

# Ram Announcer

August 2021

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



## Active Academy Summer School 2021 Lemonade Day

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# SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE

Welcome, G-A Families, to the 2021-2022 school year:

I hope you and your families have enjoyed some fun over what has been a beautiful summer. Our staff are excited to get back and be with your children and will continue to work diligently to keep them safe and focus on the most important learning our students need to be on track to graduate and be ready for their careers. Much learning time has been lost and we will not want to leave anyone behind. As you likely expect, we will continue to monitor the Covid-19 situation in our local community and make any adjustments should it be necessary.



Inside this Ram Announcer, you will find learning celebrations from this spring and from our students' participation in our summer school programming. You will see that at G-A we have a focus on the health and wellness of our students and know that this will remain a focus as many of our students will be coming back from a difficult year socially and academically. We have been busy adding some additional staff to provide more support to students. If you are worried about your son or daughter, please be sure to reach out to the building principal.

We will be attending school all five days in person with no virtual options for families. While I recognize some families would have liked to continue with a virtual option, the State has changed the rules for virtual learning back to pre-pandemic student accounting rules. G-A does not have a program that meets the criteria.

Finally, I hope you will take some time to dive into the details of the November 2, 2021 bond election. The project has not changed as these are true needs of the district in order to best prepare students for their futures. However, the amount of mills needed to do the same project has actually gone down! While inflationary costs have pushed the amount needed higher, there will be less mills levied as a result of an economy that has bounced back much better than most of us thought it would as a result of the pandemic.

The Board is committed to transparency with all their decisions. Please feel free to contact me or join us for a regular board meeting. All information can be found on our district website.

Best wishes for a great new beginning as we head into the start of school!

Respectfully,

Wendy

## *Galesburg-Augusta Community Schools - Inspirational Alumni Award*

Do you know a G-A Ram that has inspired you and helped you set goals for great achievement? Here is an opportunity for you to recognize these individuals!

We are proud to announce the creation of the Galesburg-Augusta Community Schools Inspirational Alumni Award to be presented for the first time in the Spring of 2022.

**Mission Statement:** The G-A Inspirational Alumni Award celebrates individuals whose endeavors have brought honor to Galesburg-Augusta Community Schools and who will inspire students on their road to success.

- Must be received by November 1st of each year
- Nominated by a G-A supporter
- May be awarded posthumously
- Recipient to be selected by the committee from nominations received

Nomination forms are available NOW at <https://www.g-aschools.org/>, in the News Section. If you have questions, please email [GAInspirationalAlumni@gmail.com](mailto:GAInspirationalAlumni@gmail.com).



## GALESBURG-AUGUSTA COMMUNITY FOUNDATION NEWS

During the past school year, the Galesburg-Augusta Community Foundation provided 17 grants totaling \$6,542.42 in classroom enhancement grants to fund requests for Apple Pens to better facilitate zoom learning, headphones for readers in first grade, rewards for positive behavior, seating for outdoor learning, science investigations, investing in expansion of high school arts program, and several areas that assisted with online learning.

Over \$23,000 in scholarships were awarded in addition to two \$2,500 (renewable for 4 years) scholarships. Recipients of the scholarships were: Aleigha Vos, Jordyn Klimp, Megan Earles, Trista Dawson, Audrey Clemence, Joshua Bolhuis, Jaleeah Baird, Aubree Sedore, Alyssa Luce, Emma Fleck, Andrew Wilks-Millard, and Andrew Reist.

Eight middle school students were recognized for outstanding achievement and/or academic improvement through attendance, community service, leadership or other school endeavors. They were as follows: RJ Kasten and Claire Callender (grade 5), Alexander Krugh and Lexi Coburn (grade 6), Brandon Schumacher and Molly Myers (grade 7), Levi Born and Emily Bailey (grade 8). They all received a gift card and certificate in an informal ceremony prior to graduation.

The Foundation has two primary fundraising events, a spaghetti dinner at Dig In Cafe in Augusta on the last Monday in February and a letter writing campaign in the fall.

If you are interested in finding out more about the Foundation or how to make a contribution, please contact any of the Foundation Board members: Joyce Henson, President; Joy Chase, Vice President, Wendy Maynard-Somers, Executive Secretary, Cheryl VanderVeen, Treasurer, Cheryl Fryer, Recording Secretary, Trustees: Teresa Blake, Margie Coleman, Gerald Inman, Dale Martin, Jeffrey McCubbin, Rodney Smith, Charles Whitman, Jessica Eberstein, (BOE representative). Other information may be found on the G-A Schools website: <https://www.g-aschools.org/o/gacs/page/gacs-foundation>.



## 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, 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: 269-3432524 or email Alyssa Stewart at [astewart@uwbckr.org](mailto:astewart@uwbckr.org).



**Jeff Merasco – Youth Athletic Coordinator**

Mr. Jeff Merasco has signed on to a new position created this year to build our youth athletic opportunities. To encourage students to become engaged in athletics and increased physical activity, Mr. Merasco will be:

- Serving as the liaison between the coaching staff, regional athletic specialists, and our Galesburg-Augusta students and families
- Organizing and directing youth camps and clinics
- Organizing youth leagues
- Creating opportunities to showcase our youth at home varsity competitions
- Developing and holding coaching clinics for our youth coaches
- Promote specialized training for our students such as; pitching lessons, indoor track/field events, AAU Volleyball by reaching out to parents and assisting them with the process
- And any other opportunities that will benefit the health and academic success of our young RAMS

# GALESBURG-AUGUSTA PRIMARY SCHOOL

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



## Preschool for 2021-22!!!\*

Check out our Exceptional Low Cost / No Cost Preschool Programs!

