

Bobcat Tales

Whiteford Agricultural Schools
6655 Consear Road
Ottawa Lake, MI 49267

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Whiteford School District
Ottawa Lake, MI 49267



2020 – 2021 SCHOOL HOURS / CALENDAR

Building	Starting Time	Ending Time	Early Dismissal Time
Elementary	7:55 AM	3:10 PM	11:10 AM
Middle/High School.....	7:55 AM	2:55 PM	11:00 AM

Sept. 2 Student Orientation
(Schedule by building)

Sept. 8 First Day of School
(students report at Noon)

Oct. 30 NO SCHOOL

Nov. 12-13 EARLY DISMISSAL

Nov. 25 EARLY DISMISSAL

Nov. 26-27 NO SCHOOL
(Thanksgiving Break)

Dec. 22 EARLY DISMISSAL

Dec. 23-
Jan. 1 NO SCHOOL
(Christmas / Winter Break)

Jan. 13 EARLY DISMISSAL

Jan. 18 NO SCHOOL
(Martin Luther King, Jr. Day)

Jan. 22 EARLY DISMISSAL

Feb. 15 NO SCHOOL

Mar. 17 EARLY DISMISSAL

Apr. 1 EARLY DISMISSAL

Apr. 2-9 NO SCHOOL
(Spring Break)

April 13 STATE TESTING DAY
..... NO SCHOOL K-7, 12

May 31 NO SCHOOL
(Memorial Day)

June 11* EARLY DISMISSAL
(Last day of school)

*pending weather delays/closings

* Parents are reminded that additional days may be added to the school year should we exceed our state limitation on number of days/ hours cancelled or delayed during the school year.

Food Pantry Dates / Hours

Crossroads Church

1st Thursday of Month
4:30 PM—6:30 PM

St. Michael Lutheran Church

2nd Saturday of Month
10 AM—11 AM

Zion Lutheran Church

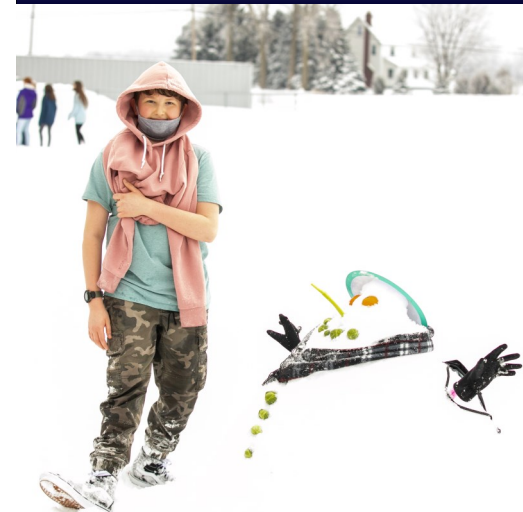
2nd/4th Tuesday of Month
10 AM—12 PM

WHITEFORD AGRICULTURAL SCHOOLS Bobcat Tales

This newsletter is also available on the district's website: www.whiteford.k12.mi.us

April 2021

DO YOU WANT TO BUILD A SNOWMAN?!!



On Friday, February 19th, the Whiteford Middle & High School students participated in an exciting snowman building contest. With the pandemic having dampened so many student activities this year, and with moods being a bit heavy throughout these challenging times, Whiteford's administration and staff thought it was high time the students were able to get back in touch with the lighter side of student life! In these uncertain times, one thing remains unquestionable: Whiteford students and staff still know how to have fun, and here are some pictures to prove it!





*Superintendent
of Schools*
VALERIE ORR

Board of Education

President
Tracy Malhoit

Vice President
Dave Dixon

Secretary
Christine Bischoff

Treasurer
Shane Hillard

Trustees
Mike Iott
Kristi Mock
Janelle Young

Upcoming
Board of
Education Meetings
7:00 PM

April 12
May 10
June 14

**District
Mission / Vision**

*Engaged ...
in our learning
Encouraged ...
by our community
Empowered ...
for our world*

We are Whiteford!

SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE...

Dear Bobcat Family,

One year ago this month, we were beginning a journey unlike anything we have ever experienced. As I reflect upon the previous year, I can't help but to feel extremely proud of everything our little district has accomplished. We are just a few short months away from completing this school year and have been able to offer in-person instruction to our students the majority of the year. Comparing ourselves to similar districts throughout the state, this is a major accomplishment and something we should never take for granted. It hasn't been easy, but it has been well worth it. Our partnership with parents and our drive to put students first has allowed us to persevere through many challenges. Again, I thank parents, staff, and students for working together to get us this far into the school year with minimal temporary closures.

We are not at the finish line yet, and we need to keep working hard to make sure our students are able to come to school for in-person learning. I am imploring parents to NOT send students to school if they are sick, or if anyone in the household is being tested for COVID. A little patience can help us a great deal. I have heard many stories of parents in surrounding school districts sending their children to school even though someone in the household is being tested for COVID. This behavior has led to entire classrooms of students being quarantined because the student ended up positive as well. When I hear these stories, I am extremely grateful for our parents and for the many phone calls I have received asking what they should do when faced with different scenarios. Our parents' willingness to call us and do the right thing has made all the difference. Please keep temperature checking your children in the morning, keep calling us when you are unsure what to do, and keep praying that we will be able to finish the school year in-person while also being able to host graduation and other events that are important to our seniors.

Thank you again for your support. Together we will put our children first!

Sincerely,

Valerie Orr

Valerie Orr
Superintendent

Counseling Corner SUBMITTED BY JENNIFER HEAD & LAUREN EHMAN

TIPS FOR STANDARDIZED TESTING

- ♦ Read all instructions thoroughly including passage introductions. They give you a better understanding of the context of the passage.
- ♦ Read questions thoroughly. Many students have the tendency to skip over important details because they are going too quickly.
- ♦ Answer the easiest questions first, then come back. This helps you move through the test faster and not remain stuck on one question for too long.
- ♦ Eliminate the obviously wrong choices to narrow down your options.
- ♦ Pace yourself.
- ♦ Get a good night's rest the night before the test.
- ♦ Eat a healthy breakfast the morning of the test.
- ♦ Leave your nerves at the door and just do your very best!



FACTS about the Monroe County Educational Technology Renewal and the May 4, 2021 Election



WHO IS CONDUCTING THE MAY 4TH MILLAGE RENEWAL ELECTION?

As required by state law, the local Boards of Education for the nine public school districts, the Monroe County ISD, and the two charter schools, throughout Monroe County have requested that the Monroe County Intermediate School District's Board of Education conduct this election to seek renewal of the county-wide millage for educational technology initiatives that support curriculum goals in the schools, across all grades K-12.



HOW ARE THE FUNDS DISTRIBUTED?

Following the election, the monies generated by the millage will be distributed to these local school districts: Airport Community Schools, Bedford Public Schools, Dundee Community Schools, Ida Public Schools, Jefferson Schools, Mason Consolidated Schools, Monroe County ISD, Monroe Public Schools, New Bedford Academy, Summerfield Schools, Triumph Academy, and Whiteford Agricultural Schools, based on each district's K-12 student population.



WHY IS THE MAY 4TH VOTE A COUNTY-WIDE ELECTION?

State law mandates that only intermediate school districts are allowed to place regional enhancement millages on the ballot for voter consideration. Since 1997, local school districts have been unable to approach the public for regional enhancement operating millages at the district level. This is a county-wide election because, by law, that is the only option.



IS THIS A NEW TAX? WHAT IS THE AMOUNT BEING REQUESTED?

This is NOT a new tax; it is a **renewal** request. Since it is a renewal, our local property taxes will NOT increase. This request for renewal amounts to .9866 mill for five years, which represents .9866 cents of taxes for every \$1,000 of taxable value on a home. [Each home has its taxable value. For instance, a home with a taxable value of \$ 100,000 would provide \$98.66 per year for educational technology.] The renewal request is for slightly LESS than 1 mill.



