



THE

RED & WHITE

AUGUST 2025

A LETTER FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

Dear Vicksburg Community Schools Families,

I hope you're enjoying a wonderful summer and have found time for rest and relaxation. As we look ahead to a new school year, I want to thank you once again for your ongoing support of our district.

Our buildings have been busy over the summer with construction projects made possible by the 2020 bond you helped pass. From classroom upgrades to safety improvements and major facility

updates, we continue to see real progress thanks to your investment in our schools.

Our team is working hard to make sure everything is ready for a smooth start to the 2025-2026 school year. I am excited for you to see the improvements and for us all to continue building on the momentum of our district's long-term vision.

We look forward to seeing everyone soon and beginning a great year together. In this issue

of the Red and White you will see pictures of and read about some of the construction projects. You'll also see what exciting things our students and staff were up to while on break.

I hope you enjoy the last few weeks of break. We look forward to seeing you soon.



Kind regards,

Keevin O'Neill, SUPERINTENDENT

FFA Team Takes Home State Title



A huge congratulations to the Vicksburg FFA team who competed at the FFA Dairy Judging competition in Lansing and are the State Champions!

They now will go on to compete at the FFA National Convention in October in Indianapolis! We are so proud of their huge accomplishment!

Congratulations to Viktor Robertson-Wicks, Koy Kolvaska, Avery Bosker and Shae Willis.

Best of luck at the national convention!

2025-2026

IMPORTANT DATES

AUG 25

First Day of School

DEC 22 - JAN 2

Winter Break

MARCH 27 -
APRIL 3

Spring Break

JUNE 5

Last Day of School



Construction Projects at Vicksburg Schools

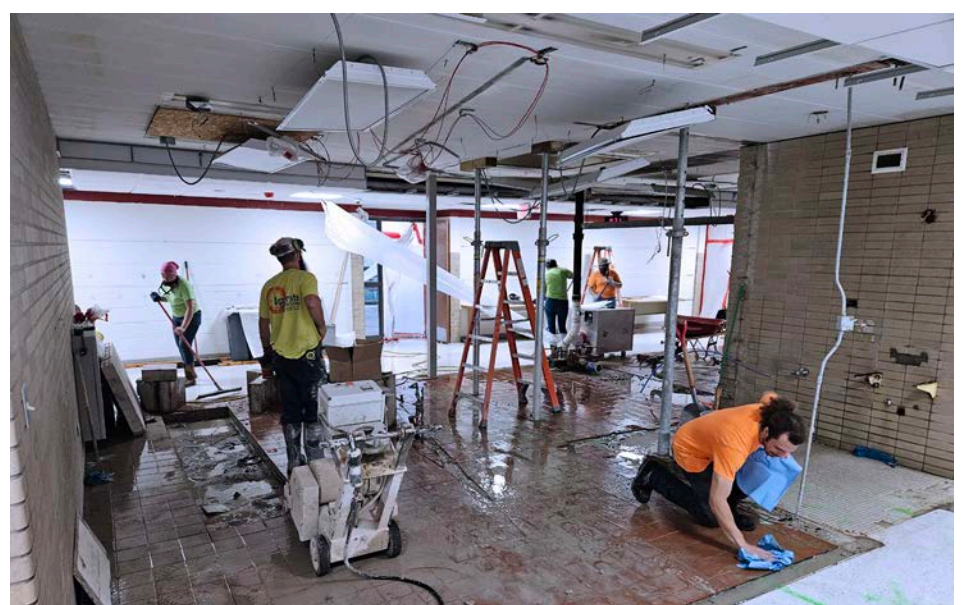
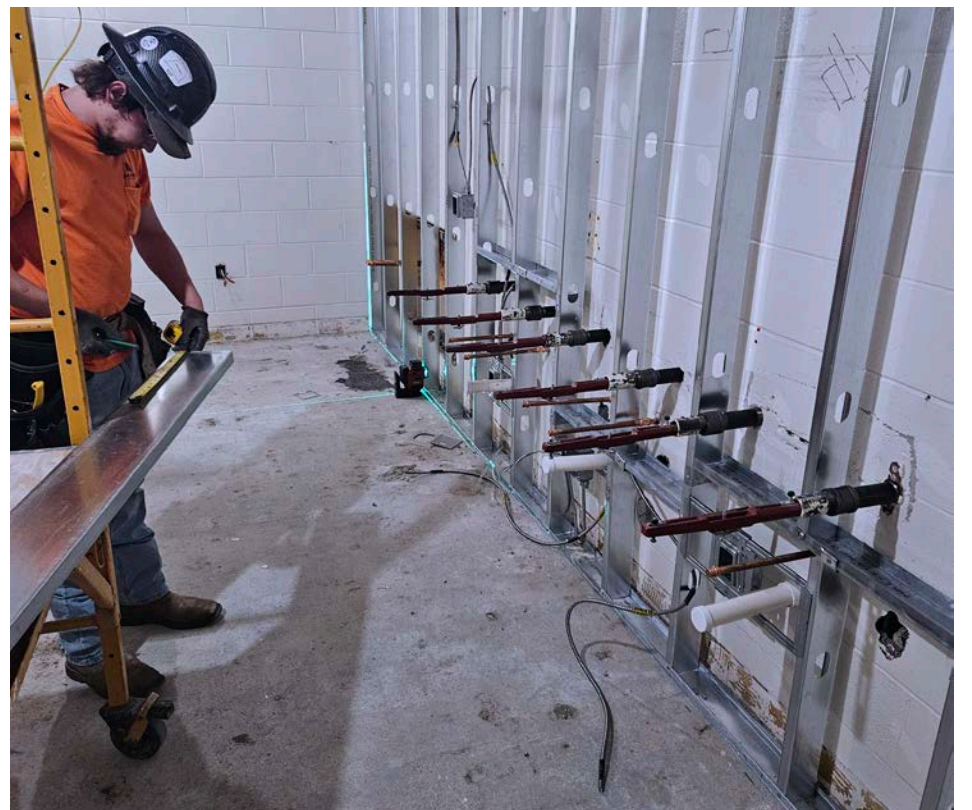
Our crews have been very busy once again this summer!

