

## LEARN **MORE**

For more details on district plans, FAQs, a tax calculator, and more, visit our website at:

[WWW.GA-BOND.COM](http://WWW.GA-BOND.COM)

# GALESBURG-AUGUSTA PRIMARY SCHOOL

315 W. Battle Creek St. Galesburg, MI 49053  
Principal: Shaun Sportel • (269)484-2040



## *We missed our students over the break.*

The Primary teachers were so excited to see the students when they returned on Jan. 11th. 2021.



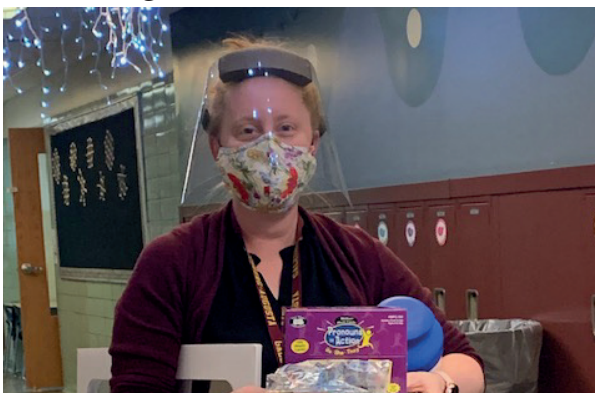
## *We are smitten with winter.*

Preschool students are loving the snow. They spend time outside every day. These are mittens that the Preschool students made.



## *Time for Speech*

Sarah McCollum  
Speech Pathologist



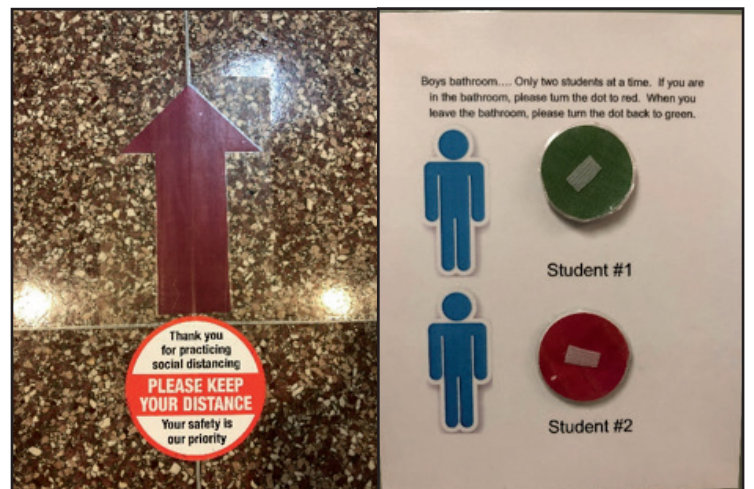
## *Rams Reading*

Students at the Primary School have been able to use our book vending machine this year. It was installed after we left in March last year due to Covid-19. Every week, 4 students earn coins for a new book.



## *Safety practices*

Our mitigation strategies are working. We use arrows in the hallways and travel in one direction. We also use hand sanitizer everytime we enter the classroom and stress best practices for washing our hands. We also use a bathroom system to allow only two students in the restroom at one time.



## *3rd Grade Future Palentologist!*



## *Academic Supports*

Our Title I staff are working hard to meet the educational needs of our students. The staff meet virtually as well as in person with both small groups as well as one-on-one.



## *Measuring Distance*

Despite Covid 19, our students in 3rd grade have an opportunity to work hands on in science and mathematics.



# GALESBURG-AUGUSTA MIDDLE SCHOOL

750 W. Van Buren St., Augusta, MI 49012

Principal: Shana M. Wiese • (269)484-2020



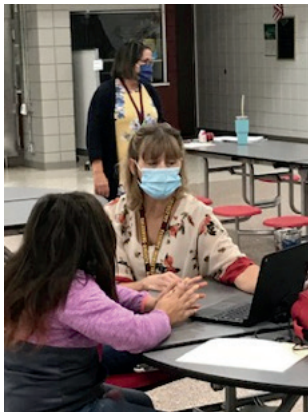
## INTERVENTION INITIATIVE

In-Person Math Intervention (and Academic Lab) opportunities have been provided for a number of G-AMS students each Wednesday. Those students identified by NWEA MAP Math Assessment scores and by historical math grades join Math Interventionist, Brian Goerge, and a host of paraprofessionals for a full day of learning. There are twenty students (five from each grade level), participating in the program. Students are spread out in the cafeteria, adhering to the six-foot social distancing standards. Throughout their day, they are provided with:

