



Welcome to the 2022-2023 School Year

Just like that, we have jumped back into the new school year. Coming off of three consecutive school years significantly impacted by changing health guidelines, an increase in student needs across the board, and every facet of our lives being impacted by the pandemic, we look ahead to the new year with a great deal of energy, excitement and optimism that comes from new beginnings.

Our confidence for great things ahead isn't blind faith. It's belief based on the hard work and preparation that our staff in every department and at every level has put in behind the scenes. We were intentional about what we had to do to better position ourselves to meet the needs of our students and community. Those unseen hours of training, curriculum work, tweaking schedules, adjusting supports for students, creating partnerships within the community, and hiring talent are all building blocks that will lead to results.

There will undoubtedly be challenges along the way, but through consistent communication, collaboration, composure and trust, we can accomplish anything. We greatly appreciate your ongoing support of our students and staff, and we are excited about the 2022-2023 school year! Let's Go Warriors!

Continued Success,

Steve Dunham

Important Announcement

**Annual Emergency Release Drill
Early Dismissal
Tuesday, November 22, 2022**

K-12 students will be released from school fifteen minutes prior to the normal dismissal time.

Please mark your calendar!



Walberta Park & Cherry Road Schools

Give Me Five

Kindergarten students are learning how to be good students with the Give Me 5 rules of listening; eyes are watching, ears are listening, legs crossed, hands are still and voice is quiet. It's going to be a great year!



Special Guest

Mrs. Byrne's kindergarten students were treated to a special guest read aloud by Superintendent Dunham. He read *All Are Welcome*, a book where all students feel welcome in their school.



Hopes and Dreams

Friends in Mrs. Brown and Ms. Catalano's first grade class listened to the story *The Magical Yet*, and discussed what things they can't do yet but will learn how to do this year.



Summer Book Bonanza

On July 26, over 120 families came to Santaro Park for the inaugural Summer Book Bonanza! Students were able to choose a book to keep and receive a sweet treat. The program was initiated by elementary librarians, Aneisa Linton and Karin Backus, and was largely funded by a New Initiatives grant from the Central New York Library Resources Council.



Cherry Road & Onondaga Hill Middle Schools

Third Grade Vibes

“Third Grade Vibes” were felt at CRS! Pictured here is Cherry Road’s team of third grade teachers and teaching assistants having some fun and displaying camaraderie during the first week of school by wearing matching t-shirts.



Second Grade Interviewers

Second graders interviewed each other, and then wrote paragraphs to introduce their friend to others.



Exploring Globes and Maps

Third graders from Mrs. Jackson’s class spent time collaboratively exploring globes and maps in preparation for their upcoming EL Unit about Learning Challenges in various countries. Many students were excited to locate the countries where their families are from in addition to finding states and countries they have personally traveled!



Help Save Fred

During the first week of school, 5th graders were challenged with saving Fred, a worm that spent his summer boating in the ocean. One day, Fred’s boat capsized and he was stuck on top of his boat. Unfortunately, his life preserver landed under his boat. Students worked cooperatively in pairs to save Fred. They were tasked with putting his life preserver around him using only 4 paper clips without touching him, the boat or the life preserver with their hands.



Onondaga Hill Middle School

Select Choir

Congratulations to the OHMS Select Choir, The Harmonizers. Many Harmonizers participated in this summer's first ever Harmonizer Camp. At camp, singers worked on music that they will be performing throughout the school year. They also got to know each other, played games, performed for their friends and family and enjoyed many delicious treats. Harmonizers will be out and about in the community a lot this year singing at school events, holiday celebrations and games. Their next gig will be singing the National Anthem for the Syracuse Mets on Saturday, September 17!



The Power of Peers Summer Style

During the month of July on Thursday mornings, OHMS students participated in the Power of Peers program. The program focused on building social and emotional skills for students using peers from Westhill High School as mentors/models as well as graduate students from Syracuse University's Communication Sciences and Disorders program. Students had a great time role playing scenarios dealing with building conversational skills with a special focus on interacting socially during game play. They practiced how to be a good winner/loser, how to recognize banter versus teasing and how to interact with others highlighting the importance of compromise. Students had a blast practicing these important skills, interacting with friends and building new relationships.



Summer iCamp

This summer's iCamp 2022 was a huge success for the current and incoming OHMS students. The iCamp focused on mindfulness, positive affirmation, building relationships and fun. Each day had a different theme. We began the week with our book tasting activity and awesome book giveaway. Throughout the week, the students shared some of their favorite activities; creating vision boards, intention jewelry, comfort boxes and middle school self-care kits! We finished the week off with our getting to know you Kahoot, topped off with an ice cream sundae party. It was so much fun introducing our incoming 5th graders to OHMS and all the fun that awaits them as they begin their middle school years.



