



Gibraltar School District

19370 Vreeland Road, Woodhaven, MI 48183 www.gibdist.net

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Welcome back to the 2016-2017 School Year! We are excited to welcome you back as Gibraltar School District has a lot to offer our students with new programming and other fun and exciting opportunities for your child to learn and grow. Please read below to learn more.

Amy Conway
Superintendent

Welcome New Teachers and Staff!

Evelyn Cramton- Math teacher at Carlson

Brooke Stefani - Math teacher at Carlson

Jason Gendron- Resource Room teacher at Shumate

Robert Vandergriff- Music at Shumate

Joel Putek- 5th grade teacher at Parsons

Ashley Richards- C.I teacher at Parsons

Kelly Tapella- 1st grade at Chapman

Dana Barry- 1st grade at Chapman

Laura Hardy- 3rd grade teacher at Weiss

Shannon Dusute- Young 5's at Hunter

Lisa Turner- Speech and Language teacher at Hunter and Weiss

Jamie Whitefoot- Afternoon custodian at Carlson

Dan Kalbfleisch- AD/AP at Carlson

Shawn Stirling- Finance Manager

**Welcome
ABOARD!**



Champions Pre-School Program



Our Champions Preschool in Rockwood has achieved accreditation by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)! We are so proud of the team for reaching this monumental milestone on our NAEYC accreditation journey! Rockwood's preschool staff is dedicated to doing what's right for children and drives to elevate the social, emotional and academic experience for each and every one of our families every day!

Technology of all 5th graders in Gibraltar School District

Gibraltar School District recognizes the value of incorporating 21st century teaching and learning strategies as well as the need to create confident, capable, self-directed, lifelong learners who can successfully navigate an information driven global society.

It was with this in mind, last fall we implemented six 1:1 pilot classrooms where each student had a mobile device for their use in class and extending the learning to home as well. It is part of our Gibraltar School District culture to be reflective and thoughtful in our actions, and so we took the time we felt was needed to research, discuss, plan, test and discuss steps for the future.

This fall we will expand the scope of our 1:1 program from 6 classrooms to 28 classrooms. This will include many classrooms at all grade levels including all 5th grade students throughout the district. We are excited to put our planning into action, and to provide our students with access to a multitude of digital tools that can support their learning both inside and outside of the classroom by fostering creativity, critical thinking and collaboration while at the same time improving communication and organization.



We are thrilled to begin this transition year that will continue to engage and challenge all of us to grow. We are grateful for your willingness to make this work, and we will do what it takes to help our students achieve their specific levels of comfort. We realize that change is not always easy and will therefore dedicate ourselves to helping our students and faculty find ways to modernize, enhance and balance classroom traditions with the needs of our 21st Century students.

Weiss STEM School Staff is Ready for the New Year!

Teachers at Downriver STEM @ Weiss have been hard at work this summer preparing for the exciting changes taking place for the 2016-17 school year. They have completed Engineering is Elementary (EiE) training in late June and Project Based



Learning (PBL) training in late July. Teachers have also spent time this summer working towards their Level 1 Google Educator certification. We can't wait for the school year to begin!



WeatherSTEM and the Gibraltar School District – “The First in Michigan”

The Gibraltar School District is excited to welcome WeatherSTEM's CEO and founder, Edward Mansouri, and his team of scientists on Thursday, September 15, 2016, as they install a WeatherSTEM weather station on the Shumate Middle School/Carlson High School campus. Our new WeatherSTEM station will not only collect, monitor, and share real-time weather conditions (temperature, wind, clouds, heat index, etc.), but it will be the very first in the State of Michigan! WeatherSTEM will provide our students with an excellent foundation for Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) education, as they will work with various online weather learning modules, learn coding and how to create applications. Our students will learn science by doing science! Furthermore, all of the weather data collected will be shared electronically with our community via our very own Gibraltar School District weather webpage (powered by Weather Underground), two social media weather sites (Facebook and Twitter), a cloud camera, and a WeatherSTEM app (available for Apple and Android). After all, WeatherSTEM makes note that “a knowledgeable community is a safe community”.



This wonderful opportunity was made possible by an Invited Grant provided by Youth Learning as Citizen Environmental Scientists (YLACES). The Gibraltar School District would like to sincerely thank YLACES for their generosity.

Please look for our new weather website, social media pages, cloud camera, and weather application to be up and running by Friday, September 16, 2016.

Athletic Busing is Back!

Did you hear the good news?! Athletic Busing is back! Information was sent out to all families. Please contact your coach or athletic director if you have any questions!





What's new in the Finance Department? Shawn Stirling, Finance Manger



The Finance Department has spent the summer closing the 2015-16 Fiscal year and preparing for the start of the 16-17 school year. Our auditors will begin the audit of the 15-16 financials the week of August 29th. As the new Finance Manager for the district, I am looking forward to keeping the Marauder ship afloat, and making sure that we have procedures in place that will keep us moving forward with our positive fund balance.