The Great Start Readiness Program (GSRP) is a Nationally Recognized Pre-K Program available at Galesburg-Augusta Primary School along with a Tuition Based Classroom. The preschool classrooms at Galesburg-Augusta Primary School feature:

- 1) Certified Early Childhood teachers
- 2) Full-day program for all 4-year-olds
- 3) ½ Day program for all 3-year-olds
- 4) Emphasis on developing literacy skills
- 5) Technology centers with iPads
- 6) Small group, whole group and center-based activities

Spaces are filling up fast for our preschool classrooms so look to enroll today.

Keep in mind we do offer “wrap around” and “before and after school” daycare for students aged 3-12! For information call 484-2040.

\*Must meet eligibility requirements



## Primary School Open House

*August 25th, 2021 5-7 p.m.*

We have scheduled the Primary School Open House on Tuesday, August 25th. The Open House will be a true open house as families will be greeted by staff members and students will be directed toward their classrooms where you will meet your child's classroom teacher, explore the classroom and building, and learn more about what to expect for the year.

This is such an important evening for you and your child to attend. Feeling comfortable and confident will set your child up for a successful first day of school. We hope to see you on the 25th!



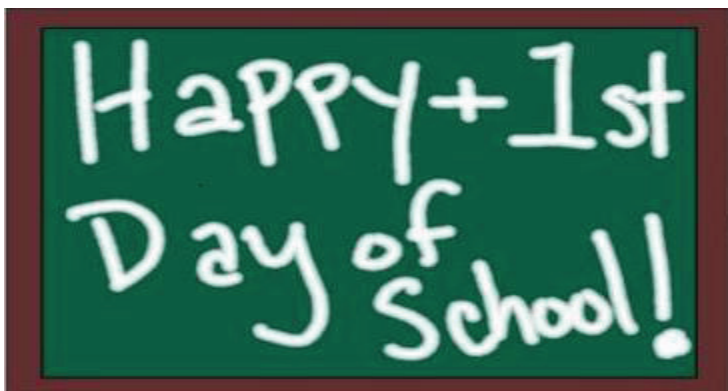
## Field Day 2021

We were still able to have Field Day for 2021! Thank you, Mr. Merasco for making this happen for our students



## Get ready for Opening Day 2021/2022!

Please stop by the Primary School office if you have not yet registered your child for school. Teacher assignments, class supply lists and Open House reminders should arrive in mailboxes by August 16th.





## PRE-K 2021 Graduation



Figure 1 Mrs. Murray's Class



Figure 2 Mrs. VanHorn's Class

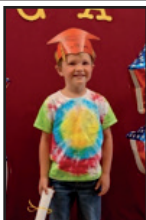


Figure 3 Mrs. Bell's Class

## Summer Active Academy



### Active Academy Summer School

Our 3rd - 5th grade Active Academy students did entrepreneur experience called Lemonade Day and sold lemonade in the parking lot of the Primary School.



Active Academy students also got to go to the Gilmore Car Museum, a Bombers baseball game & the Sherman Lake YMCA.





## *New Staff at the Primary School for the 2021-2022 school year.*



My name is Kelsey Barron and I am so excited to join the G-A community. I grew up in Portage, MI, and graduated from Western Michigan University with a degree in Early Childhood Professional Education. I recently finished a long-term sub position in a 1st-grade classroom at Central Elementary in Portage. In my free time, I enjoy camping, doing photography, going for bike rides, and reading.



Brenda Lantinga is a twice graduate of Western Michigan University. This is my 21st year teaching and I've taught just about every grade level K-8, but most notably, Middle School Science and Engineering for Battle Creek's REACH program for the past 10 years. I love to kayak, walk with friends, and spend time with my family. I am super excited to join the G-A Rams this year teaching K-5 STEAM.



My name is Oriana Benincasa. I grew up in Plainwell. I attended Grand Valley State University, where I played club soccer and graduated with a degree in mathematics and elementary education in December of 2018. After I graduated, I moved to the east side of Michigan and taught 3rd grade at Hoover Elementary in Hazel Park. I love the west side of the state and I decided to move back. We bought our first home in Portage. I plan on enjoying my summer outside with my dog, Otis, watching and attending sporting events, and moving into our new home!



Hello! My name is Emily DeVoe! I came from Little Eagles Pre-K where I did everything from daycare to summer camp leader, to Preschool Assistant, to Kindergarten Teacher! This will be my first year in a traditional public-school setting & I'm so excited! I graduated from Spring Arbor University in 2019 with a Camping Ministry degree & will graduate from Davenport University in July with an Urban Education degree. This is a dream come true, and I cannot wait to grow and learn from G-A & to be a part of your team. Thank you for choosing me to join you!

# GALESBURG-AUGUSTA MIDDLE SCHOOL

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

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



Galesburg-Augusta  
Middle School

## MIDDLE SCHOOL OPEN HOUSE

The middle school staff, grades 4-7, will be hosting an open house on Wednesday, August 25, from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. We invite you in to meet staff, tour the building, and reconnect with classmates / friends.



## From Our 4th Grade:

This year, our 4th graders participated in the Junior Achievement program "Our Region." This program was made possible through the financial support and volunteerism of our district's community partner, Eaton Cummins Joint Venture. The program, which was led by trained volunteers, introduced fourth-grade students to entrepreneurship, including regions, resources, and supply chains.

The program taught students to:

- Differentiate between entrepreneurial skills they have and those they would like to acquire.
- Recognize how entrepreneurs use resources to produce goods and services in our region.
- Describe the skills and tasks entrepreneurs must master to start a successful business.
- Explain how trade leads to economic interdependence among nations.

Students participated in the five sessions.