WHEN IS THE ELECTION? WHO CAN VOTE ON THIS PROPOSAL?

The election will be held on **Tuesday, May 4, 2021**. Polling places will be open from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m., and mail-in ballots will be available 45 days prior to the election. All persons who are at least 18 years of age, who are residents of Monroe County school districts, and who are registered voters can vote on the issue.



HOW WILL THE MILLAGE MONEY BE USED IN OUR SCHOOLS?

Millage dollars are designated solely for educational technology, related staffing, and services, and cannot be used for any other expenses. Technology opens the way for fundamental structural changes that can be essential to achieving significant improvements in productivity in both teaching and learning. Technology infuses classrooms with digital learning tools, such as computers and handheld devices; expands course offerings, experiences, and learning materials; supports learning 24 hours a day, 7 days a week; builds 21st-century skills; increases student engagement and motivation; and accelerates learning. Technology can transform teaching by providing resources to help teachers improve their instruction and personalize learning. Recently, online learning opportunities and the use of open educational technology resources have proven to be necessary and valuable for students and teachers.

THE PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICTS OF MONROE COUNTY

- AIRPORT COMMUNITY SCHOOLS
- BEDFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
- DUNDEE COMMUNITY SCHOOLS
- IDA PUBLIC SCHOOLS
- JEFFERSON SCHOOLS
- MASON CONSOLIDATED SCHOOLS
- MONROE COUNTY ISD
- MONROE PUBLIC SCHOOLS
- NEW BEDFORD ACADEMY
- SUMMERFIELD SCHOOLS
- TRIUMPH ACADEMY
- WHITEFORD AGRICULTURAL SCHOOLS

*The official proposition language
that will appear on the ballot on
Tuesday, May 4, 2021:*

REGIONAL ENHANCEMENT MILLAGE RENEWAL PROPOSAL

This proposal will allow the intermediate school district to continue to levy regional enhancement millage that will expire with the 2021 levy. Pursuant to state law, the revenue raised by the proposed millage will be collected by the intermediate school district and distributed to the constituent districts of the intermediate school district based on pupil membership count.

Shall the limitation on the amount of taxes which may be assessed against all property in Monroe County Intermediate School District, Michigan, be renewed by .9866 mill (\$0.9866 on each \$1,000 of taxable valuation) for a period of 5 years, 2022 to 2026, inclusive, to provide operating funds to enhance other state and local funding for constituent district technology purposes and related expenses; the estimate of the revenue the intermediate school district will collect if the millage is approved and levied in 2022 is approximately \$6,151,499, which funds are expected to be disbursed as required by statute to Airport Community Schools, Bedford Public Schools, Dundee Community Schools, Ida Public Schools, Jefferson Schools, Mason Consolidated Schools, Monroe Public Schools, Summerfield Schools, Whiteford Agricultural School District, New Bedford Academy, Triumph Academy, and Monroe County Intermediate School District (this is a renewal of millage which will expire with the 2021 levy)?

DO YOU HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT THIS INFORMATION?

Please call **Steve McNew**,
MCISD Superintendent
at **734-322-2610**

PRODUCED BY THE MCISD
COMMUNICATIONS OFFICE.

ACADEMICS REPORT

SUBMITTED BY JASON MENSING, DIRECTOR OF STUDENT ADVANCEMENT

When students return from spring break, spring state testing will be underway. This testing is required by the State of Michigan and is for all students including those who have chosen remote learning this year. Many are concerned about testing due to the challenging impact Covid-19 has had on the learning process over the past year; nevertheless, these tests are very important as the instructional staff uses the information it receives from them to help identify necessary areas of focus for instruction moving forward. There is no question that the pandemic has affected all our students at varying levels, and using the data from the test results will allow us to more specifically identify gaps and weaknesses that we can address through our built-in interventions, like our W.I.N. and Reasoning Skills courses. Below is a reminder of key testing dates:

