

Vicksburg Middle School  
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Vicksburg, MI 49097  
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Matt VanDussen, Principal  
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# VMS Principals' Notes

## WEEKLY EVENTS

For specific middle school events, please go to our website at  
[http://www.vicksburgcommunityschools.org/middle\\_school/](http://www.vicksburgcommunityschools.org/middle_school/)  
and click on the "Weekly Events" tab along the left side of the screen.

## MSTEP

### **8th grade**

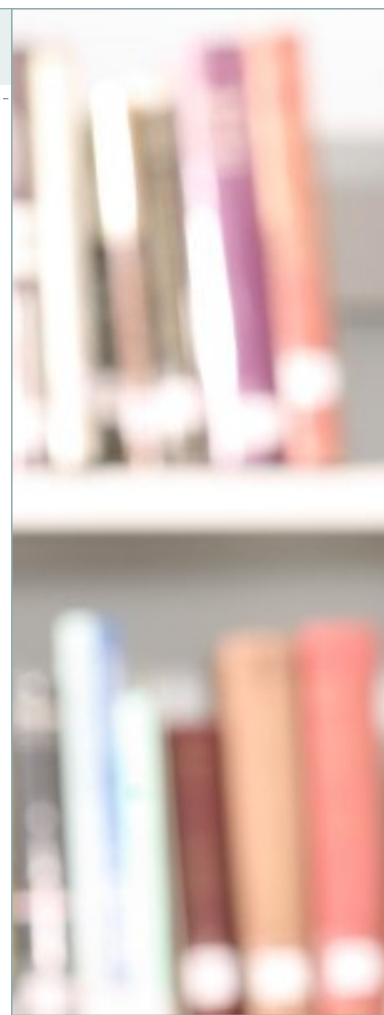
- April 11 - ELA Computer Adaptive assessment
- April 12 - ELA Performance Task
- April 18 - Math Computer Adaptive assessment and Performance Task
- April 19 - Social Studies

### **7th grade**

- May 9 - ELA Computer Adaptive assessment
- May 10 - Math Computer Adaptive assessment and Performance Task
- May 16—Science

### **6th grade**

- May 2 - ELA Computer Adaptive assessment
- May 3—Math Computer Adaptive Assessment and Performance Task



### Mission

To maximize the success and potential of all students

### Beliefs

1. All students can learn at high levels
2. Students learn in different ways and in different timeframes
3. Mistakes are expected, inspected, and respected.
4. When students don't learn the way we teach, we will find ways to teach the way they learn.
5. Assessments provide feedback that influences teaching and learning.
6. Students can and will take responsibility for their learning. Students have ownership and vision for their learning.

## Assessment Information for Educators, Parents & Community

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This toolkit is designed to assist you in providing meaningful information to staff, parents and families, and your community. The materials can be printed, emailed, posted on district and school websites, and included in newsletters, parent letters, etc. The PowerPoint presentation is considered a sample and may be used in whole or in part, and may be combined with other information and materials. The below materials are posted under the **What's New** on the **Parent/Student Information** sections of the [M-STEP \(www.michigan.gov/mstep\)](http://www.michigan.gov/mstep) and [MME \(www.michigan.gov/mme\)](http://www.michigan.gov/mme) web page.

### [Parent Letter from Brian Whiston, State Superintendent for Public Instruction](#)

State Superintendent Whiston's letter is designed for schools to give parents and is filled with valuable information on upcoming spring assessments, how testing is part of learning, why it is important, our future assessment vision, and "opt out" information.

### [2017 Michigan Assessment System: What it is, What it means - And What it Offers](#)

This popular one-page handout has been updated. (Spanish and Arabic translations will be available soon.)

### [Student Testing: What Parents Can Do to Help Students Prepare](#)

This NEW resource helps put state assessment into perspective and provides practical tips on how families can ease students' anxieties and foster success. (Spanish and Arabic translations will be available soon.)

### [Computer Adaptive Testing \(CAT\) Information](#)

Computer Adaptive Testing provides students with a customized testing experience and has been used in M-STEP assessments since Spring 2016. This information outlines how it works and the benefits for students, teachers and schools.

### [Parent Guide to MI-Access: What it is, What it Means -- What it Offers](#)

This guide provides valuable information for parents of students taking Michigan's alternate assessment.