1. Be an Entrepreneur
2. Resources: Tools for Entrepreneurs
3. Hot Dog Stand Game
4. Entrepreneurs Solve Problems
5. Entrepreneurs Go Global

Our building and district were very appreciative of the generosity and volunteerism of our community partners at Eaton Cummins Joint Venture.



## What Comes First...The Chicken or The Egg?

All 5th grade students and students in Mrs. Hogan-Standley and Mrs. Walker's classrooms participated in an embryology project, with the help of some feathered friends. Mr. Washburn set up a chicken coop and fenced area in our courtyard for chickens and roosters to roam. Students had the opportunity to observe these fascinating creatures and learn a bit about their anatomy. Some of the activities included:

- Designing a model of a brooder and a candeler
- Observing the stages of development of a chick using a candle technique
- Analyzing the parts of an egg
- Precursor to STARBASE program

Many thanks to the Washburn family for providing such a unique experience for our kids!



## FIELD DAY CELEBRATION

To celebrate the close of the 2020-2021 school year, G-AMS staff hosted the annual Field Day. Students had the opportunity to participate in a variety of activities, socialize with friends and staff members, and partake in an ice cream treat. What a great day... much fun for all!





## CELEBRATE ACADEMICS IN 6TH GRADE 6TH GRADE BEAUTIFICATION PROJECT

Knowing that students faced many challenges this academic year, the sixth grade teaching team recognized those students who had proven their commitment to tasks, put forth academic effort, and taken ownership of their learning. On a monthly basis, the sixth grade teaching team recognized those students, earning a C- or above in EVERY class. With Mrs. DeLaet leading the charge, a celebratory “shout out” was provided during lunch, and eligible students were treated to ice cream and brownies / cupcakes. Thank you to Mrs. Krugh for donating the treats for these well-deserved celebrations!



Mrs. DeLaet’s 6th grade math exploratory class invited families and community members to join them in planting flowers at the front of the middle school. This class project included researching different plant types for our region, measuring and creating a planting plan, budgeting for the cost of all plants and materials, ordering plants and materials, and collaborating on the communication to families and the community. This multi-faceted project allowed for some experiential learning with real-life applications. Thank you to all that participated in making the middle school building even MORE inviting!



## CAREER CHAT CHALLENGE

As part of the middle school career exploration curriculum, 6th and 7th grade students participated in several career presentations (via ZOOM), exposing them to a variety of career options and promoting effective communication skills. Consequently, many students participated in the Career Chat Challenge. The premise of this program was to get students comfortable with speaking to adults about their careers and understanding the most impactful questions to ask. Students were encouraged to talk with as many adults as possible about education, motivation, job descriptions/expectations, challenges, and highlights. For every interview or chat, the student’s name was entered in a drawing for a Subway gift card. At the end of the months-long program, Kristen Garceau, the KRESA Career Coach, ZOOMED with the sixth and seventh graders to “spin the wheel” and identify the Career Chat Challenge winners. The lucky winners were:

7th Grade: Emmalee Steinacker, Payton Boler, and Brandon Schumacher

6th Grade: Jaxsen Ray, Payton Newton, and Destini Lamons



Congratulations to Galesburg-Augusta Middle School for being awarded the Silver Award by the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services for initiatives to improve the health and wellness of its students, staff and community! Of 561 participating schools, Galesburg-Augusta Middle School was one of the eight schools in Michigan to achieve the Gold or Silver tier in this year’s Building Healthy Communities: Step Up for Wellness Program. Galesburg-Augusta Middle School has already submitted a grant application for the 2021-2022 school year through the Building Healthy Communities: Step Up for Wellness Program to continue our efforts to improve the health and wellness of our school and community.





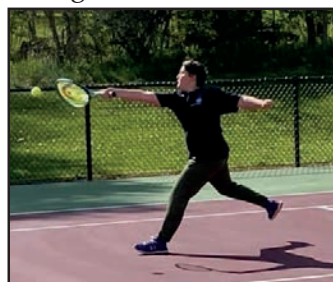
Children matter.  
You matter.  
Learn SEL!



After an intensive grant application process, Galesburg-Augusta Community Schools has been selected as one of twenty school districts by The Michigan Department of Education (MDE) to be awarded the District-Wide Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) Pilot Grant. This grant was made possible through the Michigan Health Endowment Fund. This pilot will give G-A a chance to accelerate their learning of and strengthen our whole child development system. Through an MDE-sponsored SEL Community of Practice (CoP), G-A will have the chance to learn how other districts implement their SEL efforts across their district. Galesburg-Augusta is honored to be selected for this program and appreciates the opportunity to better meet the needs of our students and community moving forward.

## M.S. Tennis

We had many athletes brave enough to challenge themselves with learning a new sport, so we spent a lot of time going over the fundamentals and scoring. The team worked hard and it didn't take long for them to learn the game and how to strike the ball. Our first matches were great learning experiences and the Rams showed incredible sportsmanship and school spirit! As the season progressed, the athletes showed immense growth in their skills and knowledge of the game. Owen Pfeiffer had an undefeated season at first singles and Nolan Waterbury had a winning record at second singles. Emily Coleman (6th grade) played third singles and showed great improvement and progress in her game.



## Operation Activation: Activate Your Body...Activate Your Mind



As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, students who had in previous years been highly engaged and active in the school setting, had fewer opportunities for physical activity & social interaction. In response, our Health and Wellness Team implemented a program called "Operation Activation." We created a block of time during the day in which all students were able to select an "Operation Activation" activity. The activities included a trail walk, team sport, and other fun exercise activities.

