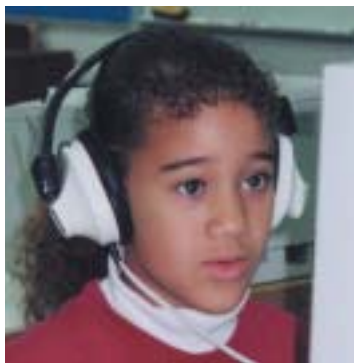




TRADITIONS IN EXCELLENCE



VCS
Vicksburg Community Schools

W E L C O M E

Vicksburg
Community
Schools



Welcome to the Vicksburg Community Schools. We are glad you are taking the time to get to know us, and we look forward to knowing and working with you. Whether you are a student, parent, employer, community member, prospective employee, or an interested citizen, we are eager to share with you our commitment to teaching and learning and our joy in serving children.

We listen carefully to what people tell us is most important in selecting a community to raise a family or start a business. Top quality schools are always high on the list. We pay close attention to what parents, teachers, and students say they are looking for in a K-12 school program. Consistently we are told:

- Safe, Caring, and Nurturing Environment
- Strong Core Academics
- Rich Selection of Curricular and Extra Curricular Choices
- Attention to Individual Needs
- Strong Behavior and Character Standards
- Access to a Variety of Learning Resources and Technologies
- High Test Scores
- Clean, Comfortable, and Well-Maintained Facilities
- High Levels of Parent and Community Involvement
- Highly-Trained and Dedicated Staff
- Commitment to Innovation and Excellence

We strive to live up to these expectations by blending the strength of our traditions from over 150 years of educating children and the best of contemporary teaching practices. Through ongoing dialogue with our community and careful planning, we maintain a vigorous process for continuous improvement. We measure our success by how well our students learn and grow.

As you look through this brochure, you will get a snapshot of the Vicksburg Community Schools. We invite you, also, to visit our schools in person, talk with us, and become part of the Vicksburg Community Schools Family.



CONTENTS

Community **3**

A Reputation for Excellence **5**

Safe and Orderly Schools **7**

Awards and Recognitions **8**

Parent Involvement **11**

Early Education **13**

Curriculum **15**

Extra Curricular **17**

Gifted and Talented **19**

Special Services **21**

Technology **23**

Testing **25**

Staff Development **27**

Facilities **29**

Excellence in Education **31**



COMMUNITY

Nurturing and Supporting Our Children



The Vicksburg Community School District is located in south central Kalamazoo County. We encompass over 110 square miles of rural, suburban, and small town geography including the villages of Vicksburg and Fulton, and all or portions of eight townships. The District boasts 14 lakes which create a unique style of suburban living. Our residents enjoy all of the advantages of a small town with a major metropolitan area just a few minutes north.

Vicksburg has easy access to two major highways – Interstates 131 and 94. Housing opportunities within the District offer a blend of unique and affordable choices to fit varying lifestyles and economic circumstances. A historic downtown and state-of-the-art school facilities reflect the spirit of Vicksburg’s rich history, community involvement, and family values. Our community members enjoy excellent schools, convenient shopping, beautiful lakes and green space, safe neighborhoods, civic services, and a friendly, family atmosphere. Vicksburg has a strong sense of place and purpose. This is reflected throughout the community, and especially in the commitment to providing excellent schools for our children. Vicksburg has all the amenities of a large suburb, but the heart and community spirit of a small town. It is a place where children can thrive and grow into successful, contributing adults.





A R E P U T A T I O N F O R E X C E L L E N C E

What
Parents
Expect



Parents, staff, and students alike, have come to think of Vicksburg as a *winning team*. A strong track record of excellence and achievement characterizes Vicksburg's school programs, our staff, and, most notably, our students. Vicksburg parents have high aspirations for their children. Together, we work to provide programs and services which will help each child reach their potential and enjoy success.

Celebrating our children and their accomplishments is both a community and a school tradition in Vicksburg. As a school district, we measure success, one child at a time and one day at a time for each child. Our greatest pride comes from the day-to-day victories in the classroom as each child takes one more step toward realizing their potential.