Tuesday, April 13: PSAT/SAT for 8, 9, 10, and 11th graders; NO SCHOOL FOR ALL OTHER STUDENTS

Wednesday, April 14: Start of M-Step for 3rd-5th grade students; WorkKeys for 11th grade students

Tuesday, April 20: Start of M-Step for 8th and 11th grade students



Whiteford Elementary School Kindergarten Round Up By Appointment Only



Elementary Cafeteria
Wed., April 14, 4:00 - 7:00 pm
Thurs., April 15, 8:30 - 11:00 am

Please check the Whiteford School website for more details, or call the Elementary Office with questions:
734-856-1443 ext. 110

VARSITY & JV BOYS BASKETBALL RECAP

SUBMITTED BY VARSITY COACH NICK ABALOS & JV COACH DAVID DeVANTIER

VARSITY — This has been an interesting year to say the least. We were very happy to have the opportunity to actually practice and play some games. Early on, it was a great feeling to be 2-0. We let one slip against Dundee and then went into a 10-day quarantine (2-1). It took us a couple games to get back in the swing of things. The athletes practiced hard and always had a good attitude. We proved to ourselves and our opponents that we can run with anyone in the league. We had Mason (league champs) down 10 points in the 3rd quarter. It was fun to beat a good Adrian Madison team twice on buzzer beaters! First from Luke Rasor, and second from Shea Ruddy.

We wanted to use this awkward season as a chance to grow. We have a unique situation where there are no seniors on the team (Luke Masserant would have been a senior and 3rd year varsity player but his torn ACL left him out). So our focus day in and day out was to get better, take steps forward, and build a winning program. I am extremely proud of what this team has accomplished and look forward to Districts, off season workouts, and ultimately next year working with the same group and adding some younger guys!

JV — The JV Basketball season was a grind. The team ended the season with a record of 9-4. We really found our groove in the last 2-3 weeks of the season. The final two games of the year we had great team wins vs Summerfield and Madison.

Lincoln Joerin did a great job leading the team as our point guard and getting in passing lanes on the defensive end. Hunter DeBarr played phenomenal defense throughout the season and was our leading scorer. Kolby Masserant rained some threes against Summerfield that gave us a lead that we didn't look back on. Jake Iott was our second leading scorer and played good defense throughout the season. Noah Stevens did a great job controlling the glass at both ends of the court and spreading the floor with elbow jumpers. Ryn Ruddy was a lockdown defender and our leading scorer coming off the bench. Addison Donnelly gave the team solid minutes off the bench as back up point guard and was one of the teams best free throw shooters. Dylan Anderson played outstanding defense coming off the bench and took good care of the ball on offense. Casey Brady was an impressive shooter and passer and helped with scoring off the bench. Liam Waterford led the team in made three pointers and improved his defense immensely by the end of the season. Jack Iott was a great back up center and the best post defender on the team, he was always in the right spots on defense. Jacob Henry contributed solid minutes off the bench and played good post defense.

I am very proud of this team. They didn't shy away from the adversities of the season and strived to finish strong. Not only are they great basketball players, but they are even better people.

FFA NEWS

SUBMITTED BY EMMA SPRADLING & JAKE GUST

FFA members have been busy in the greenhouse planting flowers, seeding plug trays, propagating new plants, learning about different plant species, as well as fertilizing and other general plant care. Students in Mr. Gust's Horticulture class share planting responsibilities with the two greenhouse W.I.N. classes and Mrs. Vittore's Ag. Explore class.

The Whiteford FFA Greenhouse will **open on May 3rd and will operate weekdays from 9 a.m. until 6 p.m. and weekends from 9 a.m. until 3 p.m.** They will offer a wide variety of flowers and vegetables in patio planters, hanging baskets, hanging bags, 4" pots, and flats.

Below are some pictures of our FFA members' work this spring!