- Individual and small group math instruction
- Individual guidance through each of their Google Classroom assignments, in all subject areas
- Opportunities to participate in their regularly scheduled Zoom times with classroom teachers
- Skill building activities
- Multiple mask breaks
- Breakfast and Lunch
- Two outdoor recess times

We are ever-so proud of providing this service. Students and their families have responded with much enthusiasm and gratitude for the opportunity presented.

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## A Time of Giving

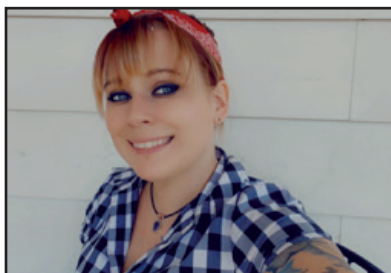
Both Thanksgiving and Christmas provided opportunities for G-AMS students to reach out and share a bit of joy with residents of The Laurels of Galesburg. Students created hundreds greeting cards, postcards, and mini ornaments to send to the residents, hoping to lift their spirits over the holidays. Kudos to those students who participated--your thoughtful contributions meant a great deal to the residents..

## Mood Meter Implementation Galesburg-Augusta Middle School/High School

The Mood Meter has become an essential tool in our Whole Child Support Program, particularly during these unprecedented times where the necessity of safety protocols inhibits much of the natural interpersonal dynamic of education. The Mood Meter allows our teachers and student support professionals to obtain essential data in real-time, which provides an unparalleled insight into our students' current emotional states. The data is immediately actionable and helps identify longitudinal patterns of student behavior over time. In addition to the identification of emotions the Mood Meter additionally provides immediate and practical strategies to help students change their emotional state if they desire to.

So far this year our middle school and high school students have submitted thousands of Mood Meter entries which our staff utilizes in real time to address student concerns through email, face-to-face check-ins, and routine follow through. This tool will remain a vital tool to support our students during this difficult year and into the future.

 <p><b>Strategies to Prevent or Reduce Red Feelings</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Walk Away</li> <li>Put your head down</li> <li>Slow deep breaths</li> <li>Drink cold water; cool off</li> <li>Use Self-Talk: "This is part of my day but it does not define my day"</li> <li>Listen to your favorite music</li> <li>Slowly count backwards from 10 to 1</li> <li>If someone else is involved in a situation that puts you in the red, take a moment to think about his/her feelings or perspective</li> <li>Use a cool down space</li> </ul>	 <p><b>Strategies to Initiate, Maintain or Enhance Yellow Feelings</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Listen to upbeat music</li> <li>Think about a happy time or place</li> <li>Stretch</li> <li>Surround yourself with happy or optimistic friends</li> <li>Do an activity you enjoy</li> <li>Smile</li> <li>Engage in exercise like push ups or sit ups</li> <li>Think about your favorite holiday</li> <li>Sing</li> <li>Engage in humor</li> <li>Dance</li> </ul>
 <p><b>Strategies to Prevent or Reduce Blue Feelings</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Talk to a teacher, friend, or counselor.</li> <li>Listen to music that makes you smile</li> <li>Do something active like take a walk or exercise.</li> <li>Build or make something</li> <li>Use self-talk to remind yourself of the big picture or use positive reframing.</li> <li>Visit with a friend</li> <li>Fresh air</li> <li>If someone else is involved in a situation that puts you in the blue, take a moment to think about his/her feelings or perspective</li> <li>Eat a snack</li> <li>Think of happy memories</li> </ul>	 <p><b>Strategies to Initiate, Maintain, or Enhance Green Feelings</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Take several deep breaths</li> <li>Write or reflect in a journal</li> <li>Read a book</li> <li>Listen to calm, relaxing, grounding music</li> <li>Draw or doodle</li> <li>Color</li> <li>Listen to nature sounds</li> <li>Put your head down and close your eyes</li> <li>Stretch</li> <li>Turn off the lights</li> <li>Meditate</li> <li>Yoga</li> <li>Look at something green</li> </ul>



### WELCOME TO G-AMS

With the retirement of long-time Kitchen Manager, Cheryl Colvin, the middle school has welcomed aboard two new individuals. Amber Peugeot is now the middle school Kitchen Manager, and Ryan Muck is now the middle school Assistant Kitchen Manager. We are delighted to have them as members of our middle school family!