Great News!!! We received a letter from the Michigan Department of Education that we are indeed out of deficit. We had a two year Deficit Elimination Plan on file, and have managed to make concessions and changes that have brought us to a positive fund balance in just one year. This does not, however, mean that we are off “the watch list”. While we have made great strides, the State of Michigan now requires all districts to maintain a 5% fund balance. They will continue to monitor us, and we will continue to send them data regarding our financial position on a regular basis. Thanks to our staff and much community support, we believe that we have made positive and sustainable changes and we will continue to move towards our 5% required fund balance.

Cooperative for Special Education Services – Sean Waymaster – Director of Special Education

We have had a very busy summer and are looking forward to an outstanding school year. We are happy to welcome aboard some new staff to Gibraltar!

- Jaye Lesner is now Secretary to the Director of the Cooperative for Special Education Services
- Michelle Porchia is new and joining us as the Secretary for the Cooperative for Special Education Services
- Sujata Delano and Katie Kamprath will job share at Weiss
- Ashley Richards is a new special education teacher assigned to Parsons
- Sarah Noto, Speech and Language Pathologist, is now full time
- Lisa Turner is a new Speech and Language Pathologist part time for our district
- Jason Gendron is a new special education teacher assigned to Shumate
- Kim Burzynski is a retired school social worker returning for a short time until we are able to fill our vacancy at Shumate, Hunter and Chapman
- Jill Josey, School Social Worker, is assigned to Carlson, Parsons and Weiss

Transportation – Melanie Palmatier, Transportation Director

This fall three (3) more 77 passenger International buses have been added to our fleet in order to replace older buses. These are great buses, just like the three we added to the fleet last year. We have a routing system that will give students specific bus stops, allowing us to give them a safer ride to and from school. It allows you to get your student's busing information from your parent portal, instead of looking over every route on a long list trying to find where is best for your child. It tells automatically



where is best for each individual student. Log on to your student profile and check it out. We have routes ready and will be in touch with special needs families soon. We are very excited to drive our new buses, no one appreciates this more than our bus drivers. We are happy to use parent portal for bus and bus stop assignments this year. It will be a quick access for your needed information. Sit back and enjoy the ride.

GTEK Summer 2016 Update, Joe Hilliard, Technology Director



The GTEK team has been very busy this summer getting ready for an exciting school year with many new programs and opportunities for our students. The district has implemented and adopted the Google Apps for Education. This summer, the migration from Microsoft mail to Gmail was undertaken. This included the transfer of data, contacts, utilization of Google Calendar and Groups.

After eight years, the District has entered a partnership to develop a new website that will better meet the needs of all stakeholders and to best showcase the amazing things happen in our district. The discovery and planning is already underway and implementation of the new website should be seen before Thanksgiving.

The team has been preparing more than 700 new mobile devices as it expands the pilot program of six 1:1 classrooms last year to 28 classrooms this fall. This will include all 5th grade students district-wide. Weiss Elementary will launch this fall as Downriver STEM. The GTEK team has been working to implement a new high speed wireless network to accommodate a learning environment where every student will have a mobile device – Chromebooks for grades 3-5 and iPads for students in lower elementary classrooms.

While we lost a member of the team this summer, we are working with two extremely talented interns to prepare for the start of the school year. GTEK is enhancing the intern program which will be refocused on high-quality customer service, project-based learning and individualized learning opportunities.

Curriculum Update – Scott Wagner, Curriculum Director, @GSDacademics



The curriculum department has been very busy with preparations for both Downriver STEM at Weiss (mentioned previously) and Lakeshore Virtual School. We are thrilled that both programs are ready to go for the 2016/17 school year! Additionally, a dedicated team of elementary teachers has spent much of their summer working on curriculum alignment and assessment writing within our math program.

They are the first team to utilize our Atlas Rubicon curriculum mapping software. This is the first part of a multi-year process to have a K-12 aligned curriculum mapped and available for our stakeholders. We've also been very busy planning for the implementation of new Social Studies materials for our sixth and seventh grade classrooms. Moving forward this year, the curriculum department will develop a curriculum study team that will address needs in the science department to align to the recently adopted Next Generation Science Standards. Great things are happening in the Gibraltar School District.

Maintenance and Operations Update – Kelly Greenhalgh, Director of Maintenance and Grounds

The custodians have been busy cleaning each building so that students and teachers can return to clean and organized classrooms. The Grounds and Maintenance Dept. have been very busy maintaining all district properties including moving several teachers from one location to another. They have constructed a new computer lab at Weiss. The gym at Carlson has fresh paint and looks absolutely amazing. They are currently trying to fill all pot holes around CHS and SMS so that staff, students and visitors can travel as smoothly as possible while on campus.