Some of the most dramatic changes are coming in the form of new flooring and paint at most of our school buildings.

The bathrooms are being completely torn out and redone at multiple schools as well. And students will also notice new furniture in most of our classrooms when they return.

These much needed improvements are all thanks to our 2020 bond and the support from our incredible community.

We can't wait for students and staff to see the upgrades! And we thank our community for making sure our buildings are safe, modern and inspirational places for all students to learn.

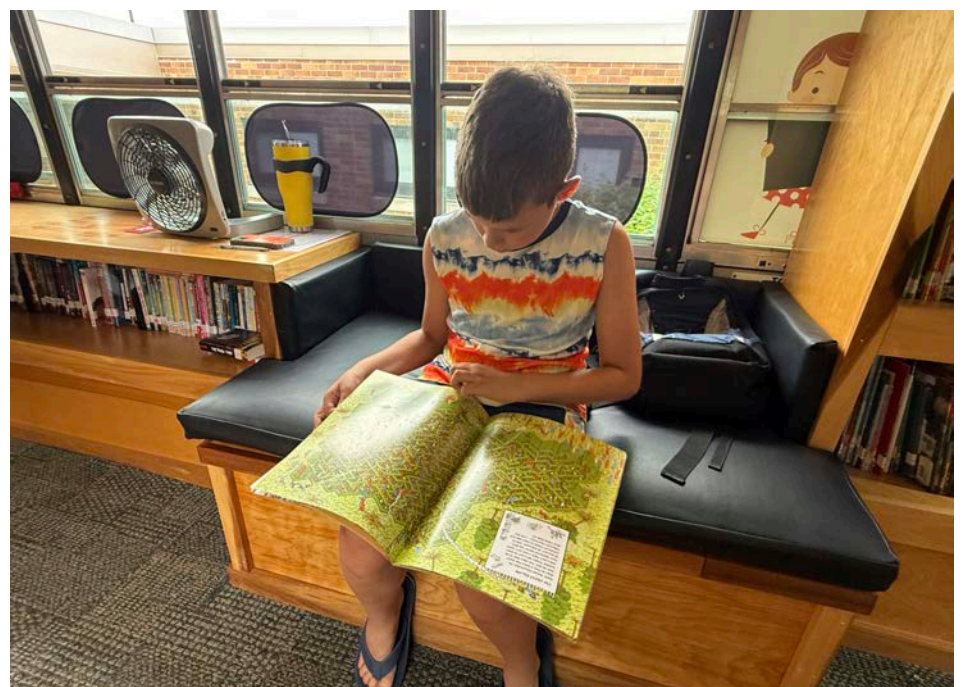



The Big Read Machine Rocks!