## *WITH MUCH GRATITUDE...*

G-A Middle School staff would like to sincerely thank the GACS Foundation for providing Education Enhancement Grants for the 2020-2021 school year. Grants, totaling nearly \$3,600.00, were awarded to middle school staff members who applied for funds to initiate or maintain projects / activities designed to enhance the educational experience for our students. Grant recipients included:

- Liz DeBoer - \$150.00--Brain Food Initiative
- Beth Ann DeLaet & Betsy Russell - \$500.00--Beautification Project / Environmental Mindfulness
- Mary Johnson - \$353.00--Science Investigation
- Jamie Korinek - \$489.99--Mood Meter
- Lori Washburn - \$500.00--Check-in / Check-out and Organization Strategies / Instruction
- Tracy Way - \$450.00--Online Engagement for Hybrid Learning
- Shana Wiese - \$500.00--PBIS Rewards
- Shana Wiese - \$645.00--COVID-19 Safety / Mask Fidelity

We extend our sincerest appreciation to the Foundation for the generosity extended and for their unwavering commitment to our G-A Middle School Family.



## *Farewell, Mrs. Colvin...Happy Retirement!*

G-AMS would like to recognize the retirement of our long-time Kitchen Manager, Cheryl Colvin. Mrs. Colvin began her employment with G-A Schools in 1989. Having planned and served tens of thousands of meals over the years, Mrs. Colvin retired from her position in November.

Mrs. Colvin earned numerous awards during her tenure at G-A. These included: the G-A Pride Award, the State of Michigan Special Commitment Award, and a Certificate of Appreciation for 25 Years of Service to Michigan's Department of Education and to the School Nutrition Association of Michigan. As the G-AMS "Coolest Staff Member" award recipient in 1986, an award-winning high school cheer coach, and founder of the G-A Rocket Football cheer teams, Mrs. Colvin reached far beyond her food service duties and connected with kids. Her well-known affinity for all-that-is SpongeBob was evident in her decorations and attire--all of which brought joy to our students. She shared that her "main job ...was to make people smile and feel important." When asked what she would miss most about working at G-A, she pointed to all of the interaction she shared with students and staff and noted that "it's been a long ride, but it has been worth it."

As a former G-A graduate and long-time resident of Augusta (61 years), Mrs. Colvin certainly is a "hometown girl." In retirement, she plans on spending time with her husband, four children, and many grandchildren. The G-A Middle School Family wishes her the very best!



## *With Health in Mind...*

Galesburg-Augusta Middle School has been awarded the 2020-2021 Building Healthy Communities: Step Up for School Wellness Program Grant! In preparation for this grant, Galesburg-Augusta Middle School formed a School Health Team, consisting of student support professionals, physical education instructors, and the building's health teacher. Our team completed the Healthy School Action Tools (HSAT) assessment and reviewed our HSAT action plan. Based on the results of our application, we were awarded two separate grants.

The first grant awarded to Galesburg-Augusta Middle School was the Physical Activity and Physical Education Resource: Active Recess Grant. The grant will provide our school with a playground equipment package, all-terrain cart for easy equipment transport and Playground Activity Cards from Gopher Sports (\$837). The physical activity equipment and suggested activities, on a convenient mobile cart, help increase students' daily physical activity. For virtual learners, the activity cards can be used to demonstrate activities that can be done outside of school, at other locations. Active Recess isn't designed to replace physical education. Instead, it provides students with active play opportunities that release energy and reduce stress, both of which help improve attention and decrease disruptive behaviors during learning time. The grant materials arrived in January and were implemented immediately.

The second grant awarded to Galesburg-Augusta Middle School was the Well-Being Resources: Staff Well-Being Grant. When it comes to well-being in schools, staff members always put students first. Staff wellness is sometimes thought of as a "nice-to-have" rather than a "must-have" in a school's culture of wellness. A culture of staff wellness will drive results by helping to create a healthy, engaged workforce. The connection between engagement and positive performance is well established. This resource will allow our school to integrate staff well-being into a culture of wellness. Our staff will select well-being webinars that are available online to provide tips, ideas, and strategies to help school staff set the tone for a positive learning culture. The grant also provides Galesburg-Augusta Middle School with \$1,500 to support these strategies in meeting the needs of our building staff.