## M.S. Track

We had several top performances throughout the season & even had one school record being broken by Jaidyn Klimp in the long jump. We had several medals awarded to our athletes at the Saugatuck Invitational and the MS Regional meet, a great accomplishment that we can be very proud of. We have an outstanding group of young people we are fortunate to work with and we look forward to the future looking very bright for GA Track and Field! Congrats and thank you to all the MS Track and Field student-athletes that competed this past season.

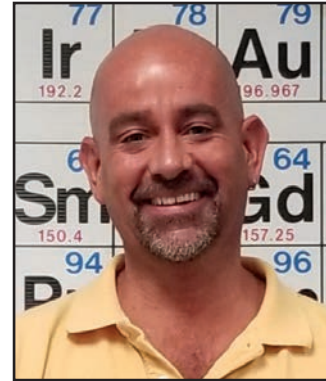


Fall Sports Schedules found at [www.g-aschools.org](http://www.g-aschools.org)

## *Welcome to New G-AMS Teaching Staff Members!*



Mr. Pierson comes to us from Battle Creek Public Schools and is looking forward to starting the 2021-2022 school year with the G-A Rams Community. He will be teaching 7th grade integrated math and 7th grade advanced math. Mr. Pierson is a graduate of Harper Creek High School and Grand Valley State University. He comes from a family full of teachers and has a twin brother who is precisely 46 minutes younger. He enjoys reading, hiking, walking, running, lying in the hammock, and just being in the great outdoors! His message to our G-A Family: "I'm really looking forward to meeting each and every one of you!"



Mr. Marschner comes to us from Parchment High School and is really excited to get started and meet all of the staff, students, and families at G-A Community Schools. He will be teaching science at the high school and health at the middle school. Mr. Marschner is a graduate of Oscar A. Carlson High School and Western Michigan University. He is the father of three: Evan, 11; Carmen, 9; and Mia, 7. He loves science (especially dinosaurs and space exploration) and enjoys camping, traveling, reading science fiction, and stand-up paddle boarding. His message to our G-A Family: "I really think it's going to be fun and enlightening for all of us!"



Mrs. Avery comes to us from the G-A Primary and will be teaching sixth grade science. Mrs. Avery is a graduate of Parma Western High School and Western Michigan University. She has been married for four years to Ryan, who is the Media and Marketing Manager at Gull Lake Ministries. She is the oldest of six siblings; three brothers who were adopted from Ethiopia, one adopted sister, and one biological sister. Her mother is a professional private practice therapist, and her father is the Jackson County ISD Teacher Consultant for children with Autism. Mrs. Avery enjoys biking, reading, hiking, camping, visiting the local farmers' market, and cooking her own concoctions. Her message (in part) to G-A students: "Know that I am counting down the days until we meet! I can't wait to encourage you, challenge you, support you, and watch you grow." To G-A families, she notes (in part): "Thank you, in advance, for entrusting your beloved children to me. Know that I will strive to encourage your child to grow, not only in academics, but also in character....it is an honor to serve you and your families..."



Mrs. Knop comes to us from Forest Academy and will be teaching 4th grade. Mrs. Knop is a graduate of Jackson Lumen Christi High School and Western Michigan University. Her husband, Marty, and she have two daughters. Taryn is 25 years old and Keelyn is 22 years old. They are both graduates of WMU and have careers in food and marketing.

Mrs. Knop is an avid walker and loves to read and travel. She is excited to start a new adventure in a new district and is super excited to meet her students. She noted that she was "thrilled and blessed" with her fourth grade teaching team. Mrs. Knop shared this message to G-A families and her incoming students: "look forward to a wonderful year full of learning and friendships. We will become a very strong family, and it will be a joy to come to school. I will be there completely for my students and families, and we will build a beautiful bond."



# GALESBURG-AUGUSTA HIGH SCHOOL

1076 N. 37th St., Galesburg, MI 49053

Principal: Katie MacDonell • (269)484-2010



## Welcome, Ms. Katie MacDonell!

Dear Parents and Students,

It is an honor to be selected as the new high school principal. As a member of this community as well as a former teacher at G-A Community Schools, it is my goal to reacquaint myself with G-A, build relationships, review the overall success of

G-A High School, and focus on enriching what is here at G-A.

I started my teaching career at G-A High School after graduating from WMU. I taught science here for seven years before a new opportunity took me to Schoolcraft for three years. Although I learned many things while there, my heart always belonged to G-A.

I am very excited to work with you all to continue to make this a great place to be for students. We are G-A!

G-A High School has become the permanent home of a valuable painting. Millie Scott, the widow of R. Scott, a world-famous western artist, has donated one of his paintings, a Big Horn Sheep to the high school in memory of their son, Jeffrey, a 1983 G-A graduate.

R. Scott, a native of Pontiac, Mi., moved his family to Galesburg in 1982 where they resided on N. 35th St. R. Scott's paintings and sculptures can be found in museums, art galleries, and homes all across the United States and some foreign countries. Before his passing in 2016 he had received every major award in the art community.

The G-A community wishes to thank Millie for her generosity and is proud to accept this gift from her on behalf of her husband R. Scott.

## 8th Grade Orientation & Open House

Open House is for every student in order to complete paperwork, review locker assignments, and review their schedules.

Orientation is for our incoming 8th graders. 8th graders and their parents will have a 30-minute meeting to discuss procedures, policy, and meet their teachers. After orientation, parents will complete paperwork and students can see their classrooms, practice opening their locker, and meet other staff members.

**8th Grade Orientation: Wednesday, August 25th at 5:30 pm**

**HS Open House: Wednesday, August 25th from 6:30-8 pm**



Our G-A Band student leaders had a great day together learning at the Upbeat Leadership Academy! Students met and interacted with 130 student leaders from 14 other band & choir programs from around the state. We are looking forward to applying what we learned to our Fall season.