### [2017 Michigan Assessment System: What it is, What it means - And What it Offers](#)

This companion PowerPoint presentation to the printed version provides an overview of Michigan's state assessment system and the upcoming Spring 2017 testing schedule.

## Video Assessment Overviews

### [M-STEP: What students can expect? \(video\) 2:13](#)

This video provides an overview of what students can experience when taking the online M-STEP assessments. The video is rich with images of the assessment's user-friendly navigation tools and interactive technology-enhanced (TE) items that students will encounter. Students with special needs and the adults who support them can learn more about the accommodations that are built into the assessments—accommodations such as the ability to choose background and text colors, cover up or mask areas of the screen, play audio using a screen reader, and view translations in Spanish.

### [M-STEP Video, Featuring Computer Adaptive Testing 4:20](#) (Available April 6, 2017)

This high quality video was first produced in 2016 and has been updated for Spring 2017. It provides the viewer with an understanding on the connection between state standards, career- and college-readiness and state assessments. The video also explains Computer Adaptive Testing (CAT) and how it provides more precise information on student learning and growth.

## STUDENT LEADERSHIP TEAM

Recently our student leadership team as well as a few other students in the building partnered with Maureen Ouvry, Director of Food Services, to taste test several items being considered as future additions to the middle school lunch menu. Mrs. Ouvry received valuable feedback from the students, and the students had a great time trying out new foods and making recommendations of what they would like to eat at school in the future.

## ATHLETIC PHYSICALS

**Reminder:** All athletes are required by the Michigan High School Athletic Association (MHSAA) to have a valid sports physical along with emergency information on file in the school before they are allowed to tryout or participate in an interscholastic sport. A current-year physical is one given on or after April 15 of the previous school year.

**Additional Reminder:** Dates for getting your child an athletic physical required for participation for the 2017-18 school year have been scheduled in the gym at Vicksburg Middle School on the following dates:

May 23 - GIRLS - 8 to 10 am - \$15

May 25—BOYS - 8 to 10 am—\$15

## 8TH GRADE CEDAR POINT TRIP

The date has been set for Friday, June 16 for our annual 8th grade Cedar Point trip. More details will be coming including cost, departure and pick-up times, need for parent chaperones, and eligibility requirements for your child in being able to attend this trip.

## STUDENT-STAFF CONNECTIONS

Last year our staff, through a perception survey, identified an area that we should focus on and target for improvement. The area was staff and student connections. Dennis Kirby, VMS assistant principal, organized an ad-hoc committee to begin addressing this focus of improvement identified by our staff and students. It was determined by the committee that our first step is to get a true sense of which staff members our students feel connected to and to whom they feel comfortable enough with to share their life's successes and challenges. In the next couple of weeks, we will be piloting a method in which to get this information from all of our current 6th and 7th grade students. Trying this out now will provide us valuable information to work out the kinks before engaging in this process again next year in October for all middle school students. Our committee will continue to meet, look at the data, and develop strategies or solutions if needed, to make sure every student in our building has 1 adult in their life they feel comfortable talking to.

## STAFF VS STUDENTS BASKETBALL GAME

For the 3rd marking period, we provided an incentive for our entire student body. If the student was passing all of their 3rd marking period classes (D– and above) and had received less than 11 days of suspension, he or she could participate in or watch the staff versus student basketball game held in the afternoon on Friday, March 24. Our students worked extremely hard in making sure all their assignments were handed in and they had positioned themselves to enjoy a fun afternoon with the staff and each other. It was a wonderful culture building opportunity! The game was highly contested, however, the staff pulled away towards the end of the game for the win. At halftime, students were randomly selected out of the stands to come down to the court to shoot a free throw. Making the free throw would earn the student a pick of an assortment of candy. It was great seeing so many students walking back up to the stands with candy and a smile!

## NEW ACCESS CONTROL SYSTEM

Our district's technology team is working on a new access control system for all exterior doors at VMS. We will be sending home a letter in the next few weeks describing the times that the exterior doors will be locked as well as the procedures for entering the building during the time that doors are locked.

## “AIR SOFT” GUNS

Air Soft guns and other similar toys can be a great source of enjoyment when used in the right places and circumstances. However, when used in inappropriate places and used to simulate working firearms they can become deadly. These types of guns are so realistic looking that law enforcement officers and others cannot tell them apart at a distance from the real thing. Due to the number of acts of violence in our state and nation in which students have become “active shooters”, law enforcement officials cannot afford to take many chances, and assume that these guns are “real”, sometimes with tragic results.

