



RAM ANNOUNCER

SPRING 2023



INSIDE:

Updates on the Galesburg-Augusta High School and Primary School bond projects.

A MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT



GALESBURG-AUGUSTA COMMUNITY SCHOOLS IS PLANNING FOR OUR DISTRICT'S FUTURE...

Did you know.... Most local school districts have a 3-5 year strategic plan to guide their work in educating their community of students. G-A is currently in that process.

Last fall, the Board of Education moved forward with developing the District's next strategic plan.

Gartner & Associates who work with many districts throughout Michigan, began helping us collect multiple sets of data that we will use to develop our district's goals. These will serve as our guide to improve our service to our students, our staff, our parents and larger community in preparing each and every child for their futures after graduation.

We are thankful to all those individuals who participated in our November focus groups. 106 juniors and seniors, staff, parents, and community members participated in facilitated conversations that probed what we are proud of and what can be approved.

Over the past month, we invited 8-12 grade students and all staff, parents, and community members to participate in surveys that will provide significant additional data around which to forge goals for the future. We are committed to this process and excited for the future we will bring to our children and G-A Family.

The final step will be completed in June. A stakeholder group of student, community, parent, and district leaders will take the data we will have collected and Dr. Nick Ceglarek, the superintendent from Northwest Education Services (formerly named the Traverse Bay ISD) will facilitate a day long workshop in developing the final plan.

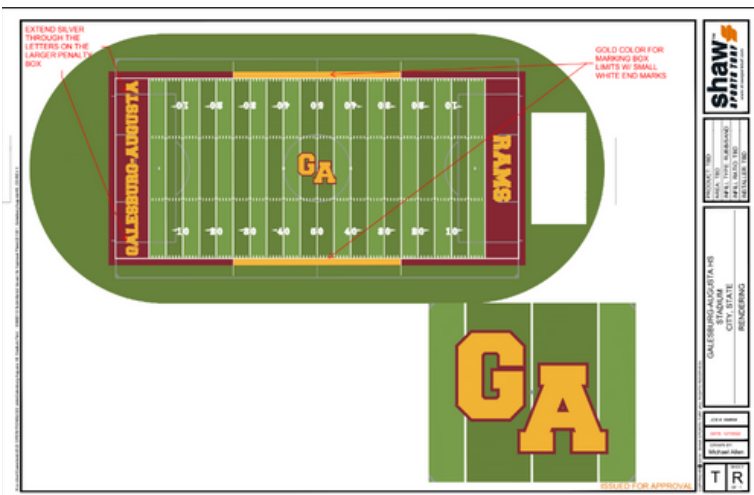
We expect to be able to publish and share our new strategic plan with all stakeholders in the fall of the 2023-2024 school year.



MULTI-PURPOSE ATHLETIC FACILITY

In November 2021, a committee of 15 individuals began working on plans for the athletic field. Committees are always formed when projects begin their design phase, to be sure stakeholders are involved who do the homework and final design of the projects. When we began planning back in 2019, our community wanted to see a new track and field stadium, after 20 years of not having a track and field available for our athletes. In addition to football, community walks on the track, Physical Education classes, softball and baseball teams will all be able to use this facility. In addition, we have an amazing music program at G-A and we want to increase opportunities for those students. An example of this would be hosting marching band competitions. Turf is a better surface for marching band. Turf also allows multiple groups to utilize the space at the same time without worrying about tearing up the field. Use of the turf field is also less dependent on weather than grass. Safety is always a concern, and the committee did evaluate the safety of turf vs grass.

Because we had interest earnings that were significantly higher than anticipated due to the market and additional funds due to the sale of the bonds, the District is able to pay for the turf. We are looking forward to playing at least one home football game next year and are planning a ribbon cutting ceremony.



WHY NAME THE FIELD AFTER COACH MASKILL?

Many younger families will not know about the the legacy of Coach Bill Maskill, both on the field and after his retirement. Listed below are the many accomplishments of his athletes under his leadership. Additionally, after retirement, "Coach" and his entire extended family continued to significantly support the district. Coach touched hundreds of lives, and those individuals and their families continued a strong relationship after his retirement because of his mentorship and friendship until his passing.

G-A was a formidable foe and other districts never looked forward to playing against us during that time. Very few school districts can tout such a legacy. But like those who do have histories of influential coaches, G-A will name the field in his honor:

Home of the Rams Stadium and Maskill Field.

