

SUPERINTENDENT **NEWSLETTER**

December 1, 2023

December 1, 2023

Dear Gull Lake Families and Staff,

During this Holiday Season, there is a chance to get creative in celebrating things of great value. So often, we tap into these skills in our work lives and use them when completing projects that are on a timeline that creates pressure. There is a way to use that creativity in a less pressured and hurried manner. It involves thinking about the people you love and how to do something special and thoughtful for them during a Season that welcomes that opportunity!

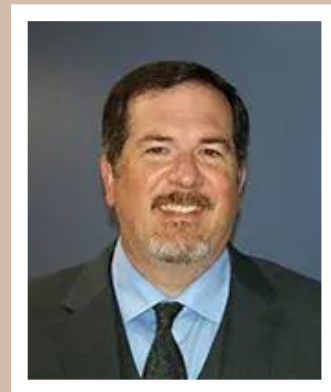
In my early career as a band director, one of the best ways I could engage my beginning band students was to customize the first song each student would perform for their families at the Holiday concert. Without fail, every student had a song in mind to wow their families...one student might pick the *Star Wars* theme, another might request to play *Rockin' around the Christmas Tree*, the list was extensive! For each student, I would compose that piece for them on music notation paper taking into account the range and difficulty level involved so that they could successfully perform it by the Holiday concert date. During the concert, each student would stand up in popcorn fashion and play the excerpt from their chosen song. What I remember was the sense of pride and connection this activity promoted. The students had reached a level where their newfound skills were evident, and they were being encouraged by the presence of their loved ones at the concert venue, a match made in Heaven.

Our GLCS team of educators' hearts are moved when we see these examples of deep learning and engagement come to fruition. Our wish for every student and family member is to experience multiple moments of applied creativity and engagement made possible through positive relationships and an encouraging environment. This is what we promote daily on behalf of our kids and school community.

Wishing you and your student all things Merry and Bright!



Raphael Rittenhouse/Superintendent
Gull Lake Community Schools



www.gulllakecs.org