We cannot stress enough how important it is that young people are not allowed to have or use toy guns on school property. Further, they should not be used anywhere to shoot at bystanders or shot in public places as they could easily be mistaken.

We live in a world in which the best way to deal with tragedy is to prevent it from happening in the first place. We thank you for your help in keeping our kids and community safe.

## MILLAGE RENEWAL VOTE COMING UP MAY 2

An important vote for all Vicksburg families is coming up soon. It is a vote to renew for 3 years what is called the “Regional Enhancement Millage”. This millage, which was first passed 12 years ago, is at a rate of 1.5 mills. It costs the average household about 25 cents per day, yet raises about \$900,000 for the school district. The district invests these funds into staff and programs for helping Vicksburg students at all grade levels. Without this money, the district will need to make about \$900,000 in reductions to staff and programs.

More information on this millage can be found in the spring edition of The Red and White, the VCS website, or by calling the administration building at 269-321-1000.

# Vicksburg Middle School

## Class Schedule

6TH GRADE		7TH GRADE		8TH GRADE	
<b>ANNOUNCEMENTS</b>					
1ST HOUR	7:39-8:35	1ST HOUR	7:39-8:35	1ST HOUR	7:39-8:35
2ND HOUR	8:39-9:34	2ND HOUR	8:39-9:34	2ND HOUR	8:39-9:34
3RD HOUR	9:38-10:33	3RD HOUR	9:38-10:33	3RD HOUR	9:38-10:33
LUNCH	10:33-11:03	4TH HOUR	10:37-11:32	4TH HOUR	10:37-11:32
4TH HOUR	11:07-12:02				
5TH HOUR	12:06-1:01	LUNCH	11:32-12:02	5TH HOUR	11:36-12:31
		5TH HOUR	12:06-1:01	LUNCH	12:31-1:01
6TH HOUR	1:05-2:00	6TH HOUR	1:05-2:00	6TH HOUR	1:05-2:00
AR	2:04-2:29	AR	2:04-2:29	AR	2:04-2:29

# Vicksburg Middle School

## Varied Schedule

<b>2 HOUR DELAY</b>								
6TH GRADE			7TH GRADE			8TH GRADE		
Time		Period	Time		Period	Time		Period
9:39	10:15	1st Hour	9:39	10:15	1st Hour	9:39	10:15	1st Hour
10:19	10:54	2nd Hour	10:19	10:54	2nd Hour	10:19	10:54	2nd Hour
10:58	11:33	3rd Hour	10:58	11:33	3rd Hour	10:58	11:33	3rd Hour
11:33	12:03	Lunch	11:37	12:12	4th Hour	11:37	12:12	4th Hour
12:07	12:42	4th Hour	12:12	12:42	Lunch	12:16	12:51	5th Hour
12:46	1:21	5th Hour	12:46	1:21	5th Hour	12:51	1:21	Lunch
1:25	2:00	6th Hour	1:25	2:00	6th Hour	1:25	2:00	6th Hour
2:04	2:29	AR	2:04	2:29	AR	2:04	2:29	AR

35 minute classes

<b>MS ASSEMBLY SCHEDULE</b>								
6TH GRADE			7TH GRADE			8TH GRADE		
Time		Period	Time		Period	Time		Period
7:39	8:20	1st Hour	7:39	8:20	1st Hour	7:39	8:20	1st Hour
8:24	9:05	2nd Hour	8:24	9:05	2nd Hour	8:24	9:05	2nd Hour
9:09	9:50	3rd Hour	9:09	9:50	3rd Hour	9:09	9:50	3rd Hour
9:50	10:20	Lunch	9:54	10:35	4th Hour	9:54	10:35	4th Hour
10:24	11:05	4th Hour	10:35	11:05	Lunch	10:39	11:20	5th Hour
11:09	11:50	5th Hour	11:09	11:50	5th Hour	11:20	11:50	Lunch
11:54	12:35	6th Hour	11:54	12:35	6th Hour	11:54	12:35	6th Hour
12:39	1:06	AR	12:39	1:06	AR	12:39	1:06	AR
1:10	2:29	Assembly	1:10	2:29	Assembly	1:10	2:29	Assembly

41 minute classes