Some statistics:

Coach at G-A from 1957 until 1990

(33 years of young men coached)

18 Kalamazoo Valley Association (KVA) Champions

4 State Championships

2 State Runner-Ups

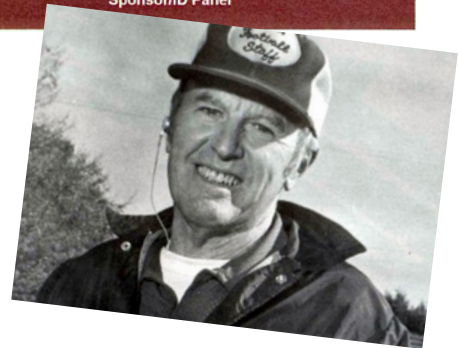
9 times voted Regional Coach of the Year

7 times voted Class C Coach of the Year

Winner of the Charles E. Forsythe Award in 1992

In 1983 Elected to the Michigan Coaches Hall of Fame

In 2005 Elected into the National High School Coaches Hall of Fame



Go Rams!

Wendy Maynard-Somers, Superintendent

BUILDING ON COACH MASKILL'S LEGACY, BRICK BY BRICK

Galesburg-Augusta Community Schools is accepting orders for custom bricks, which will be placed in our new athletic complex. Sponsor an engraved brick in honor of family or friends, an athletic team, an organization, or in memoriam of a loved one.

Bricks can be ordered online at <https://polarengraving.com/galesburgaugustacommunityschools> or by stopping the central office attached to the High School.



Primary School Construction Progress



UNITED WAY MAKES A DIFFERENCE IN GALESBURG & AUGUSTA

Did you know that if you designate your United Way gift or pledge to the Galesburg-Augusta Community your money is returned to our community? A committee of G-A residents decides who receives the grants. Shirley Kupiecki is the chairperson of the Galesburg-Augusta United Way Committee.

For years Galesburg-Augusta United Way has funded grants for educators and staff at G-A Community Schools, Food Pantries, Warm Kids program (coats & hats), programs at Augusta and Galesburg-Charleston Libraries plus many other projects.

Please help us help our communities. Give to United Way and designate Galesburg-Augusta Communities. If you have any questions or need a pledge card, please contact United Way by phone: 269-343-2524.

Leave a message if no one answers.

You may also donate by using the QR code.

Thank you for your help.



Welcome

To the Ram Fam



At the beginning of the 2023, we welcome two new trustees to our Board of Education.

Christy Corsi, a business owner and mother of two G-A students, is passionate about transparency, communication, and the district continuing to build strong relationships with community members and families. She describes herself as a doer, and demonstrated that as she served as co-chair for the bond committee this past year.

Laura Wilks is a G-A graduate herself (class of 1998), and has one child who is a G-A graduate and three currently attending the High School. She has been actively involved with the district for the past ten years, serving on various booster groups as an executive board member (AFGAK, PASS, Band/Music Boosters) and as a community member on various committees.



We also have a new team member in the central office. Laura Soper started in January as the Executive Assistant to the Superintendent.

Laura recently moved to the area from Illinois, where she worked for a company in administration and corporate sales. She shared that she is looking forward to learning her new role and “being an integral part of the G-A team and the future of our country, as we provide education to the children in our district.”

Join the Ram Fam!



PRESCHOOL



G-A Preschool Enrollment is now open! We offer both a state funded GSRP program and a tuition program. You can pick up an application in the G-A Primary School Office or apply online at dreambigstartsmall.org. Please contact Jillian Turner at 269-484-2075 or jillian.turner@garams.org with any questions.



Kindergarten Round-Up

Attention all parents and guardians of potential Kindergarten students for the upcoming 2023-2024 school year. We will be having our Parent Info Night at the Primary School on Wednesday, April 5 from 6:00-7:00 pm.