SAFE AND ORDERLY SCHOOLS

Priority One



Appropriate student behavior and student safety are crucial to a successful school climate and they are top priorities in the Vicksburg School District. Working collaboratively with local law enforcement agencies, the District has an interactive, cooperative program that promotes student safety and positive relations. The District offers the D.A.R.E. program where police officers conduct sessions for students in resisting peer pressure and substance abuse. At both the elementary and secondary levels, police officers are welcome role models and friends on campus. School administrators, parents, community leaders, and law enforcement officials have developed a safe schools plan which emphasizes prevention, intervention, education and management. The District is steadfast in its no-tolerance philosophy and will continue to maintain a climate for optimal safety of our students and staff.

Vicksburg prides itself on safe and orderly buildings. High expectations for appropriate behavior and discipline result in students, staff, parents and guests feeling safe in our school environment. Moreover, Vicksburg students are known for their hospitality and gracious demeanor toward guests and newcomers. We strive for a friendly and respectful atmosphere where everyone can feel secure and welcome.





AWARDS & RECOGNITIONS

The Hallmark
of Superior
Performance



The effectiveness of the Vicksburg Community Schools is reflected in numerous National, State, and local awards. All Vicksburg schools have met rigorous standards of accreditation. Vicksburg schools have been designated as State and National Exemplary (Blue Ribbon) Schools. Individual school programs in language arts, humanities, foreign language, science, math, the arts, business, technical, and other specialized curricular and extracurricular areas have received their own awards and recognitions. As a result, Vicksburg has come to be known and highly regarded for standards of achievement and continuous improvement.

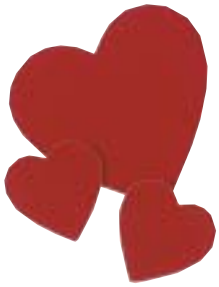
This track record of excellence and achievement carries through the staff and students as well. Vicksburg staff have received numerous recognitions for teaching excellence, including such prestigious awards as the National Milken Foundation Education Award. Each school year, Vicksburg students also accumulate an impressive list of awards and recognitions at the State and National level as well. In fact, notable staff and student achievements are such a frequent occurrence that time is devoted at monthly Board of Education meetings to publicly recognize and celebrate these individuals and their successes.





P A R E N T I N V O L V E M E N T

The Heart of Student Success



Family support is the heart of student success, and parent participation is an integral part of the learning process in each Vicksburg school. Teachers and administrators welcome opportunities to involve parents and families. Parents are encouraged to become active in their child's education beginning with the Kindergarten screening process and continuing through High School graduation. Throughout their child's school years in Vicksburg, parents are encouraged to stay connected and involved in the educational process through parent/teacher conferences, parent/child activities designed to create strong bonds between home and school, and parent/teacher organization activities.

Volunteer opportunities are boundless for parents and community members at the individual schools, and we encourage each parent to become involved in these activities to help us provide quality services for our children. District focus groups, steering committees, study groups, and advisory councils are other ways parents and community members can stay involved in the educational process.

Parents become comfortable with the staff and the educational process through their children's early years. By the time our students reach High School, we have built a strong relationship with parents and an equally strong basis of community support. This helps parents successfully guide their children through High School and launch them into post-secondary education or the work force. From this foundation, we can open a world of opportunity for our students and make their High School years the capstone of rich and abundant education.





EARLY EDUCATION

A Solid Foundation



The first years in a child's formal education lay the foundation for all that is to follow. A successful start means greater success every step along the way. For this reason, Vicksburg pays special attention to the individual development of every child, especially in the critical areas of reading, writing, language development, and mathematics.

Class sizes in the early grades are carefully limited. Teachers work with a team of reading, math, and language specialists who assist them in monitoring each child's progress and providing individualized or small group instruction in areas diagnosed as needing special attention.

Throughout the elementary years, children encounter a program designed to help all students achieve reading and writing levels, at or above grade level. Through expanded learning time, a wide range of learning resources, challenging curriculum, carefully honed instructional practices, and specialized service for individual student needs, children achieve a high rate of success.

When students need an extra boost, programs like Reading Recovery, Front Loading, Academic Assistance, and Sunshine Summer Academy are a few of the interventions that make a difference. For students who are ready to go beyond the basic curriculum, there is a planned program of classroom enrichment, pull-out programs, and extended learning opportunities. Again, the emphasis is on a successful start for each child with limits for none.





C U R R I C U L U M

Strong Basics With Diverse Options



The Vicksburg Community Schools curriculum stresses the basics while encouraging creativity and exploration through diverse curriculum opportunities. The District works to integrate the curriculum with activities that help students become effective problem-solvers, team players and excellent communicators. Each area of the curriculum is under continuous review by District staff to ensure that it stays current and relevant to the needs of students.