The Vicksburg Community Schools Foundation and the Big Read Machine have made dozens of stops around town this summer!

Students at Summer School got weekly visits from the mobile library. It has also been set up around town for various events, including a new series of bedtime stories for families in the evenings.

The bus will be rolling through August with lots of opportunities to check out books. Head to the Vicksburg Community Schools Foundation page on our website for a calendar of events.






Is your information up to date??

**CHECK YOUR
SKYWARD
ACCOUNT**

**SCAN
ME! >>**



Before the new school year starts please make
sure your contact information is up to date!



Clay Target Team Excels

The Bulldog Clay Target team represented Vicksburg at the USA Clay Target National Championships in Mason, MI!

Bryce Sherwood made it into the final round. His score included a 50 straight and a 25 straight.

Also competing were Xavier Cleveland 95/100 with a 25 straight, Brayden Dugray 94/100 with a 25 straight, Ryder VanSolkema 88/100, Kevin Francisco 85/100, and Cody

VanSolkema 82/100.

The team squad of Bryce Sherwood, Brayden Dugray, Greyson Young, Sky Smith, and Kevin Francisco also made it to the final round in the team event!

Great job representing the Bulldogs on the national stage!



Science Teachers Study STEAM

Four Vicksburg Middle School science teachers spent part of their summer learning new things to bring back to the classroom this school year.

They attended the Science on the Grand conference in Grand Rapids.

Teachers Jenniffer Heeres, Liz Pierce, Holly James and Michelle Wistinghausen learned new and innovative STEAM ideas to bring into their lessons. We are excited to see what they have planned for VMS students this fall!





REGISTRATION OPEN NOW!



VICKSBURG SCHOOLS GSRP PRESCHOOL

VCS is now accepting applications for the **2025-2026** school year for kids who will be 4 by September 1st.

Apply on the Community Education tab of our website today!
Or scan here to download the application:





IMPORTANT NUMBERS

Transportation:	(269) 321-1070
Food Service:	(269) 321-1033
Indian Lake Office & Attendance:	(269) 321-1400
Sunset Lake Office & Attendance:	(269) 321-1500
Tobey Office & Attendance:	(269) 321-1600
VMS Office & Attendance:	(269) 321-1300
Vicksburg High School Office:	(269) 321-1100
VHS Attendance:	(269) 321-1150
Vicksburg Pathways HS Office:	(269) 321-1024
Vicksburg Administration Building:	(269) 321-1000

VICKSBURG COMMUNITY SCHOOLS FREE BUS SAFETY CARNIVAL



August 14th
5:30 to 7:30pm
at the VAB Parking lot

ALL PRE-K & ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS ARE INVITED!



Students & Parents Learn
School Bus Safety!



Free Games, Prizes and More!

VICKSBURG COMMUNITY SCHOOLS PRESENTS:

VICKSBURG COMMUNITY TAILGATE!

Thursday, August 28th, 2025
4:30pm to 6:30pm



Join us for free food, games, giveaways and more from dozens of Vicksburg area businesses!



Summer Science Camp Studies Nature

Rising Vicksburg High School freshmen got to conduct some hands-on research at VHS Summer Science Camp!

Teachers Liz Ratashak and Les Latham focused the camp on the question "What evidence can we collect to determine if human activities are helping or harming the stream ecosystem?"

Students examined the water that runs through Clark Park, taking samples and making notes of their findings. They also visited McLinden Nature Trail where we

also collected data to serve as a control group.

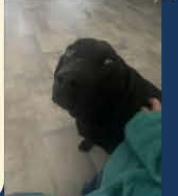
On the final day of camp, students created and presented infographics to share with the community.

