



Superintendent **NEWSLETTER**

October 15

Dear Gull Lake Community Schools Families and Staff,

Our senses can often be our best guide to navigating the world around us. What happens when our senses give us misleading information? We have all had the chance to trick our own senses even as children by spinning rapidly in circles in order to create that familiar dizzy feeling. We all chuckle as adults when we see a child employ this strategy and wobble off unsteadily for a few seconds until the sensation passes. These early lessons help us to make corrections as adults when we get conflicting information and must narrow down our choices. Underwater divers often lose track of which direction leads back to the surface and they must rely on the trajectory of their ascending air bubbles even when their body is telling them to go another direction. Sometimes the technology we use fails us during critical moments, such as our vehicle GPS navigation systems that leave us stranded or our cell phones that cannot find a signal.

Recently, we have been hearing about social media and the algorithms aimed at our children that are designed to sell products and negatively impact their self-confidence. Even worse, it tends to send them online content that mirrors their click behavior and eliminates other perspectives in their learning. It is another example of how we are faced with conflicting information that stirs our senses and creates confusing choices. Social media giants are now under intense scrutiny much like big tobacco companies that market addictive products to our kids. As parents and educators, what can be done to help our kids navigate the vast amount of misleading content that is circulating in their media feed and youth culture?

There is hope for all of us as we look for ways to evaluate competing and contradictory signals in our environment. We can evaluate the information in front of us and navigate a steady course through the surrounding ocean of extremes. We do this most effectively when we emerge from isolation and interact with our family, friends and community through conversation and shared activities. These interactions give us exposure to other people who differ from us and who have unique perspectives they have developed through their lived experiences. We can all encourage our kids and students to strike a balance between their alone time and shared time in the company of others who are also seeking balance and perspective. As parents and educators, we seek to enrich the lives of our kids through a variety of experiences that help shape them into well rounded individuals who have the skills, confidence and support to deeply engage in their local community and world at large. We find our way together.

Best regards,



Raphael Rittenhouse/Superintendent
Gull Lake Community Schools



Updates

Virtual Parent/Teacher Conferences will be on October 21 and October 22, 2021. Please refer to your student's school newsletter or website for more information.

No School on October 22, 2021.

Early Release on November 3, 2021.

www.gulllakecs.org