Student performance standards are set for each area of the curriculum. Courses and units of study are carefully planned to help students achieve and exceed those standards wherever possible. In addition, we provide students with a wide range of information technologies, instructional resources, and field experiences to enrich the learning process.

The curriculum at each level of the school program is organized and sequenced to help students build connections to the real world and develop competencies that will apply to their post-secondary life and career goals. Students are taught to monitor their own achievement, develop educational goals, and create dynamic plans to reach those goals.





T E S T I N G

Measuring Student Success



The Vicksburg Community School District utilizes a variety of instruments to measure student success including standardized tests, portfolio assessments, local curriculum based assessments, and, of course, the State of Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP) Tests. These assessments help schools analyze and address strengths and weaknesses in curriculum and instruction and help students identify the skills and knowledge needed to improve their performance.

In all areas of State and National Testing, Vicksburg students score well above the averages. Moreover, results of both standardized and local assessments show a steady trend of improvement, with Vicksburg students attaining even higher levels of performance. Vicksburg students are clearly doing well and getting even better.





STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Commitment
to Superior
Instruction



Staff development, or teacher training is essential to maintaining quality schools and successful students. The Vicksburg Community Schools provides extensive staff development opportunities that are designed to meet both staff and student needs. Staff development, in Vicksburg, reinforces and helps staff understand and apply current research in the field of education. Through coaching, mentoring and teaming, teachers refine skills to meet the changing needs of students.

Superior instruction in every classroom is our goal. We start by hiring motivated and knowledgeable staff who are committed to their students. We look for teachers who will convey the joy of learning and who will use our extensive professional training resources to become the best they can be as educators.

This commitment to continuous improvement pays off in learning dividends for students. Whether attending a conference or workshop or participating in on-site professional development programs, Vicksburg teachers use their professional training opportunities to stay out front with the best in teaching practice. Often, our own staff members are asked to present at State and Regional conferences and workshops to support their peers in the field.

Our staff and administration have a reputation for high professional standards and dedication to continuous improvement. We think of ourselves as a learning community - one in which students and staff share the joy of learning.





EXTRA CURRICULAR

Opportunities for Students



Vicksburg students have access to a wide range of after-school, weekend, and summer opportunities that extend their regular school program. Elementary students can enjoy activities which introduce fitness and sports, exploration of arts, scouting, community service, and an array of other special interests.

At the Middle School, students have competitive athletics; intramural sports; special interest activities and clubs; educational competitions such as Odyssey of the Mind, Science Olympiad, and Math Counts. Band, choir, dance, drama, and visual arts offer a rich experience in the arts.

Continuing on into the High School, students can pursue their personal interest in almost any direction they choose through an exciting array of after-school choices. These include, but are not limited to, fine and performing arts, agriscience, athletics, service and social clubs, student government and community services, videography, educational competitions, and technology.

Vicksburg believes it is important to a student's success to have creative and positive opportunities to pursue their interests, curiosities, and passions. We endeavor to maintain a broad cross section of possibilities to support our students' growth.



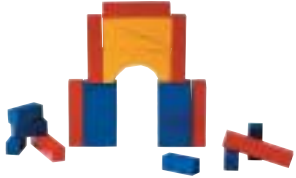


WINGS



G I F T E D A N D T A L E N T E D

Challenging Our Students



All children have special gifts and talents. In Vicksburg, we respond to the challenge of maximizing each child's potential through a combination of specialized programs and an organized process for extending beyond the basic curriculum.

Programs include an academically talented pull-out program called WINGS, accelerated coursework, Advanced Placement with International Endorsements, enrichment labs, independent study, mentorships and apprenticeships, externships, residencies, dual enrollment, scholarships, and off-site programs like the Kalamazoo College ATYP Program and the Kalamazoo Area Math and Science Center.

Students can enrich and extend their educational experiences through student competitions such as Future Problem Solving and Odyssey of the Mind, forensics, literary magazine, enrichment clubs, after school programs, special performance groups like Jazz Band and the highly acclaimed *Common Ground* vocal group.

The Performing Arts Center and the County-wide Education for the Arts Programs offer extensive opportunities in the fine and performing arts ranging from dance, music, and theater to sculpture, film and video, three-dimensional and computer generated arts, and applied arts such as architectural and engineering design.