Because Galesburg-Augusta Middle School has been selected for the Building Health Communities: Step Up for School Wellness Grant, we earned the opportunity to annually apply for new grants to further develop and sustain a culture of wellness for the students, staff, and the G-A community for years to come.



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## *Galesburg-Charleston Library is Open*

The Galesburg-Charleston Memorial District Library located at 188 E. Michigan Ave. in Galesburg, is open to serve you. Staff have been busy adding new books to the collection, planning for future programs, and looking forward to welcoming their friends back.

The library is open Tuesday and Wednesday 11:00 am – 6:00 pm, Thursday and Friday 11:00 am – 4:00 pm, and Saturday 11:00 am – 1:00 pm. Anyone entering the building is required to abide by MDHHS emergency orders regarding face coverings. The library is limiting the number of patrons in the building and asking everyone to observe social distancing. In addition, patrons are asked to limit their visits to thirty (30) minutes. Computers are available, however no social media or games are allowed and appointments are recommended.

The library continues to offer curbside pickup during normal hours. Patrons can reserve items through the online catalog, or by calling the library. Inter-library loan and electronic resources are available through MeL and digital materials – ebooks, comics, audiobooks and movies - are available from OverDrive and Hoopla. The library catalog and all electronic collections can be accessed 24/7 from the library's website, [www.galesburgcharlestonlibrary.org](http://www.galesburgcharlestonlibrary.org). Please call 269-665-7839 for more information.

## *Pixellot System—for a monthly fee, watch live feed of our home events!*

We are thrilled to announce this Livestream was made possible by our Sports and Music Boosters. Especially now during the pandemic when we must restrict the number of guests, this is a great opportunity for family members to watch their children and grandchildren during their competitions and performances held in our high school gymnasium. Here is the link: <https://www.nfhsnetwork.com/.../galesburgaugusta-high...> Go Rams!



THE PLACE FOR  
**HIGH  
SCHOOL  
SPORTS**

## *Family Drive-In Movie*

We had so much fun at the “Drive-In Movie” on December 18th. We had 50 cars join us and had two special visitors! The Grinch and the G-A Ram were in attendance to greet and wish everyone a Happy Holiday.



## *Capturing Kids Hearts®*

*“If YOU HAVE A CHILD’S HEART....YOU HAVE A CHILD’S MIND.” Flip Flippen*

The high school staff had the opportunity to learn together the dynamic program called, Capturing Kids Hearts. Our two-day training proved to be eye-opening as staff received training on how to engage with students on a more personal level, meet their individual needs and supporting their academic growth. We look forward to the second semester as teachers and support staff incorporate the practices of CKH into our daily school lives.

### Capturing Kids Hearts (CKH) Testimonials

*“Using good things that we learned from CKH started changing my student’s mindsets. It has shown them that every day, there is something good we can celebrate going on in their lives.” ~Jacob Baumann High School Social Studies Teacher*

*“I’ve have had my students create a social contract for my classroom - they chose words that described how they want me to treat them and how they want to be treated by each other. It was fascinating to see some of their feelings that they think about but often might not verbalize.” ~ Logan Fisher, Eighth Grade Math Teacher*



# G-A HIGH SCHOOL NEWS:



## *EMC/EFE/EFA*

Our RAM High Schoolers can take advantage of three (3) outstanding opportunities in Kalamazoo County:

Early Middle College (EMC)—17 students currently enrolled

Education for Employment (EFE)—27 students currently enrolled

The Education for the Arts (EFA)—2 students enrolled

EMC students can earn an associate degree from KVCC by completing a 13th year of high school. Through EFE, opportunities are plenty! Here are a few of the programs that students can earn credentials and more as part of their pathway to a future job, career and post-secondary education:

Accounting & Finance

Animal Technology

Art & Design

Culinary Arts

Emergency Medical Technician

Heating, Ventilation & Air Conditioning

Teacher Academy

Construction Trades

Law Enforcement

Welding

Many of these programs lead to jobs that are in high demand in Kalamazoo County and the State of MI. For more information, email our HS Counselor, Christine Walmsley at: [christine.walmsley@garams.org](mailto:christine.walmsley@garams.org) or call the High School: 269-484-2010.