The G-A Bands and Choir presented a Virtual Spring Concert on Thursday, May 27, 2021, in the high school gym. The Seventh Grade and Eighth Grade Bands performed first, followed by the High School Choir and Symphonic Band. Our students were appreciative of all the family, friends, and community members that tuned in to enjoy the concert!





# G-A HIGH SCHOOL NEWS:





## Welcome our New G-AHS Teacher!



Mrs. O'Donnell grew up in Riverview, Michigan, & moved to Kalamazoo in 2011. She attended WMU & received her bachelor's in Aviation Science and Administration & her Master's degree in Workforce Education Development and Leadership. She completed an internship at Portage Central High School to receive her standard CTE teaching certification in Business Administration Management and Operations. Kayleen & her husband Brian have two kids together, Finnegan and Karlee. In her free time, she likes to travel, try new foods, ride her bike, tend to her garden, train their lab Lady to do new tricks, bake, binge (re)watch The Office and Parks & Recreation, and create craft items to give to friends and family. She looks forward to meeting and working with all of her fellow team members and students at GAHS!

## INTRODUCTION OF TWO NEW VARSITY COACHES



Chuck Hadley was selected this past winter as our new varsity football coach. He has been coaching football in the Plainwell school system for over 15 years. Chuck spent a few years coaching middle school football before moving up to join the Plainwell High School staff as a varsity assistant. He also spent two years as the head J.V. coach and one year as the interim varsity head coach where he led them to the playoffs. In addition to his high school duties, Chuck was also in charge of the successful Plainwell Rocket Football Program where he served as the director for 18 years. Coach Hadley and his staff hit the ground running after accepting the position. He has been a fixture in the buildings, weight room, and community since his arrival. Welcome Coach Hadley.



Brian Dolph was recently selected as our new boy's varsity basketball coach. Brian is a life-long resident of our community where he starred as a three-sport athlete. He is a recent member of our Athletic Hall of Fame. Brian's coaching experience includes several years coaching youth football and also youth basketball. In addition, he served two years as the varsity football offensive coordinator and four years as our head varsity football coach. Brian's high school basketball coaching experience includes one year as our JV boy's assistant and one year as our interim boy's varsity coach. Brian will be starting his eighth year as the Dean of Students at Galesburg-Augusta High School. His enthusiasm and leadership in our school system makes him a great addition to our athletic program.

*In honor of Coach Hadley's new beginning at G-A, our 1st home game of the season on Thursday, August 26th vs Decatur will be free admission for all! Bring your family and enjoy a night of Ram Pride!*

## GALESBURG-AUGUSTA FOOTBALL SCHEDULE 2021

### Varsity

DATE	OPPONENT	SITE	
Thurs. 8-19	Scrimmage vs. Allegan Union City, and Holton	Home	6 p.m.
Thurs. 8-26	Decatur	Home	
Thurs. 9-2	White Pigeon	Away	
Fri. 9-10	Parchment	Away	
Fri. 9-17	Watervliet	Home	
Fri. 9-24	Delton	Away	
Fri. 10-1	Schoolcraft	Away	
Fri. 10-8	Lawton	Home	
Fri. 10-15	Saugatuck	Home	
Fri. 10-22	Potterville	Away	

### Junior Varsity

DATE	OPPONENT	SITE	
Thurs. 8-19	Scrimmage	Home	4 p.m.
Wed. 8-25	Decatur	Away	
Wed. 9-1	White Pigeon	Home	
Thurs. 9-9	Parchment	Home	
Thurs. 9-16	Watervliet	Away	
Thurs. 9-23	Delton	Home	
Thurs. 9-30	Schoolcraft	Home	
Thurs. 10-7	Lawton	Away	
Thurs. 10-14	Saugatuck	Away	
Thurs. 10-21	Gobles	Away	

# G-A HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC NEWS:



*We would like to recognize three outstanding athletes from the 2021 graduating class. They will be continuing their athletic careers in college.*



Jordyn Klimp signed her letter of intent to attend Kalamazoo Valley Community College as a member of their volleyball team. Best wishes Jordyn.

Aubree Sedore signed her letter of intent to attend Saginaw Valley State University as a member of their cross country team and track and field team. Best wishes Aubree.

Jaleeah Baird signed her letter of intent to attend Trine University as a member of their cheerleading team. Best wishes Jaleeah.



## GALESBURG-AUGUSTA CROSS COUNTRY SCHEDULE 2021

DATE	OPPONENT	SITE	TIME
Tues. 8-31	Marshall "Barney Roy" Inv	Cornwell Turkeyville	6 p.m.
Tues. 9-7	Comstock Jamboree	Comstock H.S.	6 p.m.
Thurs. 9-9	Delton Inv.	Gilmore Car Museum	4:30 p.m.
Sat. 9-11	Centreville Inv.	Centreville H.S.	8:30 a.m.
Wed. 9-15	S.A.C. Jamboree #1	Fennville	5 p.m.
Sat. 9-18	Mendon Inv.	Mendon H.S.	10 a.m.
Wed. 9-22	Schoolcraft Inv.	Schoolcraft H.S.	5 p.m.
Wed. 9-29	S.A.C. Jamboree #2	Galesburg-Augusta	5 p.m.
Sat. 10-9	Portage Invitational	Portage	TBD
Thurs. 10-14	S.A.C. Championship	k-Christian	4:30 p.m.
Sat. 10-16	Bloomingtondale Invitational	Bloomingtondale HS	10 a.m.
Sat. 10-23	Gobles Invitational	Gobles H.S.	10 a.m.
Oct. 29 or 30	Regionals		TBD
Sat. 11-6	State Finals	Michigan Int. Speedway	TBD