The projects were completely student-led and they were able to share their research and what they would like the community of Vicksburg to know about their impact on our local waterways.



CLARK PARK CREEK AND WHATS IN IT

during the summer we ran a science camp that looked at our creek in Vicksburg, Clark park. we studied the Oxygen in the water, the speed, how deep it was, water flow, and the microorganisms in it. We compared it to a more controlled creek in McLinden trail. Why is it important? its important to know how our stream is doing as a person who lives around it and share the information of what we see



Clark Park	McLinden Trail
clear	clear
Very good	good
4.38	4.67
6.60	7.13
6.14	7.39
5.83	7.15
	7.17
18.6 m/s	0.234 m/s
0.69 m/s	0.11 m/s
fallen logs	fallen logs
81.4, 81.4, 81.2	78.8, 79.3, 79.3
612, 615, 616	604, 451, 604
8	7.5

WE HAVE TOOK BOTH INFORMATION FROM BOTH CREEKS AND AS SHOWN IN THE IMAGE TO THE LEFT THE MCLINDEN TRAIL CREEK WAS BETTER. BUT WE LEARN THAT THE CONDITIONS FOR OUR CREEK IS INTENTIONAL. WE CONTACTED KALAMAZOO COUNTY DRAIN COMMISSIONER ABOUT THIS. THEY SHARED THAT OUR CREEK HAD A ENDANGERED SPECIES IN OR CREEK CALLED THE SNUFFBOX MUSSEL



(a Burrowing mayfly)

the snuffbox mussel sadly is becoming more endangered by habitat loss or destruction, and pollution. they are found at our creek, with that they had made specific conditions for the creek so they can thrive in our creek.



its important to keep them around as they are a filters to bacteria, algae, and detritus

evidence for snuffbox

Infographic by Abi Harp.

Is Clark Park Creek healthy for macroinvertebrates?



*An backbone-less organism that you can see without a microscope.

Background:

- For this year's Summer Science Camp, we looked at Clark Park Creek and one other stream near our community.
- We compared their water quality, dissolved O₂, Conductivity, pH, temperature, and water clarity.
- We thought it would be important to study these factors in order to determine the health of organisms at Clark Park Creek.

Evidence:

- In Clark Park Creek we found out that the water quality rating based on macroinvertebrates was a 4.38 or "Very Good" rating based on the water quality sheet we received from the "Michigan Clean Water Corps."
- We discovered the dissolved O₂ level was an average of 6.19 and the amount needed for warm water organisms to survive was 5 which we found from the State of Michigan water quality parameters.

Conclusion:

- Finally, we can conclude that Clark Park creek is healthy and safe for macroinvertebrates living in the Creek, since it is right in the homeostasis needed for warm water organisms to survive.
- Also, since the macroinvertebrates we found were very sensitive to pollution yet were thriving in the Clark Park Creek's condition we can assume the stream is healthy since they have found no need to adapt.



Infographic by Malena Dickerson.

Summer Schoolers Collect Cans for Good Cause

Our elementary summer school students hosted a can and bottle drive and all the proceeds are going to charities that help provide clean water!

The drive is part of a new project-based learning initiative VCS implemented with the help of the Van Andel Institute for

Education.

Students started by learning about charities that work to clean our oceans and provide clean drinking water. Then they drew their own can and bottle drive posters before using Canva to make their designs come to life.

Over the course of summer school, they set up bins outside of Tobey Elementary for students, staff and the community to drop off recyclables.

Students are in the process of recycling the cans and bottles and will then make donations to

the charities of their choice.

We are so proud of their work already and can't wait to see the impact of their efforts!



Spanish Students Explore Costa Rica

A group of 14 Vicksburg High School Spanish students recently returned from a 9 day trip to Costa Rica along with teacher Allie Lamers.

Highlights of the trip included zip-lining, kayaking, an organic farm tour, volcanic hot springs, and a Latin dance class.

The students also had the opportunity to live with a Costa Rican family for a portion of the trip, where they were able to experience daily Costa Rican life.

Many memories were made as students practiced their Spanish, tried new foods, and adventured throughout the country!