## Senior Trip

Mrs. Groetsema is still planning the senior trip for 2021. If your student is interested please reach out to Mrs. G. for additional information. All arrangements are pending the approval at the state and national level.

## G-A Community Schools Foundation

**WHEN:** Monday, February 22th, 2021

**WHERE:** Dig In Café - 111 W. Michigan Ave, Augusta, MI

**Menu:** Spaghetti, garlic bread, tossed salad with house dressing, and a cookie!

**\$10 Each Meal**



The G-A Community Schools Foundation will be hosting their annual fundraising Spaghetti Dinner. It will look a bit different this year!! All dinners will be take-out, ready to eat when picked up. We will take your order at the drive thru window at Dig In and then have you pull into a parking space, and we will run your order to your car! Orders may be called in (269-731-5846) as well and picked up in the same manner. Please support this annual fundraiser so the foundation will be able to help make grants to classrooms and staff to help give your students an even better experience at G-A! We appreciate Dig-In Cafe for graciously donating their time and facility for this fundraiser!

## *Galesburg-Augusta forges a Three-Year Athletic Strategic Plan*

Last May, as the pandemic shut down in person learning, many members of our district and athletic department continued virtual meetings in order to finalize our district's Athletic Strategic Plan. We spent a year conducting stakeholder meetings and surveys with athletes, parents, educators and community members. Our purpose for completing this process was to ensure that student-athletes receive a positive experience through competitive and equitable athletic programs by utilizing the expertise and perspectives of a diverse stakeholder group. We will dedicate time and commitment to creating a cultural shift in our G-A Athletics.

The plan was presented and approved by our Board of Education. The entire document can be found on our website.

**"ONE TEAM. ONE VISION"**

### MISSION STATEMENT

The Galesburg-Augusta Athletic Program strives to provide an enduring source of pride for our school and community. While competing at the highest level is a priority for our athletic department, educational athletics and learning valuable life lessons and overcoming adversity are primary goals. Through participation, our students will develop individual skills, teamwork, commitment, discipline, integrity, leadership, and sportsmanship.

### VISION STATEMENT

The Galesburg-Augusta Athletic Program will create an all-inclusive program that strives for excellence in athletics and academics while providing opportunities for student-athlete growth and promoting community involvement.

### OUR CORE VALUES

- We believe that our responsibility is to teach student-athletes
- We believe in order to develop a quality Athletic Program we must have coaches actively involved in youth programs, both in the school and community.
- We believe the Galesburg-Augusta Athletic Program will be committed to providing athletes with qualified, positive and professional leaders that support the development of the individual as a whole.
- We believe in sportsmanship
- We believe in creating a winning culture
- We believe in creating quality sub-varsity and feeder youth programs
- We believe in G-A Ram Pride

### OUR THREE (3) YEAR GOALS

- Build pride in Galesburg-Augusta athletics
- Create synergy among the coaching staff and programs
- Increase participation in athletics over the next 3 years by reducing obstacles to participation
- Improve and maintain the athletic facilities
- Invest in our athletes to become tomorrow's leaders

### Athletic Advisory Committee Members

Wendy Somers-Superintendent

Diana Walker-Board of Education

Christie Robinson-High School Principal

Jeff Merasco-Middle School Athletic Director

Shaun Sportel-Primary School Principal

Denny Patzer-Advisor

Ben Overgaard-Board of Education

Mike Woodard-High School Athletic Director

Tracy Sheets-Sports Booster President

### Coaches

Tim Prince-Baseball • Jason Porter-Softball • Tracy Nyitray-Tennis • Chris Thomas-Cross Country/Track

Linda Freybler-Track • Anthony Smith-Football • Cory Schug-Boys Basketball • Sam Spencer-Soccer

### Parents

Ryan and Misty Pfeiffer • Barry Gray • Kristen and Mike Flores • Mike Armock • Jessica and Dan Eberstein  
Jennifer Newton • John Klimp • Chris and Christina Champion

### Students and Alumni

Alexis Reist-Alumni • Jazmine Dorey-Sheets • Owen Pfeiffer • Abby Newton • Rusty Noyes • Drew Reist

