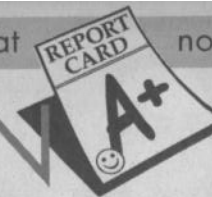


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# MY EDUCATION



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## Village Oaks Gives Back with Blood Drive

By Holly Bowne  
NEWS SPECIAL WRITER

About every two seconds, someone in America needs blood; and Michigan is one state that never has enough.

To help boost Michigan's donated blood supply, and in honor of several staff members who have been touched by cancer, Village Oaks Elementary School will be sponsoring an American Red Cross blood drive. The blood drive will be held at Village Oaks Elementary School from 1 to 7 p.m. Friday, May 11.

"One of our fourth grade teachers, Melissa Lind, was recently diagnosed with leukemia; and Linda McGuigan, our special education paraprofessional, is currently battling brain cancer," said Sue Egan, special education teacher consultant for Village Oaks, and Novi Woods, and coordinator of the blood drive. "We decided to sponsor the blood drive as part of a 'Village Oaks Gives Back' to the community in honor of them, and several other staff members who, due to illnesses, have required blood transfusions."

When illness strikes, we expect the blood required for our treatment to be there when we need it. But Michigan is known as an importing region, according to Joann Lindquist, donor resources representative for the American Red

Cross in Michigan.

"We actually use more blood than we get in donations. So every drop of blood donated in the five counties we service - Wayne, Washtenaw, Oakland, St. Clair and Macomb will be used right here in one of our local hospitals."

According to [www.bloodcenters.org](http://www.bloodcenters.org), about 60 percent of the general population is eligible to donate blood, and of that 60 percent, only 5 percent actually do. Why do so few people donate? "I think it usually boils down to two main reasons," said Lindquist. "People are too busy, or they're afraid of needles. You get a lot of excuses, but it's usually one of those two reasons."

Many people are unaware that one blood donor can save as many as three lives with a single donation; because one pint can be separated into three components: platelets, plasma and red blood cells.

"We're hoping to schedule 80 to 90 appointments," said Cameron Kompoltowicz, Village Oaks substitute teacher, and blood drive committee member.

"The school is providing the location and promotion for the event which will be run by volunteer registered nurses."

The fact Village Oaks is sponsoring the event does not surprise second grade teacher, Lynn Secord. Secord was a recipient of Village Oaks' brand of encouragement and

support, when staff members delivered meals to her home in the weeks following a recent surgical procedure. "I think sponsoring this blood drive is representative of the kind of people we have in this building. The staff and families of this school are so supportive and loving whenever anybody has any kind of crisis in their life."

Kathy Siarto, a second grade teacher, sums up the warm attitude of the Village Oaks family.

"I personally believe we are here on earth to help one another - to work together," she said. "When someone is in need, we rally around and help that person."

"Since we have had so many teachers affected by cancer, sponsoring the blood drive is something I know would make Melissa feel better, because she feels the same way about helping people."

"I am proud to be a teacher in Novi. We have an incredible district, incredible families, teachers and administrators."



Submitted Photo

Village Oaks Elementary School teacher Melissa Lind reads to her students.

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