

# Superintendent NEWSLETTER

March 4



Dear Gull Lake Families and Staff,

As we enter the first weekend of *March is Reading Month*, I find myself comparing the growth of literacy skills to the Spring routine my dad followed each year when growing our large family garden plots in the Upper Peninsula. Learning to read and growing reading fluency and vocabulary does not happen overnight for most of us. These skills, when nurtured consistently, bear fruit and sustain us over a lifetime of learning.

My earliest memories were a combination of following my dad around in the gardens, trying to help by mimicking what my dad was doing. Every year, he would till up the soil with a front tine rototiller and me and my siblings would follow behind, gathering the rocks that pushed up to the surface and carrying them to the edge of the field. Next, my dad would mix in the fertilizer in each row to be planted. After the soil was prepped, a line was strung marking each row to be planted, and my dad would use the handle of his rake to make a small hole where a seedling would be dropped in and covered over with the fertilized soil. After each row was planted, one of us would come behind with the garden hose, wetting the ground just enough so that the seedlings could get a good soaking without being washed out of their shallow cover. After the planting, we consistently tended the garden plot, weeding and watering, inspecting, and waiting for the plants to produce.

At the same time, we were tending the gardens, we were growing our reading skills. After garden chores were finished, I remember each of us choosing books from a big bin of our favorites by my dad's green Lazy Boy chair. We would climb up into his arms to be read to. Sometimes we would do our best to sound out the words in front of him with the books we had memorized by heart. If my dad had his hands full with another sibling, my mom or older sisters would gather me in for a story. It was a foregone conclusion that we would spend time in books, and we just knew somehow that reading was our chance to learn and grow. My parents had an unspoken agreement to never interrupt me or my siblings if we were lost in a book. We picked up on their reverence for learning and maintained these reading habits through the years. The gardens and our reading habits both bore fruit, and we harvested the benefits.

Neither endeavor was an overnight success, both requiring certain practices and habits over time. As we celebrate *March is Reading Month*, I encourage you to bond with your child through reading, and to enjoy the unique habits you form with each other as you foster a tradition of lifelong learning.

Fall into a good book with your child this weekend!

Best regards,

Raphael Rittenhouse/Superintendent  
Gull Lake Community Schools



## Updates

**GLMS District Band Festival** on March 10, 2022, at Mattawan HS.

**½ Day of School** on March 10 and 11, 2022 for 2<sup>nd</sup> trimester exams.

**First Robotics Competition** March 10- 12, 2022 at GLHS.

**3<sup>rd</sup> Tri** begins March 14, 2022.

**Incoming Kindergarten/Young Fives Welcome Night** on March 14, 2022, 5:30 pm – 7:00 pm at Richland & Kellogg Elementary.

**Early Release** on March 16, 2022.

**No School** on March 25, 2022.

**Spring Break** is March 28 –April 1, 2022.

[GLCS Good Things](#)

[www.gulllakecs.org](http://www.gulllakecs.org)