*We know daycare can be an issue, but Parents only please - if possible

SCHOOLS OF CHOICE ENROLLMENT

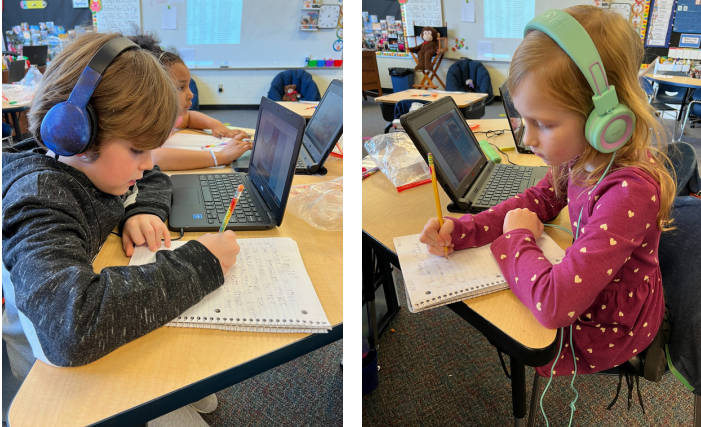
Galesburg-Augusta Community Schools will be accepting K-12 Schools of Choice Applications for the 2023-2024 school year. Applications can be picked up beginning **May 1, 2023** at the Superintendent's Office, 1076 North 37th Street, Galesburg, MI or printed online at www.g-aschools.org.

Applications must be returned by **June 9, 2023** at 4:00 p.m. to the office of the Superintendent. Please call 269-484-2000 if you have any questions.

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:

Superintendent Wendy Maynard-Somers | 1076 N. 37th St. | Galesburg, MI 49053 | 269-484-2000

PRIMARY SCHOOL



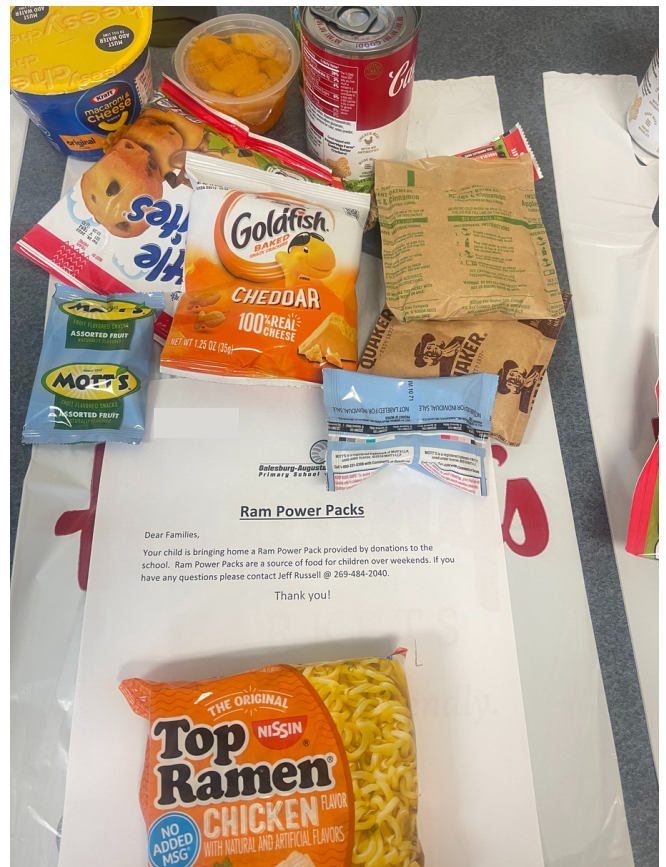
Students in Ms. Barron's 2nd grade class have been working on nonfiction writing. Students used the Epic reading app to research a nonfiction topic of their choice. They wrote down facts and worked on grouping similar ideas together. Then they used the writing process to draft, edit, revise, and publish their paper.

GA Primary School “RAMS” Power Packs

On Friday, January 27, 2023, Galesburg-Augusta Primary School re-introduced the “RAMS” Power Packs program. On that day, the first bags of nourishment went home with 44 students. With the help of an Educational Enhancement Grant from the Galesburg-Augusta Community School Foundation, and a monetary donation from the Jim Hemenway Wealth Management Group, enough funding has been secured to operate this program every Friday through June of 2023. A special thank you also to the Galesburg-Augusta Harding’s Marketplace for donating the plastic bags to pack the food in.

The program, which was piloted in 2018 at the Primary School by Heather Ludlow and Leslie McCaw, was discontinued during the COVID pandemic as food was provided weekly by the district while students were learning remotely from home. Now re-introduced, Power Packs are meant to be a source of food for students over weekends or breaks away from school.