## GALESBURG-AUGUSTA VOLLEYBALL SCHEDULE 2021

DATE	OPPONENT	SITE	TIME
Tues. 8-24	Comstock (JV and Var)	Away	5 p.m.
Wed. 8-25	Delton-Kellogg Tournament (Var)	Away	9 a.m.
Tues. 8-31	JV Quad at Heritage Chr. w/Martin and Zion	Away	5 p.m.
Tues. 8-31	Var. Quad at Martin w/Heritage Chr. And Zion	Away	5 p.m.
Thurs. 9-9	Watervliet (JV and Var.)	Away	
Sat. 9-11	Climax-Scotts Tournament (Var)	Away	
Tues. 9-14	Constantine (JV and Var)	Away	
Tues. 9-21	Parchment (JV and Var)	Away	
Thurs. 9-23	Coloma (JV and Var)	Home	
Sat. 9-25	Battle Creek Central Tourn. (JV)	Away	TBD
Tues. 9-28	Hackett (JV and Var)	Home	
Sat. 10-2	Battle Creek Central Tourn. (JV)	Away	TBD
Tues. 10-5	Schoolcraft (JV and Var)	Home	
Sat. 10-9	Comstock Tournament (Var.)	Away	
Sat. 10-9	Climax-Scotts Tournament (JV)	Away	
Tues. 10-12	Martin Triangular w/Wellspring Prep (JV/Var)	Away	5 p.m.
Thurs. 10-14	Saugatuck (JV and Var)	Away	
Sat. 10-16	Constantine Tournament (Var)	Away	
Sat. 10-16	Martin Tournament (JV)	Away	8:30 a.m.
Tues. 10-19	Delton-Kellogg (JV and Var)	Home	
Thurs. 10-21	K-Christian (JV and Var)	Away	
Wed. 10-27	Climax-Scotts (JV and Var)	Home	
Nov. 1-3	Districts	TBD	TBD

All matches start at 5:30 p.m. unless noted with the JV playing first, followed by the varsity match.



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## *Some Reminders from Nurse Nancy*

1. Prepare yourself for school--get enough sleep and eat a good breakfast--most important meal of the day!!
2. Discuss first day expectations from your parents and your teacher(s).
3. Get your kids active in after school activities to keep their minds active and to keep them busy.
4. Work on a family schedule for screen time, snacks, and play before homework.
5. Make good, healthy choices, for snacks and lunch at school.
6. Dedicate a special place for your kids to do their homework--one that is well lit with plants or other decorations--have them help decorate their space.
7. Encourage your kids to be organized by getting their clothes, homework/school supplies, and lunch ready the night before each school day.
8. Schedule regular shower times and bedtime routines.

### FOR KIDS:

- Please wash your hands throughout the day
- Please cough or sneeze into your elbow instead of your hands
- Be friendly, say please and thank you
- Come prepared each day to learn
- Come prepared to be positive, helpful, and excited each day



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**This school year (2021-2022), every student can eat a school meal - a Mighty Meal - at no cost.** Mighty Meals provide every student with healthy, delicious food to fuel their day, whether learning at school or remotely at home.

### **Multiple meals are available each school day - all at no cost**

Breakfast, lunch, snack, and supper may be offered. Contact your school to learn which meals are available and check the menu.

### **Balanced, nutritious meals ensure students are ready to learn**

Mighty Meals offer a nutritious variety of meals so every student can find something they like to eat, including those with special dietary needs. Visit your school's website to check the menu.

Eating Mighty Meals does not impact a student's eligibility for P-EBT, SNAP or other benefits.

### **Michigan's Mighty Meals can help your family, school, and community**

Mighty Meals can save all families time and money, lower the grocery bill and spend less time preparing meals.

Eating Mighty Meals help your school secure funding and resources to give students better overall educational experiences.

Mighty Meals support Michigan farmers, local growers, and the local economy.



**\* YOU ARE STILL REQUIRED TO FILL OUT A FREE AND REDUCED LUNCH APPLICATION!**

You can go to [www.lunchapp.com](http://www.lunchapp.com) or fill out the attached paper application.

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**Delayed Starts for Professional Staff Development:** This year G-A will be adding additional Delayed Start Wednesdays to offer more ongoing professional learning time for our staff. We utilize this time to collaborate around how to improve our school environment, teaching and learning, and the overall academic success of our students.

Delayed Starts will **NOT** happen on the **FIRST Wednesday** of each month as you can see below.

Just a reminder that on Delayed Start Wednesdays, your child's school starts exactly 90 minutes LATER than a normal day and ends at the normal time each day. All students will be transported to school 90 minutes later than they would on a normal day, either by their parents or our transportation department.

What we hope is that by giving you the dates in advance, your family will be able to plan accordingly.

While your building principal will send you reminders and the transportation office will let you know your pick up times, please be sure to get these Delayed Start dates on your calendars:

### Delayed Start Dates

September 15, 22 & 29

October 13, 20 & 27

November 10 & 17

December 8 & 15

January 12, 19 & 26

February 9, 16 & 23

March 9, 16 & 23

April 20 & 27

May 11, 18 & 25

June 1

## Please Welcome New Board Trustees



Jessica Eberstein: I am a G-A graduate and I previously served on the board from 2013-2017. I live in the district with my husband and our son. I am very committed to improving what we do for GA students.



Krista Simmons: I have lived in the G-A area for 6 years with my husband Josh and our 3 children, Carter (11), Peyton (9), and Evelyn (3). We enjoy spending most of our time outdoors camping, biking, skiing, kayaking or just hanging out.

I joined the G-A BOE because I want the best educational experience for not only my kids, but for all the children in our community. I want them to have the same opportunities that are available to students in a larger school district, while still maintaining that small district feeling.