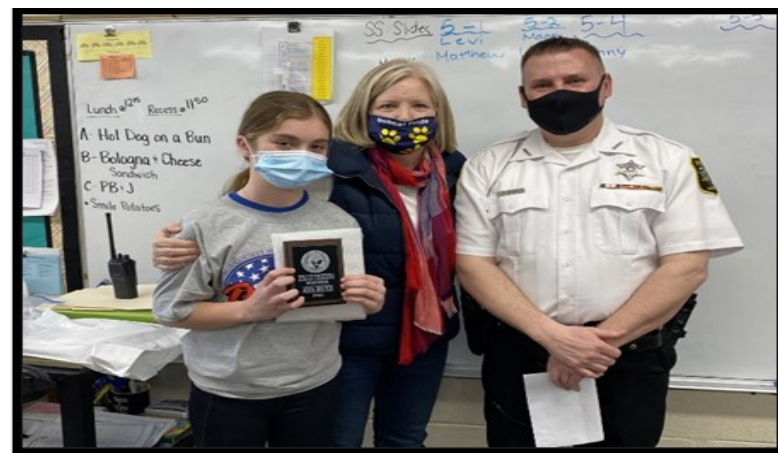
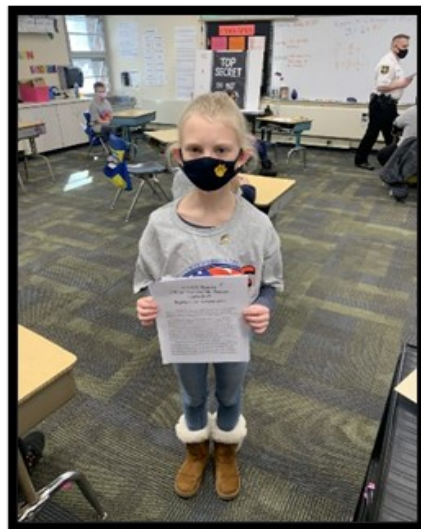
D.A.R.E. GRADUATION!

SUBMITTED BY ELEMENTARY PRINCIPAL MICHAEL SHEPHERD



On Thursday, February 25, Deputy Mike Bomia, our School Resource Officer, led our Whiteford 5th grade students through their DARE Graduation Ceremony which was a little bit different than our usual program. Since we are not able to have visitors in the building or gather in large groups for assemblies, Deputy Bomia provided pizza for all of the students and teachers, and each individual classroom held their own ceremony. The DARE program has been a part of the fifth grade curriculum for over fifteen years, and the material that is provided for the students gives them information, facts, and strategies to learn and allows them to practice making good decisions, while teaching them tactics to help cope with the many challenges they may be faced with in their lives.

Students need to complete each of the weekly lessons that include role playing activities, important discussions involving making difficult decisions, and how to handle tough situations. They also have to write an essay explaining what they learned from their DARE experience.



The essay award winners who were given the opportunity to read their essays to their classmates were: Jameson Babcock, Harlow Jurgenson, Brody Masters, George Thompson, and Rory Vida. There were also Spirit Awards given to students who showed a positive attitude throughout the course of study, and those students were: Sadia Hamid, Nathan Schumacher, and Kallie Shingleton.

Additionally, Whiteford Elementary School presents a very special award to one student who demonstrates integrity, leadership, compassion, and kindness. This is the Keith Dressel Award. This tribute has been given every year since 2007 to honor Officer Keith Dressel, who was killed in the line of duty, and was a former Whiteford Bobcat student. His mother, Lorraine Dressel, was also a teacher and employee for many years. This year's deserving

One School, One Book! "Almost Super"

SUBMITTED BY ELEMENTARY PRINCIPAL MICHAEL SHEPHERD



March is National Reading Month, and every year Whiteford elementary students have the opportunity to participate in special events and activities to promote reading. This year was no different as our "One Book, One School" reading program was put into action once again! This special month was kicked off with a week of story clues announced every day to get the kids excited about the book that they would get to read.