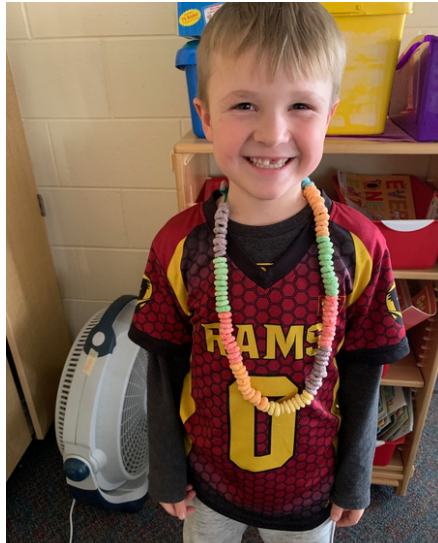
If you’d like to learn more about this program, contact Jeff Russell at jeff.russell@garams.org.



PRIMARY SCHOOL

100th
DAY OF
SCHOOL

The first graders in Ms. Fox's classroom celebrated the 100th day of school by sorting 100 fruit loops and making them into a necklace.



Mrs. Boniface's 2nd graders made "100th Day Trail Mix" on the 100th Day of School to practice counting, sorting, and graphing.

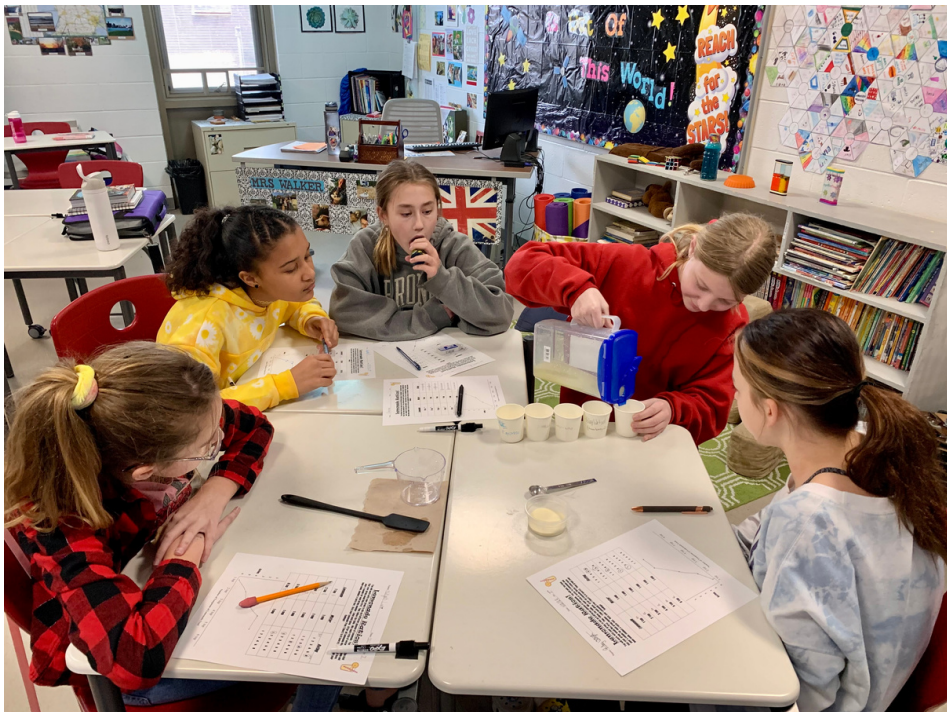
Ms. Whittico, (our teacher consultant on staff), visited Mrs. Rekis' first grade class in February to teach them about penguins. Ms. Whittico visited The Shedd Aquarium a couple weeks ago and met two special Magellanic Penguins named Mercedes and Darwin! Ms. Whittico created a lovely slideshow and even handed out small gifts for the children.



MIDDLE SCHOOL

FIRST SEMESTER GOLD CLUB

The middle school staff is proud to announce that 82% of our student body were eligible for first semester Gold Club. Gold Club members received no discipline referrals or received one minor referral and opted to take part in a restorative task to earn back membership. The Gold Club celebration took place on the afternoon of Friday, February 3. A Student vs. Staff dodgeball game kicked off the festivities, followed by intermission games / activities, a “just dance” party and socializing. A great time was had by all!!