## DIRECTORY INFORMATION

Each year the Superintendent shall provide public notice to students and their parents of the District's intent to make available, upon request, certain information known as "directory information." The Board designates as student "directory information":

- A. a student's name;
- B. participation in officially recognized activities and sports;
- C. height and weight, if member of an athletic team;
- D. height if member of an athletic team;
- E. weight, if member of an athletic team which requires disclosure to participate;
- F. date of graduation;
- G. awards received;
- H. honor rolls;
- I. scholarships;
- J. school photographs or videos of students participating in school activities, events or programs;

The Board designates school-assigned e-mail accounts as "directory information" for the limited purpose of facilitating students' registration for access to various online educational services, including mobile applications/apps that will be utilized by the student for educational purposes. School-assigned e-mail accounts shall not be released as directory information beyond this/these limited purpose(s) and to any person or entity but the specific online educational service provider and internal users of the District's Education Technology.

Parents and eligible students may refuse to allow the District to disclose any or all of such "directory information" upon written notification to the District within ten (10) days after receipt of the District's public notice.

### Armed Forces Recruiting

The Board shall provide United States Armed Forces recruiters with at least the same access to the high school campus and to student directory information (names, addresses, and telephone listings of secondary students) as is provided to other entities offering educational or employment opportunities to those students. "Armed forces of the United States" means the armed forces of the United States and their reserve components and the United States Coast Guard.

If a student or the parent or legal guardian of a student submits a signed, written request to the Board that indicates that the student or the parent or legal guardian does not want the student's directory information to be accessible to official recruiting representatives, then the officials of the school shall not allow that access to the student's directory information. The Board shall ensure that students and parents and guardians are notified of the provisions of the opportunity to deny release of directory information.

Public notice shall be given regarding the right to refuse disclosure of any or all "directory information" including to the armed forces of the United States and the service academies of the armed forces of the United States.

A fee, not to exceed the actual costs incurred by the high school, for copying and mailing student directory information under this section, may be charged an official recruiting representative.

Directory information received under armed services authorization request shall be used only to provide information to students concerning educational and career opportunities available in the armed forces of the United States or the service

academies of the armed forces of the United States. An official recruiting representative who receives student directory information under this section shall not release that information to a person who is not involved in recruiting students for the armed forces of the United States or the service academies of the armed forces of the United States.

Annually the Board will notify male students age eighteen (18) or older that they are required to register for the selective service.

Requests to the District records officer shall be presented on a standardized form developed by the armed forces of the United States requesting access to a high school campus and a time for the access. Requests should bear the signature of the ranking recruiting officer of the armed service making the request.

Whenever consent of the parent(s)/eligible student is required for the inspection and/or release of a student's education records or for the release of "directory information", either parent may provide such consent unless stipulated otherwise by court order. If the student is under the guardianship of an institution, the Superintendent shall appoint a person who has no conflicting interest to provide such written consent.

The Board may disclose "directory information" on former students without student or parental consent, unless the parent or eligible student previously submitted a request that such information not be disclosed without their prior written consent.

The Board shall not permit the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from students for the purpose of marketing or for selling that information (or otherwise providing that information to others for that purpose).

The Board may establish online access for the parents or the eligible student to the student's confidential academic and attendance record. To authorize such access, the parents or the eligible student must sign a release (see Form 8330 F10). This release shall remind the parents or eligible student that the account and confidential information about the student is only as secure as they keep their account information. Neither the District nor its employees will be held responsible for any breach of this policy by the parent/eligible student or any unauthorized party.

The Board authorizes the use of the microfilm process or electromagnetic processes of reproduction for the recording, filing, maintaining, and preserving of records.

No liability shall attach to any member, officer, or employee of this District specifically as a consequence of permitting access or furnishing student records in accordance with this policy and regulations.