In Vicksburg, we reach for every opportunity to express and apply our students' talents. We teach children to recognize and explore their own talents while respecting and appreciating the talents of others.





SPECIAL SERVICES

Making the
Educational
Experience
Richer



Vicksburg Community Schools is grounded in the belief that every child can and will learn in a supportive setting. Through a broad range of programs and services, learning environments are created to meet the needs and interests of all students.

Vicksburg goes the extra mile to make the educational experience well-rounded. Students are challenged through gifted and talented programs. Athletics offer a wide array of activities and opportunities. Transportation and Food Services provide safe and healthy components of school life. Daily, each school's kitchen prepares nutritionally-balanced and tasty meals. Special Education services provide individualized support for students and their families. After school services provide the community with a multitude of services and opportunities ranging from child care to recreation.

Vicksburg Community Schools strive to make every child's experience rich and rewarding.





T E C H N O L O G Y

Connecting
to the World
of Learning



Vicksburg is committed to providing the technology resources necessary to link our students to a world of learning opportunity. To this end, we have established fully networked voice, video, and data systems throughout each school building, from building-to-building, and to a County-wide information network. Through this network, we bring Internet access, an exciting array of information sources and courseware and distance learning capability to every classroom.

Classroom technology is augmented by state-of-the-art computer labs and multi-media labs. The District maintains a technology support team to provide long-range planning, technical support and training. We are the development site for a fully integrated data management software system and development partners with a major technology systems engineering and consulting firm.

Vicksburg's investment in providing students with extensive technology resources supports a learning environment that actively engages our students. Students and staff use these resources to explore information sources, solve complex problems, reinforce basic skills, and communicate in dynamic and innovative ways.

Technology has also become a powerful tool for monitoring the progress of each student, evaluating the effectiveness of our school programs, and increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of our operation, thus leading to better services for our students.





SPECIAL ADVERTISING SECTION
THANK YOU TO OUR
HEARTY HOSTS
**12TH ANNUAL VICTOR
HEARTY HUSTLE**



MAY 8, 1999

DRUG FREE SCHOOL



F A C I L I T I E S

Designed
for Learning



The Vicksburg Community School District boasts state-of-the-art facilities due to recent renovations and additions. Facilities include a 1,000-seat Performing Arts Center, Outdoor Education Center, computer and science labs, multimedia technology networks and media centers, an agriscience and greenhouse facility, a 3,000-seat gymnasium and a historic administration building. Additionally, the District maintains a full-service transportation and maintenance complex, outdoor sports facilities, fully-equipped playgrounds, and complete kitchen facilities.

School facilities and grounds in Vicksburg are in excellent condition and they are a constant source of pride for our community. Most important for our students, Vicksburg's excellent facilities were designed and constructed to create significant learning opportunities and motivation. Students can look forward to each day in carefully maintained, well-equipped, and comfortable schools. These beautiful schools are the generous gift of a community that cares about its children enough to ensure the educational advantage that comes from good school buildings and outdoor facilities.





EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION

Our Mission



We, in the Vicksburg Community Schools, believe in service to the youth and adults of the community and being responsive to their educational needs, values, and aspirations. Furthermore, we feel the school has an important role in helping to improve the quality of life in our community.

In our educational program, each individual will be accepted, with equal opportunity to learn, develop, and succeed. The dignity, worth, and uniqueness of all individuals will be preserved in our program.

Each student has the right to an education fitting his/her own needs, interests, and abilities. Through the recognition of individual differences, our schools will provide the opportunities for all students to develop the values, attitudes, skills, and knowledge necessary to become self-confident, responsible, productive, and contributing members of our society.

We recognize the immense force public education has in the preservation of freedom and the advancement of a democratic way of life. It is to this end that we are dedicated to transmitting the democratic ideals emphasized in the Constitution of the United States of America.

The Vicksburg Community Schools shall be progressive in that they are ever ready to change and improve. We believe in a holistic approach to student growth, in an environment that encourages students and educators sharing mutually in the joy of learning.

The successful implementation of our mission is necessary for our goals to become realities and our intentions actual practices. The extent to which we are able to implement our mission is the real measure of our service to the community.







VCS

Vicksburg Community Schools

Traditions In Excellence

For more information about
Vicksburg Community Schools
call (616) 321-1000 or visit us on the web:
www.kresanet.org/vicksburg