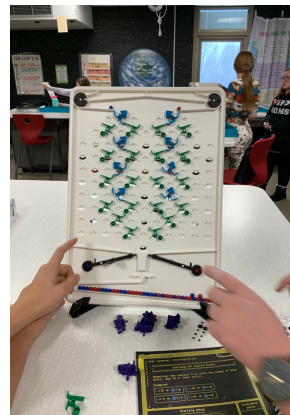
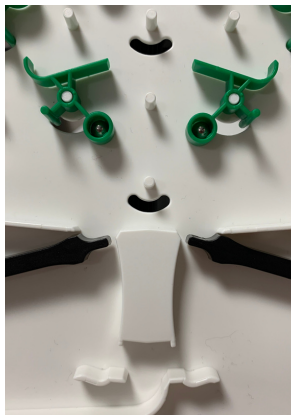


Mrs. Walker’s math exploratory students explored ratios by using their sense of taste. Students mixed different ratios of lemonade mix with water to see which combination tasted the most balanced and delicious. Lemonade making supplies were courtesy of the Galesburg-Augusta Foundation Grant.



MIDDLE SCHOOL

7th graders in Betsy Russell's Project Lead the Way class having been exploring how "simple switches, connected together in clever ways, can do incredibly smart things" with Turing Tumble. "Turing Tumble is a revolutionary new game where players build mechanical computers powered by marbles to solve logic puzzles." Check out www.upperstory.com/turingtumble to see how the game and computers work!



MASLOW'S BOUTIQUE AND PANTRY

Galesburg-Augusta Middle School has transformed the empty In-School Suspension Room into Maslow's Boutique and Pantry. The space will help us more effectively provide our students in need with food, clothing and essential hygiene products. Knowing that once those basic human needs are met, our students will have a greater opportunity for academic success in the classroom. This project would not have been possible without a generous donation from Eaton Corporation. In addition to a large monetary donation, Eaton also conducted a campus-wide drive with our STEAM Education Community Partners Eaton Cummins Automated Transmission Technologies to provide Maslow's Boutique and Pantry with its initial inventory.

Thank you Eaton Cummins!



HIGH SCHOOL

STUDENT LEADERSHIP

Celebrating student voice and achievement is a top priority for G-AHS! Strategic Planning Focus groups and Student Council vision sharing is helping us ensure our students have say and are leading our mission.

Students lead and announce our Homecoming festivities.

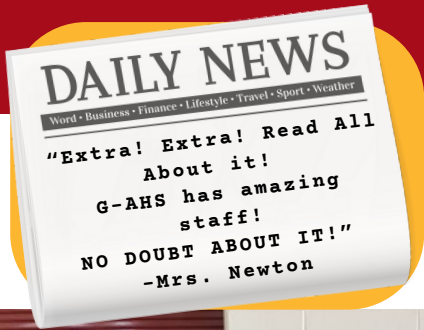


Students hosted a Thanksgiving meal for our staff. Thank you to our Special Education educators for making this happen for our students and staff.

National Honor Society celebrated new member inductions: Kayleigh Kuhse, Korbin Nigg, Samantha Prince, Gabriel Schwendinger, Patricia Simpson, Arianna Wetzler, Haven Bowsher, Grace Carter, Natalie Earles, Shane Eldred, Adam Hubbard, & Audrey Jones-Reck



HIGH SCHOOL



We started our school year off discussing goals, building our team, and engaging in professional development and giveaways!