Any entity receiving personally identifiable information pursuant to a study, audit, evaluation or enforcement/compliance activity must comply with all FERPA regulations. Further, such an entity must enter into a written contract with the Board of Education delineating its responsibilities in safeguarding the disclosed information. Specifically, the entity must demonstrate the existence of a sound data security plan or data stewardship program, and must also provide assurances that the personally identifiable information will not be redisclosed without prior authorization from the Board. Further, the entity conducting the study, audit, evaluation or enforcement/compliance activity is required to destroy the disclosed information once it is no longer needed or when the timeframe for the activity has ended, as specified in its written agreement with the Board of Education

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## Notification of Rights Under the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA)

PPRA affords parents certain rights regarding our conduct of surveys, collection and use of information for marketing purposes, and certain physical exams. These include the right to:

- Consent before students are required to submit to a survey that concerns one or more of the following protected areas ("protected information survey") if the survey is funded in whole or in part by a program of the U.S. Department of Education (ED)–
  1. Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or student's parent;
  2. Mental or psychological problems of the student or student's family;
  3. Sex behavior or attitudes;
  4. Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
  5. Critical appraisals of others with whom respondents have close family relationships;
  6. Legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, or ministers;
  7. Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or parents; or
  8. Income, other than as required by law to determine program eligibility.
- Receive notice and an opportunity to opt a student out of –
  1. Any other protected information survey, regardless of funding;
  2. Any non-emergency, invasive physical exam or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered by the school or its agent, and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of a student, except for hearing, vision, or scoliosis screenings, or any physical exam or screening permitted or required under State law; and
  3. Activities involving collection, disclosure, or use of personal information obtained from students for marketing or to sell or otherwise distribute the information to others.
- Inspect, upon request and before administration or use –
  1. Protected information surveys of students;
  2. Instruments used to collect personal information from students for any of the above marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes; and
  3. Instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum.

These rights transfer from the parents to a student who is 18 years old or an emancipated minor under State law.

Galesburg-Augusta Community Schools will develop and adopt policies, in consultation with parents, regarding these rights, as well as arrangements to protect student privacy in the administration of protected information surveys and the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes. Galesburg-Augusta Community Schools will directly notify parents of these policies at least annually at the start of each school year and after any substantive changes. Galesburg-Augusta Community Schools will also directly notify, such as through U.S. Mail or email, parents of students who are scheduled to participate in the specific activities or surveys noted below and will provide an opportunity for the parent to opt his or her child out of participation of the specific activity or survey. Galesburg-Augusta Community Schools will make this notification to parents at the beginning of the school year if the District has identified the specific or approximate dates of the activities or surveys at that time. For surveys and activities scheduled after the school year starts, parents will be provided reasonable notification of the planned activities and surveys

listed below and be provided an opportunity to opt their child out of such activities and surveys. Parents will also be provided an opportunity to review any pertinent surveys. Following is a list of the specific activities and surveys covered under this requirement:

- Collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales, or other distribution.
- Administration of any protected information survey not funded in whole or in part by ED.
- Any non-emergency, invasive physical examination or screening as described above.

*Parents who believe their rights have been violated may file a complaint with:*

Family Policy Compliance Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue SW  
Washington, DC 20202

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## PARENTS RIGHT TO KNOW

It is the right of every parent or student of legal age, to request information regarding the professional qualifications of the student's classroom teachers. The district must provide this information to the parent or eligible student, within a timely manner. Requests for professional qualifications must be made in writing to the building principal.

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## ASBESTOS NOTICE

The asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act requires inspection and notification of friable asbestos containing materials in school buildings. An asbestos report regarding Galesburg-Augusta Community Schools is available at the Administration Offices:

1076 N. 37th Street  
Galesburg, MI 49053

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## SECTION 504/ADA COMPLIANCE OFFICERS

Pursuant to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 ("Section 504"), the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as amended ("ADA") and the implementing regulations (collectively "Section 504/ADA"), no otherwise qualified individual with a disability shall, solely by reason of his/her disability, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance. The Board of Education does not discriminate in admission or access to, or participation or treatment in its programs or activities. As such, the Board's policies and practices will not discriminate against students with disabilities and will make accessible to qualified individuals with disabilities its facilities, programs, and activities. No discrimination will be knowingly permitted against any individual with a disability on the sole basis of that disability in any of the programs, activities, policies, and/or practices in the District.

The high school principal and the middle school principal are the District's Section 504 Compliance Officers/ADA Coordinators. The compliance officers can be reached at: 1076 N. 37th Street, Galesburg, MI 49053; 269-484-2000.

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## PESTICIDE NOTICE

Pursuant to Michigan Environmental Laws, school administrators will notify parents before pesticides are applied on/around a student's building.

