



# SPARTAN INFORMER

## Valley View Local School District

### Watch Out for Watch D.O.G.S. On Patrol

No, you won't see any four-legged, furry friends at VVSD buildings in the 2019-2020 school year, but you might see some friendly two-legged Watch D.O.G.S. helping with drop-off/pickup, in the lunchroom or in the classroom.

Starting in the fall 2019, we will be implementing an exciting new program for grades K-6 called Watch D.O.G.S. (Dads of Great Students), which provides in-school volunteer opportunities for fathers and father figures of Valley View students. Through this nationally recognized program, volunteers will assist with a variety of tasks inside and outside the classroom, giving male family members a chance to positively impact students' academic performance, self-esteem and social behavior.

Year after year, research shows that positive male role models—whether it's dad, grandpa or uncle—play a vital role in a child's success in school. In our community, we have many wonderful dads and father figures who take an active role in our students' success, and we want to provide the opportunity for many more to participate, as well.

The best part about the program is students. Schools and volunteers are all impacted through participation. School districts see reduced bullying and enhanced security through the presence of Watch D.O.G.S. volunteers, students gain the presence of positive male role models and volunteers get a glimpse into the students' world and the challenges they face. In fact, many volunteers even sign up for additional days after participating!

If you or one of your family members are interested in participating in this program next school year, we welcome your involvement! We will be communicating more about the program, including information about when and where to sign up, in future editions of this newsletter as well as by email over the coming months.



### Upcoming Events

- May 6 - Senior Signing Day, 12:50 at the High School
- May 7 - Intermediate & Junior High Band Concert, 6:00 at the Junior High
- May 7 - General Election
- May 13 - Board of Education Meeting, 6:00 in the High School Choir Room
- May 14 - High School Choir & Symphonic Band Concert, 6:00 at the High School
- May 14 - Freshman Orientation - Class of 2023, 6:00 at the High School
- May 21 - Commencement Practice, 12:00 Princeton Pike Church of God
- May 21 - Class of 2019 Commencement, 7:00 Princeton Pike Church of God
- May 23 - Last day of school
- May 27 - Memorial Day
- June 3 - Board of Education Meeting, 6:00 in the High School Choir Room
- July 8 - Board of Education Meeting, 6:00 in the High School Choir Room

All concerts are open to the public. Please come support our talented students.

### Alumni Spotlight Spencer Izor

Spencer is currently living in Germantown with her wife and 3 boys. Since graduating in 2000, Spencer completed her B.S. in Sports Management in 2004, received her M. Ed. in Education Policy & Leadership in 2008, then in 2012 she finished her education at the University of Dayton with her J.D. in Law. Spencer is currently working on her Ph. D. at Miami University in Educational Leadership. She is also employed at Miami University as the Development Officer, helping to raise money for scholarships and to support the University.

## Stay informed with Valley View!

- Website** - [www.ValleyView.k12.oh.us](http://www.ValleyView.k12.oh.us) contains a great deal of information on Valley View, including access to Progress Book, board minutes, calendars, lunch menus and committee information.
- Social Media** - Facebook @Valley View Local Schools, Twitter @ValleyViewSupt or @VVSpartansAD
- ListServe** - Go to our district website to sign up for important emails.
- Board Meetings** - Meetings for 2018 will take place the 2nd Monday of each month in the High School Choir Room, 6027 Farmersville Pike. The meetings begin at 6:00 p.m. Changes and Special Meetings will be noted on website calendar.
- Coffee Talks** - Come talk to Superintendent, Mr. Richards the third Wednesday of every month at either Center Street Cafe in Farmersville at 9:30 am or at Elwood's Creamery in Germantown at 6:30 pm.

### District Administration

**Ben Richards**  
Superintendent  
[ben.richards@valleyview.oh.k12.us](mailto:ben.richards@valleyview.oh.k12.us)

**Laura Sauber**  
Treasurer  
[laura.sauber@valleyview.k12.oh.us](mailto:laura.sauber@valleyview.k12.oh.us)

**Todd Kozarec**  
High School Principal  
[todd.kozarec@valleyview.k12.oh.us](mailto:todd.kozarec@valleyview.k12.oh.us)

**Nichole Thomas**  
Junior High Principal  
[nichole.thomas@valleyview.k12.oh.us](mailto:nichole.thomas@valleyview.k12.oh.us)

**Bill Lauson**  
Intermediate Principal  
[bill.lauson@valleyview.k12.oh.us](mailto:bill.lauson@valleyview.k12.oh.us)

**Lindsey Schmidt**  
Primary Principal  
[lindsey.schmidt@valleyview.k12.oh.us](mailto:lindsey.schmidt@valleyview.k12.oh.us)

### Board of Education

**Angie Valenti**  
President  
[angie.valenti@valleyview.oh.k12.us](mailto:angie.valenti@valleyview.oh.k12.us)

**Elliot Boyd**  
Vice President  
[elliot.boyd@valleyview.k12.oh.us](mailto:elliot.boyd@valleyview.k12.oh.us)

**Jenny Michael**  
Member  
[jenny.michael@valleyview.k12.oh.us](mailto:jenny.michael@valleyview.k12.oh.us)

**Tom Geglein**  
Member  
[tom.geglein@valleyview.k12.oh.us](mailto:tom.geglein@valleyview.k12.oh.us)

**Mark Cline**  
Member  
[mark.cline@valleyview.k12.oh.us](mailto:mark.cline@valleyview.k12.oh.us)

Spring 2019

### A College Grad Graduates High School at Valley View

... Yes, you read that correctly.