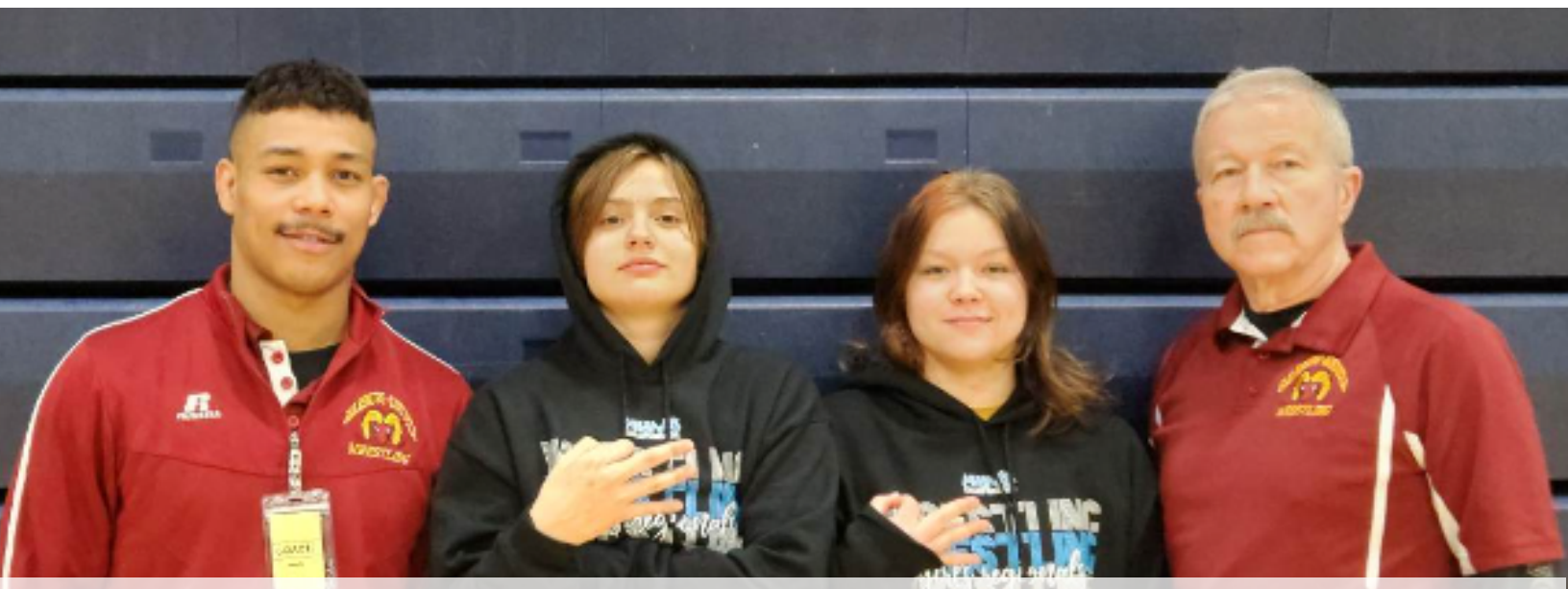


G-AHS Staff focus on school culture and climate through building trust, pride and teamwork.
#RamNation



Three G-AHS staff receive the superintendent Above and Beyond Awards this year for their student-first work ethic.





Freshmen Caitlyn Valadez & Shay Simonds competed at the MHSAA State Wrestling Finals. Shay made SCHOOL HISTORY as the first female wrestler from G-A to place in the MHSAA Finals (8th place).

NOTIFICATION OF RIGHTS UNDER FERPA

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students who are 18 years of age or older ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. These rights are:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days after the day the Galesburg-Augusta Community Schools receives a request for access.

Parents or eligible students who wish to inspect their child's or their education records should submit to the school principal a written request that identifies the records they wish to inspect. The school official will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA.

Parents or eligible students who wish to ask Galesburg-Augusta Community Schools to amend their child's or their education record should write the school principal, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed and specify why it should be changed. If the school decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the school will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

3. The right to provide written consent before the school discloses personally identifiable information (PII) from the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. The criteria for determining who constitutes a school official and what constitutes a legitimate educational interest must be set forth in the school's or school district's annual notification for FERPA rights. A school official typically includes a person employed by the school or school district as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel) or a person serving on the school board. A school official also may include a volunteer, contractor, or consultant who, while not employed by the school, performs an institutional service or function for which the school would otherwise use its own employees and who is under the direct control of the school with respect to the use and maintenance of PII from education records, such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist; a parent or student volunteering to serve on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee; or a parent, student, or other volunteer assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official typically has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the Galesburg-Augusta Community Schools to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA are:

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

[NOTE: In addition, a school may want to include its directory information public notice, as required by § 99.37 of the regulations, with its annual notification of rights under FERPA.]

Please visit the district website, www.g-aschools.org, to see the list of the disclosures that elementary and secondary schools may make without consent.

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.

If you have a G-A student or 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

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. 37th St.
Galesburg, MI 49053



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.

Galesburg-Augusta Community Schools
Administration Offices
1076 N. 37th Street Galesburg, MI 49053
Phone: 269-484-2000

Primary School (Pre-K through Grade 3)
Principal: Shaun Sportel
269-484-2040
shaun.sportel@garams.org

Middle School (Grades 4 -7)
Principal: Shana Wiese
269-484-2020
shana.wiese@garams.org

High School (Grades 8 - 12)
Principal: Lindsey Newton
269-484-2010
lindsey.newton@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. 37th St.
Galesburg, MI 49053