On Monday, March 1, each classroom teacher was able to give a presentation to reveal the book title and pass out a book for every student. They also received a couple of bookmarks, and a calendar of the activities for the month were explained.

The main theme of our story this year was "Superheroes." The main characters of the story



work together to show kindness and caring toward others. Throughout the month, students were able to win prizes that included a chance to read to Derby, our therapy dog, choose another Super Hero book that helps promote reading and our theme, win a super hero comic book writing leaflet, and also participate in a Super Hero Day!

Additionally, students were encouraged to read or listen to each of the audio chapters posted on our website and answer daily questions about the story that came on the morning announcements. This month of reading celebration and activities help to promote reading and literacy. It was a fun and exciting time that we will continue to build upon, and we encourage all students and their families to work together with us as we continue to develop and encourage the love of reading!



How to CONTACT Us

MAIN PHONE

734.856.1443

PHONE PROMPTS

- 4 Elementary Office
- 5 MS/HS Office
- Athletic Dept.
- 6 Transportation Superintendent/ Business Office/ Maintenance

ADMINISTRATION / SUPPORT SERVICES

**Superintendent/
Interim MS/HS
Principal**
Valerie "Val" Orr
ext. 401

Elementary Principal
Michael Shepherd
ext. 110

**Director of Student
Advancement/AD**
Jason Mensing
ext. 109

**Elementary
Counselor**
Lauren Ehman
Ext. 309

**Dean of Student
Services/Career
Coach**
Ken Groch
ext. 122

MS/HS Counselor
Jennifer Head
ext. 102

**Director of Transportation,
Buildings &
Grounds**
Charlie Butz
ext. 401

**Chief Financial
Officer**
Michelle Strick
ext. 106

OFFICE FAXES

Elementary Office
734-856-4724

MS/HS Office
734-856-2564

**Superintendent /
Business Office**
734-854-6463

ALWAYS MORE TO CHEER ABOUT!

SUBMITTED BY COACH KIM DeSILVIS

Our Varsity Cheer Team had a great season despite the limited practice time available due to Covid shut-downs and restrictions. The team of ten girls included seven freshmen and was led by Senior Captain, Morgan Olrich. The girls were able to “wow” the crowd and lead the fans at games by incorporating stunts, gymnastics, and props into their cheers. The Bobcat Cheer Team added true spark to home basketball games. With such a young team, prepare to be amazed at their performances in the future. Great work girls!



ATHLETICS REPORT

SUBMITTED BY JASON MENSING, ATHLETIC DIRECTOR

In this year of delays, pauses, and cancellations we are really excited that the Spring sports season is starting with only a one-week delay! This spring is especially exciting for us as we are opening our new track and field facility. Whiteford student athletes will be able to run “at home” for the first time since 2008. We are extremely thankful to our community and the support of the bond issue for allowing this opportunity for our students. Mike Hughes will return as our head track and field coach, while Chris Thomas will be working with our middle school track athletes. Terry Pant returns as our head varsity baseball coach; he has had a great run as our coach including being the first coach to win 4 consecutive Tri County Conference championships. R.J. Rios will be serving as his assistant and head JV baseball coach. Finally, Matt VanBrandt was named head softball coach prior to last season but unfortunately, we weren't able to play any games due to Covid-19. This year Matt will be assisted by our new 5th grade teacher, Peyton Foster. We are extremely optimistic for a great spring sport season. With all our sports teams competing outdoors and having limited to no contact, we have been led to believe the risk of Covid transmission is very low. Ideally, this will lead to a season that seems more normal for our student athletes, which will greatly impact their social-emotional wellness. The pandemic has been a tremendous strain on all of us, and we believe this spring sports season will be an opportunity for us to take another step back to normality.



SUBMITTED BY RYAN DUBENDORFER

Baseball and softball registrations were recently collected, and we are in the process of creating teams for each age group. You should expect to hear something soon from coaches.