Throughout elementary school, Emily Helmers never felt like she was a very good student. "I spent most of my time thinking I would never really amount to anything because my standardized test scores weren't high enough," says Helmers. But by the end of her eight grade year, her confidence in her abilities as a student had begun to flourish—and it showed. In the fall of 2015, she was placed in all honors courses by her teachers—a distinction she was both proud of and motivated by.

### High School Funding Gives Students Opportunities to Rise Higher

That same year, Ohio created College Credit Plus (CCP), a dual-enrollment program designed to enhance 7-12 grade students' career readiness and postsecondary success. Funded in part by school districts' yearly operating expenses, CCP gives students the opportunity to take college courses at Ohio universities at little to no cost to them or their families. Students in the program are held to a high standard to even be eligible for enrollment. They must prove college readiness through a rigorous assessment exam as well as hold a GPA of 3.0 or higher. Universities must also deem them eligible for enrollment based on the selectiveness of their own admissions process, which can vary widely by school.

### A Father's Unwavering Support

Undaunted by rigorous acceptance requirements and feeling a confidence in her academic ability, Emily applied for CCP admission at Miami University's Middletown (MUM) campus and was accepted. Because high schools cannot provide transportation for students who participate in CCP and Emily was only 14 when she enrolled, her father, Greg Helmers, drove her between the MUM campus and Valley View High School five days a week for two years. In fact, Helmers credits her father as playing a large part in her academic success—far beyond simply driving her to and from school. "There were many days where we would sit and talk for hours about the material I was covering in classes and discuss our own ideas as it related to the various topics," she says.

*"I spent most of my time thinking I would never really amount to anything because my standardized test scores weren't high enough"*

In the fall of 2017, however, that all changed when her father was diagnosed with stage 4 pancreatic cancer. While treatment made him tired and weak, he was able to attend her graduation from MUM with her Associate of Science. Sadly in April of 2018, he passed away.

While many other teens would have struggled to maintain this intense workload even under normal conditions, Helmers didn't let losing a parent deter the hard work and plans she had made.

*continued on page 2*



continued from page 1

A little over a year after her father's passing, Emily Helmers will walk across the stage to receive first her Bachelor of Science in Political Science from Miami University and then one week later her high school diploma from Valley View School District.

**The Road Ahead**

In the fall of 2019, she will continue her educational journey at the University of Dayton in their Master's program in Educational Leadership, which she hopes to follow with a Ph.D. in Educational Policy or a related field. "Education is something I'm truly passionate about," she says.

"Given my past experience with standardized testing, college, high school, and everything in between, I plan to use the next few years as stepping stones to start my own organization for education reform," she says. She hopes to pair educational policymakers with teachers to ensure policies are as effective as possible for both the student and the teacher to improve the learning experience for everyone across the country.

**Advice from a Master**

When asked for advice she would give students considering CCP as an avenue for gaining higher education credit, Helmers sounds like an educator already.

"I would say to first consider your learning style. If you need constant guidance to get your work done, maybe wait a year. If you're self-motivated and getting As and BS in school, maybe start off slow and take one or two classes. If the program is something that works well for you, meet with your college academic advisor very closely because their job is to help you—and if they are anything like my advisor was, you won't regret it."

It's clear Ms. Helmers is going to achieve great things in her academic and professional careers, and we're proud to call this soon-to-be Miami alumna a Spartan as well!



**More Communication, Less Stress, Less Expenses**

Emails from teachers. Automated calls for school closings and announcements. Papers sent home about picture day and lunch fee reminders. Add on top of all that, helping with nightly homework and you can understand why it's overwhelming as a parent to stay on top of school events and responsibilities.

But starting with next school year, Valley View parents will have a little help with one of these painful issues, at least. We're excited to share that Valley View School District will be replacing [One Call?] with Parent Square—a platform that streamlines an entire district's communication. From permission slip, volunteer opportunity and conference sign-ups to absence, lunch balance and school closing notifications, parents will be able to quickly receive and consume information in the way that fits their communication needs.

As a district, we're looking forward to making communication easier with a more comprehensive system that is less expensive than our current communication system. Watch for more in-depth messages about Parent Square over the summer!



**One Gateway Means Less Paperwork For Parents**

While we're not quite done with the current school year, before you know it parents will be asked to fill out registration for the upcoming year, the summer will come to an end and administrators will attempt to dig out from the piles of paperwork. But not anymore!