Erik Reed: I currently live in the Galesburg Area with my wife, Jessica, and our 2 children, Landon and Lawson. In my spare time, I enjoy hunting, boating, vacationing, & riding ATV's with the family.

I believe it's important to bring a diverse perspective to our Board of Education to ensure the best experience for not only our children but, future generations to come. Additionally, I feel it's important to ensure we are competitive with our school's offerings and we are transparent with our Staff and the Community.



Abby Calala: I am a G-A community member and I previously worked at Galesburg-Augusta High School as the Online Classroom Mentor. I love working with and for our students.

### Don't miss any updates from G-A Rams!

1. Search '**Galesburg-Augusta Schools, MI**' in your phone's app store and download the app
2. Select '**ALLOW**' when prompted on initial download to ensure you receive notifications
3. Open the app, and navigate to the bottom menu then tap '**SETTINGS**'
4. Ensure your settings are turned on and your organization is selected





# 2021 BOND PROPOSAL

VOTE NOV. 2, 2021



## OUR STUDENTS' NEEDS **REMAIN**

On May 4, 2021, the bond proposal lost by only **three votes**. Afterward, our community overwhelmingly told the Galesburg-Augusta Community Schools Board of Education it was important to put the bond back on the ballot in November. The needs represented in this project have not disappeared. We still need classroom space, STEM/STEAM designed education classrooms, a place for our robotics team (which currently uses the maintenance barn), a track for our students, new buses, a security vestibule and drop off/pick up area for our preschool and daycare program, improved parking near our softball/baseball fields and a multi-purpose instructional facility for flexible space to move outside the confines of the classroom for school events.

## WHY **NOW?**

**The economy continues to do well.** A variety of factors now allow us to levy 6.7 mills with this new issue, as opposed to the 7.0 mills requested in the May 2021 bond vote.

- One factor is our Taxable Value — our taxable value grew over the 2020 value at 3.15 percent.
- We can structure this bond issuance in two parts, saving interest and allowing for a lower mileage request.
- The most important reason to hold the bond vote now is the interest rate environment. Rates are very low right now. We can lock in these lower interest rates and, therefore, not have to pay as much for the debt service over the long term. Ultimately, it reduces the cost to our community members.

**We need additional space at our Primary School and High School.** We have temporarily moved fourth-grade classrooms into the Middle School building and eighth-grade classrooms to the High School because we have zero classroom space at the Primary School. Now, the High School is crowded; but the move was necessary to reduce class sizes and add programs.

We have not had a competitive track in more than 20 years, and now, **it is unusable and unsafe for our runners to use, even for practice.**

The current stadium was built in 1972. **It does not meet ADA regulations, and the ongoing costs to simply maintain it no longer makes sense.** High School athletes and Marching Band students must be bussed to the Primary School for events. Maskill Field will become a youth field and continue to be used by the Primary School students, and the costs to maintain will be reduced.

By increasing the 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 their careers and communities.**

**Improvements will 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!

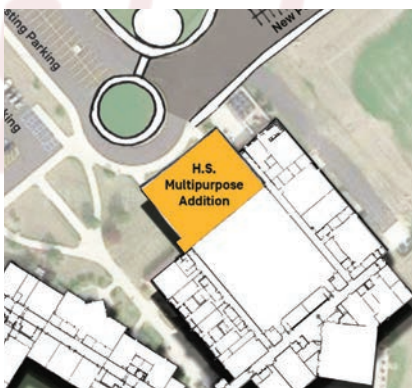


## FACILITY IMPROVEMENT **PROJECTS**



### **Primary School Addition | \$4.26 million**

- Construct four fourth-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 3-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
- 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 | \$5.88 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 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



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## **Galesburg-Augusta Community Schools November 2, 2021 Bond Proposal**

**Same project, less cost to taxpayers.**

**Q: *Why is the Galesburg-Augusta School Board placing the bond project on the November 2, 2021 ballot when the voters did not pass it in May?***

**A:** The needs represented in the bond project have not gone away. The proposal lost by three (3) votes. After the election, many community members attended the regular board meeting and felt strongly that we need to try again for the benefit of today's students and our future Rams.

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

**A:** The project remains exactly the same as the needs are exactly the same.

- **Additional classroom space at the Primary School means returning 4th grades to the PS and 8th grades to the MS. It will open space back up at the High School for needed programs:**  
Space is maxed out at our Primary School due to necessary and additional programs being added over the past several years. By adding an additional wing on to the Primary which will house four 4th grade classrooms and a STEAM education classroom, we once again will be able to house our 8th graders back at the Middle School and our Primary will return to a PreK-4 building.  
Currently the High School space is also maxed out keeping us from adding teachers and courses. Our very successful Robotics program is housed in a maintenance building.

**Q: *Why has the price of the project gone up from \$14.9 million to \$16.5 million?***

**A:** The estimates have been updated to post-pandemic commercial building and labor costs. The good news is, the economy, both interest rates and property values have increased, thereby allowing us to pay for those inflationary increases without having to raise the mills levied compared to our request in May.

- The mills needed to pay for this project are estimated to be 6.7 as compared to 7.0 had it passed in May. There are two reasons for this: 1) we will be able to issue the bonds in two (2) series rather than all at once and 2) the taxable value of properties have grown at 3.15% over the 2020 value, allowing the district to pay off existing debt and future debt faster with less mills needing to be levied.
- The first year ONLY will be at 1.9 mills. This is simply due to the timing of when the first bond will be issued, which will be in February of 2022 but with a payment due in November, before the new millage rate will be levied at 6.7.
- All in all, for a property that has a market value of \$100,000 and a taxable value of \$50,000, the monthly increase in property taxes will be \$5.00 per month (\$60.00 per year). Property with market value of \$200,000 and taxable value of \$100,000, the increase is \$10.00 month.

