

**Germantown Elementary School  
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**Learning Comes from  
Everything and Everyone  
Around Us**

**germantownbulldogs.org**

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January 1, 2012

Dear Parents, Guardians, and Community Members,

It is hard to believe 2012 is upon us. When reflecting upon this past year, it proved to be one filled with lots of success along with a few challenges.

### **January**

With a record of 5-2, the Scholar Bowl Team finished second out of eight Clinton County teams at the annual Central High School Scholar Bowl Competition.

The Varsity Lady Bulldogs under the leadership of coaches Mike Fields and Jeff Lampe ended their basketball season with a 24-2 record and claimed the 2011 Class S SIJHSAA State Champion title.

The PTA hosted its first ever Trivia Night and oral/silent auction. Over 30 teams entered the Trivia Night Contest with the junior high teachers claiming the first place prize. The event was a huge success. Over \$15,000 was raised.

### **February**

The JV Bulldogs brought the basketball season to a close with a championship game victory over Aviston in the Trenton Knights of Columbus Tournament.

The Bulldog band and chorus performed at competition on Saturday, February 26. The chorus earned 1st place, missing a superior by just one point. The Jazz Band earned a first superior for their performance. Germantown band students were awarded 12 first superiors, 24 firsts, and 3 seconds for their solo performances.

### **March**

Representative Robert Rita (D-Blue Island) introduced House Bill 1886 proposing to dissolve all school districts in Illinois and then re-establish them as county school districts. Governor Quinn also proposed the creation of a School Administration Consolidation Commission charged with producing an action plan to mandatorily streamline and consolidate Illinois school districts.

On Friday, March 11, students in grades 5-8 participated in the first ever Kids Health Fair. This event served to educate the students about the importance of making good health choices.

After 11 years coaching basketball in the community, Mike Fields retired as the Germantown Lady Bulldog basketball coach.

## **April**

A public meeting on school consolidation was held at St. Rose Elementary on April 7. At the meeting, an overview of the proposed consolidation legislation was provided and discussion of its impact on the county ensued. While all local legislators were invited to the meeting, none of them accepted the invite. Local superintendents and concerned citizens from several area school districts including Germantown were in attendance.

The school district was notified that it would receive an Energy Efficiency Grant to help cover the cost of window and door replacement in the original part of the building.

After serving 16 years and 4 years respectively on the Board of Education, Marla Langenhorst and Mark Freund stepped down this month. Jeff Lampe and Denise Haake were re-elected for another four year term. Mark Kohlen and Gail Theising began their first term as newly elected members of the Board of Education.

On Friday, April 15, the students in 5th-8th grade participated in a variety of Earth Day activities throughout the community. The students spent time cleaning up the parks, helped the village workers with projects, offered landscaping services to those in need of help, and polished and landscaped the cemetery and church grounds.

At District Organizational Contest on Saturday, April 2, the Bulldog Band captured an overall first rating with the judges awarding them a pair of first ratings and a second rating. The band improved its score by 21 points and narrowly missed receiving an overall first superior rating at State Organizational Contest on April 30. The judges awarded the band one first superior rating and a pair of high first ratings.

## **May**

Ben Lampe, Sophie Kuhl, Isaac Gebke, Olivia Theising, and Lexi Hemker qualified for the SIJHSAA State Track Meet.

On Saturday, May 21, a record-setting 524 participants crossed the finish line at the seventh annual Germantown Bulldog Dash 5K and 2K Run/Walk. The event netted over \$17,000 to benefit Germantown Elementary School. In its seven year history, the event has provided the district over \$100,000.

Thirty-seven students graduated as members of the Class of 2011.

After 34 years in the teaching profession, Jane Strieker retired at the end of the 2010-11 school year.

Jennifer Wempe, Angie Jansen, Marleen Albers, Trishia Kohlen and Cheri Johnson stepped down as PTA Officers. The newly elected PTA Officers took over:

President: Jennifer Arentsen  
Vice President: Crystal Gebke  
Treasurer: Carrie Kehrer  
Special Events: Kathy Oertel

**June**

Due to cuts in expenditures that totaled approximately \$118,000, the district was able to finish the fiscal year with a balanced budget.

**July**

The school district was notified that it would receive an Early Childhood grant for the 2011-12 school year. The funding provided through this grant allowed for the school district to continue offering a PreK program. Several other local districts did not get their grant funded, so we were pleased our grant application earned enough points to warrant program funding.

**August**

The week before the start of the new school year, the Illinois State Board of Education notified schools that General State Aid was being cut by 5 percent. For Germantown, this cut equated to a loss of nearly \$45,000 in state funding. Along with this state cut, the district lost almost \$90,000 in federal money due to reductions in education spending.

On August 23, House Bill 1216 was enacted. This bill created a commission charged with recommending ways Illinois school districts can improve student learning opportunities and reduce duplicative administration costs through consolidation.

**September**

The school district earned a Financial Profile Score of Financial Recognition by the Illinois State Board of Education. This is the highest category a school district can receive.

Due to significant decreases in revenue this fiscal year, the Board of Education was forced to approve a budget with deficit spending. While the district has money in reserves to help us through these difficult financial times, we plan to limit our use of that money because there is no way of knowing how long these financially troubling times will last.

**October**

Germantown Elementary School District #60 earned the 2011 Bright Star Award. Out of 868 total districts in Illinois, only 79 were honored with the award. The award recognizes school districts with high student performance at low cost.

The window and door replacement project in conjunction with the Energy Efficiency Grant began this month.

**November**

Germantown Elementary School hosted its annual Veteran's Day ceremony. Numerous Germantown Veterans participated in the all school assembly.

**December**

With several area superintendents, I attended and testified on behalf of Germantown School District #60 at the Classrooms First Commission meeting on school consolidation in Springfield. My testimony implored those in attendance to allow school consolidation to be a local decision made by the citizens of each respective community as opposed to being forced by State legislation.

December was a busy month in the sports arena. The JV Lady Bulldogs captured first place in the Carlyle Junior High Basketball Tournament. In Clinton County Conference Tournament action, the Varsity Lady Bulldogs captured third place while the Varsity Bulldogs captured fourth place.

The window and door replacement project came to a close this month.

As you can see, we dealt with a few challenges in 2011 as anticipated, yet overall, it was a very productive year at Germantown Elementary School. 2012 promises to bring much of the same. One thing I will continue to keep in mind is that challenge makes us stronger. Through the challenges we face, I have confidence we will become an even stronger school district.

Best wishes for a happy, healthy, and productive 2012.

Sincerely,

Robin Becker, Superintendent  
Germantown Elementary SD #60