There has been some confusion regarding girls softball due to a spring travel team (unaffiliated with WRC) that formed, the MI Bobcats. This team runs 2nd through 8th grade and starts at the end of March and plays through early May. The WRC league will start practices the week of April 12 for 10U and 12U. The 6U and 8U teams will start April 26. Games will start the week of May 24 and be done the week of June 28. The WRC season will begin as the MI Bobcats season comes to an end so there is no issue playing for both teams if you choose.

We also want to thank all businesses and individuals that sponsored WRC by purchasing a banner. Banners will be hung at Stoneco Park from mid-April through end of June. If you had purchased a banner last year, your banner will be displayed free of charge this year due to last season being canceled. Also, a huge thank you to Lambertville Mini Storage who donated a storage unit to the WRC for storing our baseball and softball gear during the off-season! The WRC appreciates everyone's support! Please follow us at <https://www.facebook.com/WhitefordRec>.

ATHLETIC BOOSTER NEWS

Kroger Community Rewards Program

If you are not currently supporting an organization through the Kroger Community Rewards Program, please take a few minutes to register today and help support Bobcat athletics. Go to www.kroger.com, log into your account and follow the links to the Community Rewards page. Select organization number **PV787** as the donation recipient. Remember, this is free money and will not affect your fuel points!

WHITEFORD PARENTS ASSOCIATION (WPA) NEWS

SUBMITTED BY JACLYN WARREN

Happy spring! We hope the sunshine and warmer weather is helping put everyone in good spirits and get ready for summer.... who can believe we are turning the corner to the end of the school year already?! The WPA is still busy behind the scenes, doing what we can to help make school even better for students and staff. Believe it or not, we have already started brainstorming for next school year!

WPA meetings via Zoom took some getting used to, but now we're kind of enjoying meeting with our group from the comfort of our own homes (or wherever we want to be!). Meetings are a lot of fun, and we would love to have a few more parents or grandparents join us each month!

***Follow us on Facebook-simply search for Whiteford Parents' Association! You can also email us at whiteford.parents@gmail.com. This year, it will be extra-important to stay connected with us via email or Facebook, so you can get the link to the monthly Zoom meetings (held on the 3rd Tuesday of every month). Already following us? Please invite your Whiteford friends to like our WPA page, too!



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TRACK & FIELD RIBBON CUTTING CEREMONY

PICTURES SUBMITTED BY SCHOOL PHOTOGRAPHER MRS. NATALIE MCCORMACK



Whiteford Agricultural Schools will, at long last, be able to host a “home” track meet for the first time since 2008! On Friday, March 19th, the entire Whiteford staff and student body, along with the current track & field coaches, joined together in celebrating the official opening of our new Whiteford Community Track & Field during an exciting and memorable ribbon cutting ceremony. Our incredibly talented marching band, led by the masterful Mr. David Welling, kicked off the celebration by playing some popular tunes which put everyone in festive spirits. Next, our equally talented choir performed under the direction of the legendary Mr. Todd Schreiber, adding to the celebratory mood. When the hoopla quieted, Superintendent & Interim MS/HS Prin-

cipal, Mrs. Valerie Orr, addressed the crowd, then led them in a countdown to cut the ribbon and officially open the track for the 2021 spring sport season. As a result of all the time and effort spent on making this dream a reality for track athletes, coaches, and community members alike, Mr. Charlie Butz, Director of Transportation & Buildings and Grounds, was awarded the distinct honor to cut through the ribbon with the festive, over-sized ceremonial scissors. Alongside Mr. Butz stood the Junior and Senior Class track athletes who not only helped hold the ribbon, but also held a pair of smaller scissors which they used to make cuts of their own; some even decided to keep the small piece they cut as a memento of this special occasion. After the shiny gold ribbon fell to the ground and the cheering subsided, Mrs. Orr invited every class, K-12, to participate in running a victory lap around the track. This long-awaited, thrilling event lit a fire in our hearts that even the blustery Whiteford wind could not extinguish! GO BOBCATS!!