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## INDIVIDUAL WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT REQUIREMENTS

The Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires all states to have a “comprehensive Child Find system” to assure all children who are in need of early intervention to special education services are located, identified, and referred. Part C of IDEA, early intervention, focuses on children aged birth to three. If you have a registered Homeschool and suspect your child might have a disability please contact:

**Early On**  
(Children birth to three years)  
Kathy Hollis at 269-250-9649

**Pre-primary Evaluation Team**  
(Children three to five years)  
Felicia Burnette at 269-250-9670

**Galesburg-Augusta Community Schools**  
(children five & up)  
Jennifer Chiechi at 269-484-2020

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## FERPA NOTIFICATION

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education.

FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's education records. These rights transfer to the student when he or she reaches the age of 18 or attends a school beyond the high school level. Students to whom the rights have transferred are "eligible students."

- Parents or eligible students have the right to inspect and review the student's education records maintained by the school. Schools are not required to provide copies of records unless, for reasons such as great distance, it is impossible for parents or eligible students to review the records. Schools may charge a fee for copies.
- Parents or eligible students have the right to request that a school correct records which they believe to be inaccurate or misleading. If the school decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student then has the right to a formal hearing. After the hearing, if the school still decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student has the right to place a statement with the record setting forth his or her view about the contested information.
- Generally, schools must have written permission from the parent or eligible student in order to release any information from a student's education record. However, FERPA allows schools to disclose those records, without consent, to the following parties or under the following conditions (34 CFR § 99.31):
  - o School officials with legitimate educational interest;
  - o Other schools to which a student is transferring;
  - o Specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes;
  - o Appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student;
  - o Organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school;
  - o Accrediting organizations;
  - o To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena;
  - o Appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies; and
  - o State and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific State law.

Schools may disclose, without consent, "directory" information such as a student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, honors and awards, and dates of attendance. However, schools must tell parents and eligible students about directory information and allow parents and eligible students a reasonable amount of time to request that the school not disclose directory information about them. Schools must notify parents and eligible students annually of their rights under FERPA. The actual means of notification (special letter, inclusion in a PTA bulletin, student handbook, or newspaper article) is left to the discretion of each school.

For additional information, you may call 1-800-USA-LEARN (1-800-872-5327) (voice). Individuals who use TDD may use the **Federal Relay Service**. Or you may contact us at the following address:

Family Policy Compliance Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20202-8520

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## NONDISCRIMINATION AND EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

The Board of Education does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including sexual orientation and transgender identity), disability, age, religion, height, weight, marital or family status, military status, ancestry, genetic information, or any other legally protected characteristic, (collectively, "Protected Classes") in its programs and activities, including employment opportunities.

The District's Compliance Officers shall handle inquiries regarding the Board's nondiscrimination policies and address any complaint of discrimination

GALESBURG-AUGUSTA COMMUNITY SCHOOLS  
1076 N. 37<sup>th</sup> St.  
Galesburg, MI 49053

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**Vision Statement:**

*To encourage learning, inspire pride and support all students.  
WE ARE G-A!*

**Mission Statement:**

*Galesburg-Augusta Community Schools will empower all students to  
be productive and responsible citizens.*

**Administration Offices**

1076 N. 37<sup>th</sup> St.  
Galesburg, MI 49053  
(269) 484-2000

**Primary School (Pre-K through 3rd Grade)**

Principal: Shaun Sportel  
(269) 484-2040  
shaun.sportel@garams.org

**Middle School (4<sup>th</sup> - 7<sup>th</sup> Grades)**

Principal: Shana Wiese  
(269) 484-2020  
shana.wiese@garams.org

**High School (8<sup>th</sup> - 12<sup>th</sup> Grades)**

Principal: Christie Robinson  
(269) 484-2010  
christie.robinson@garams.org

The Board of Education does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including sexual orientation, and transgender identity), disability, age, religion, height, weight, marital or family status, military status, ancestry, genetic information, or any other legally protected characteristic (collectively "Protected Classes") in its programs and activities, including employment opportunities. The District's Compliance Officers shall handle inquiries regarding the Board's nondiscrimination policies and any complaint of discrimination.

Complaints or inquiries should be forwarded to:  
1076 N. 37<sup>th</sup> St.  
Galesburg, MI 49053