**Q: *What is STEM/STEAM education and why do we need specialized classrooms?***

**A:** **The Building and refurbishing current space to add STEM/STEAM opportunities**

- For three years, G-A has been adding STEM/STEAM courses K-12. This type of curriculum incorporates Science, Technology, Engineering and Math and Art. These programs are collaborative-based, group-oriented classes where projects are examined integrating all subject areas. Students examine real world problems and develop engineering process-focused solutions.
- 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

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million STEM jobs were projected to go unfilled across the U.S.! Kalamazoo County sees the same gap in graduates' training and open positions.

- Excitingly, G-A has a partnership with Eaton-Cummins in Galesburg to help us 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.

**Q: *Is a multi-purpose instructional activity area at the High School really a need?***

**A: Overwhelming, yes.**

- We may be a small district, but our high school students still need experiential learning opportunities that increases their preparedness for life after graduation. Having the flexible space of a multi-purpose facility will allow our high school staff to add such things as: large group presentations related to health and safety, career and technical education options throughout the county, job fairs, college application/FAFSA nights, fine arts celebrations, large group projects, robotic competitions, music, speech, theatre, debate, and additional P.E. classes. We need space for indoor marching band practice, flag corp practice, sideline cheer and to start a competitive cheer program.
- It will also be available for 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), and space for our community to use as well. The value added to host more and/or larger sports tournaments will help raise much needed funds to provide ongoing support for these programs.

**Q: *We have a football field. Is a new multi-purpose athletic facility just about competing with our neighboring schools?***

**A: No. The multipurpose athletic facility will be small in scale but meet the facility needs for the district. It has been 20 years since G-A has had a suitable and safe track for hosting home meets. Our PE classes have never had a track for health and fitness since the new high school opened in 2004. Only tennis and softball/baseball fields were included.**

- Currently our track and field middle school and high school students must travel to and use other school districts' tracks for both practice and for all meets. Without a new track facility, our students will not get the chance to practice their skills on a daily basis, reach their performance goals nor 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 school events and trips, uniforms, equipment, two-way bussing and participation fee relief.

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

**A: The current facility has outlived its life expectancy.**

- Community members volunteered their time and built that athletic facility at the old high school (now the Primary) back in 1971. When we asked for an assessment of what it would cost to bring that facility up to performance and ADA standards AND last well into the future, the price tag is approximately \$3.4 million.
- The site at the high school was created to support a new athletic facility. And it's not just for football. We have students who play soccer, perform in marching band, softball, tennis, baseball and who are required to take fitness and health in our PE classes. Currently there are no bathrooms outside for anyone's use and we must bus all our groups of students to the Primary on game days. Imagine loading up all our marching band equipment into a trailer, taking it to the old field, performing at half time and throughout the game, loading the equipment all back up, bussing band students back to the



High School and then unloading all the instruments again. Our students deserve to walk outside their band room and head onto the field! This facility will be utilized by all our high school students, many middle students and by community members who would like a safe place to walk.

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

**A: Expanding and repurposing facilities, increasing the number of academic/athletic opportunities, offering increasing STEM/STEAM curriculum, flexible spacing for after-school student groups, 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 after-school programming such as athletics. They found that those adults exhibit *goal setting, perseverance, communication skills and far greater confidence in themselves and their futures*. All G-A students deserve the opportunities to learn and master these life skills for their future success as community members and contributors to the world around them.

**Q: Does G-A still have one of the lowest millage rates compared to other local districts?**

**A: Yes. At 5.5 mills we are second to the bottom. With an increase to 6.7 mills, we will still be in the bottom third for the number of mills levied.**

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: Are there still buses in the bond project?**

**A: Yes. Our bus fleet is an aging fleet that requires increasing and costly repairs to keep them safely on the road.**

- 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 still has an average age over 11 years with high mileage rates--an average of 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 (approximately \$300,000), thereby 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.



## COMMUNITY **TESTIMONIALS**

### **Josh Simmons, Parent**

“As a father of three children, two of which have been in the middle school for fourth grade, this bond means so much to me. The middle school staff did amazing taking these fourth graders into the building, but that’s not really where 9- and 10-year-olds belong. These are still little kids who deserve to enjoy the fun and excitement that comes with being in the Primary School building. My daughter is only 3, and she still has a chance to reap those benefits if this bond passes.”

### **Monica Metty, program manager, Eaton Commins Automotive Technology, Galesburg**

“As part of our partnership with the schools, my focus has been on career readiness efforts to kids of all ages. This bond will be very critical to get career mentors into schools and help our kids in this district to see what careers exist in companies, such as ours.”

### **Marching Band Student**

“Anytime there is a performance, or if we want to practice on the big field, we have to pack up and we have to worry about transportation to and from, whether it’s buses for people or having parents pick up and drop kids off.”

### **Barry Gray, parent, coach, business owner**

“We are in a situation where we do not have a track. As a coach, it breaks my heart that they can’t practice and prepare for opportunities in life to the best of their ability. Our hope is that this bond proposal provides the opportunity for these young individuals, who are the future of our community, to have those opportunities.”







## 2021 BOND PROPOSAL

## QUICK **FACTS**



### TAX IMPACT

**+1.2 MILLS**

or \$5 per month for the average taxpayer



### FUNDS GENERATED

**\$16.5 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:

You don't have to wait until Nov. 2 to vote. Visit [www.michigan.gov/vote](http://www.michigan.gov/vote) to request an absentee ballot. Ballots will be available Sept 18, 2021.

### Reminder:

You can 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 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: Katie MacDonell  
(269) 484-2010  
katie.macdonnell@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