Starting this fall, Valley View School District will use Registration Gateway to streamline the yearly enrollment registration process. Parents of new students will fill out information and upload documentation all through the gateway, and parents of returning students will simply make changes to existing information or click a single button to indicate that no changes are needed.

By adding this resource, we're saving parents time and reducing the district's costs related to non-classroom-related tasks. The gateway also reduces the incidences of student information errors, such as incorrect contact information for parents or other contacts. We look forward to sharing more information about the gateway over the coming months!

**Levy Facts**

**Facts at a Glance**

- 6.49 Mills
- \$227 per \$100K per year
- Reduced \$450K before school year
- Committed to reducing \$1.5M over the next 3 years. Gives us time to make strategic reductions.

**What can the money raised from an Operating Levy be used for?**

This levy is for operating expenses, such as supplies, textbooks, technology, wages and benefits, transportation, mental health services for students, etc. It is for the day-to-day operations of the district.

**Last Time on the Ballot for Operating Money**

- 6 years ago

**Factors that Increase Expenditures**

- Maintenance
- Special Education
- Unfunded Mandates (Such as CCP)
- Inflation

**Strategic Planning Addressed**

- Improving Math
- Improving Instruction
- Improving Academic Outcomes
- Student Development
- STEM
- Fiscal Responsibility
- Communication



**From the Desk of Superintendent Richards**

As the school year begins to come to a close, it is a good time to look back at what has been accomplished and where we are going on our path forward.

Our students face unique challenges, and our teachers, custodians, secretaries, food service workers, classroom aides, and building leaders work diligently to ensure our students have a positive educational experience where they can maximize their learning.

This exemplifies our mission, "We are an education community committed to life-long learning." In academic development we recently announced that Spanish and Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) as junior high electives. Research has shown that students become more fluent and confident speakers if they start learning a language in middle school rather than high school.

STEM encompasses fields that are considered the core technological underpinnings of an advanced society. Exposing our students at an earlier age excites and engages through a hands-on, learn by doing approach.

I am extremely proud to say that we have started a "Whole Child" committee, in cooperation with and supported by the Montgomery County ESC and Wright State University. This group is examining how we can continue to respond to unique situations we are facing in today's society, such as mental health/ illness, drug use, depression, bullying, and homelessness.

The Whole Child approach strives to improve a student's learning through better physical and mental health initiatives.

We are working to build relationships within the community to help us better understand the unique needs and dynamics of our school district. One of the largest initiatives is how we communicate with our community. Monthly electronic newsletters from the district, and within each building, began earlier in the year. Beginning with this newsletter, we will be reaching every home in the district, keeping taxpayers without children in the schools informed of past and future events. In addition to our website, we are working on other ways to better communicate with all district residents such as the monthly Coffee Talks. We meet the third Wednesday of the month at Center Street Café in Farmersville (9:30 am) and Elwood's Creamery in Germantown (6:00 pm).

In the area of Facilities, this group of community participant is intended to guide the district on how to address our buildings for the future of our district. All the information from the meetings can be found on our district website by clicking on the Building Facilities link on the main menu.

Early this year the district adopted the Ohio Open Checkbook. Open Checkbook shows taxpayers exactly how their tax money is being spent. The Strategic Planning Committee also discussed the need for the district to be more streamlined in costs, and as such, we are committed to reducing our costs by an additional \$1.5 to \$2 million dollars over the next 3-4 years.

In order to stay solvent and to achieve our goals, we have placed a 6.49-mill operating levy on the May ballot.

Change most certainly does not happen overnight, but I am pleased with our progress along with the energy and enthusiasm of our administrators, teachers, and support staff. Valley View is a wonderful district. I am excited for us to take these steps to make us the best we can be.

**A Focus on the Whole Child, Not Just Grades**

Being a teenager is difficult in ways that go far beyond just grades and sports. As administrators, we know students' success depends on a variety of external factors, including the ability to pay attention, self-regulate, control impulses, handle internal and external behavior and perceive their own weaknesses and strengths.

Over the 2018-2019 school year, we dug deeper into addressing these issues through a collaboration with Wright State University (WSU), Montgomery County Educational Services Center (ESC) and eight other school districts in a program called Whole Child. The program focuses on all aspects of children's lives to ensure success—from health, nutrition and physical education; the physical environment; counseling, psychology and mental/behavioral health to social and emotional learning; specialized services; and even staff wellness.

Through this program, we developed an advisory committee made up of community members, parents, business owners and staff whose focus is on helping the district create evidence-based, grant-funded preventative programs and assessments for the upcoming school year.

We also adopted action steps through a strategic planning process based on input from community members as well as collaborators from WSU and Montgomery County ESC:

- Quarterly family education/outreach
- Student/staff mentors in each grade
- Volunteer development
- Quarterly mental health PD
- Annual needs assessment for all

*If you are interested in learning more about the Whole Child program or attending an advisory committee meeting, please contact Kevin Phillips at kevin.phillips@valleyview.k12.oh.us.*