Onondaga Hill Middle & Westhill High Schools

OHMS Chess Club

After a few years hiatus, the OHMS Chess Club was restarted last year. Slowly word has spread about the program and we had a record number of students attend this year's first meeting. As you can see, nearly every table was filled with students from 5th to 8th grade. Any student is welcome, and some of the more seasoned chess veterans are there to help those with no knowledge of the game to become proficient. Or as the students say, "We learned what the horsey thingies do today!"

We have also added two sets of Stratego to the mix as well as a chess-like game called Senete. This is an exciting Ancient Egyptian game that was buried with King Tut in his tomb. We strive for fair competition, acquiring the skills to win and the grace to lose and be a good sport. Any student at OHMS is welcome - the more the merrier!

Any questions on the club can be directed to the club's advisor, Marc DuBois at mdubois@westhillschools.org.



Substitutes Needed

Teachers
Teaching Assistants
Nurses
School Bus Drivers
School Bus Attendants
Custodial

Applications can be found on our website,
www.westhillschools.org under the District Tab.

Please submit application to:
Personnel Office
Westhill Central School District
400 Walberta Road
Syracuse, NY 13219

National Merit Semifinalist

Senior, Charlotte Roth, has earned semifinalist status in the National Merit Scholarship Program. With that designation, she has the ability to advance to the finalist level and be eligible for National Merit scholarships. To qualify for finalist status, a semifinalist must have an outstanding academic record throughout high school, be endorsed and recommended by the high school, write an essay and earn SAT or ACT scores that confirm the student's earlier performance on the qualifying test.

Charlotte has taken a rigorous academic program throughout her high school career, taking honors-level and AP courses. This year she is splitting her time between taking courses at the high school and at OCC. This past summer, she attended a high school summer program at Stanford University, taking several college credit bearing courses. Outside of the classroom, Charlotte has been an active member in a variety of extracurricular activities which include membership in NHS, Character Ed, band and Tri-M. Charlotte hopes to pursue post-secondary studies in biology and math leading to a career in the medical field. Congratulations, Charlotte!



Westhill High School

Summer Band and Jazz Camps

During the first week in August, 102 camper-musicians, 43 counselors and three music educators from Westhill, Baldwinsville, Christian Brothers Academy, Jamesville-Dewitt, Liverpool, Manlius Pebble Hill, Marcellus, North Syracuse, Syracuse City, Syracuse University, SUNY Fredonia, SUNY ESF, Daemen University, Nazareth College, University of Buffalo, Northwestern University, Carnegie Mellon University, University of Hartford, Hofstra University and the University of Rochester rehearsed and performed together in the Westhill Summer Band Camp and Jazz Camp at Westhill High School. The camps were hosted by Westhill Instrumental Music Department teachers, Ms. Elizabeth Buell, Mr. Corey Riley and Ms. Erin Tapia.

From August 1-5, the Westhill Band Camp student-musicians joined together for a week-long concert band program and culminated their week of rehearsals with a band concert for friends and family, conducted by Ms. Buell and Ms. Tapia and assisted by the Westhill Camp Counselors. Sixth-ninth grade students rehearsed in two separate ensembles for five evenings on a fun and challenging variety of concert band pieces. The Summer Band Camp also featured a jazz band component. Mr. Riley led the Westhill Band Camp 8-10th grade Jazz Ensemble through performances of works by Sammy Nestico, Louis Prima, Walk the Moon and Mike Kamuf. He was supported by high school and college-age jazz counselors.

We would like to thank the Westhill Booster Club for sponsoring this camp, Empire Winds for sponsoring our shirts, the Westhill custodial staff for their hard work and assistance throughout the week, the Westhill Board of Education and administration for supporting this educational and musical endeavor and the campers' families for encouraging their children to make music a year-round part of their life. A special thank you to our high school and college volunteers who gave so freely of their time, talent, leadership and enthusiasm throughout the week while working side-by-side with the campers!



Westhill High School & UPK

WHS Celebrates Spirit Week and Homecoming

The week of September 19th was Spirit Week at the high school. The week's events included theme days, a pep rally, class competitions and room and hallway decorating. The week culminated in the annual homecoming bonfire, football game and homecoming dance.



UPK Off to a Great Start

Westhill and the YMCA formed a partnership to offer Universal Prekindergarten or UPK to 36 Westhill students this year. The program kicked off last week and is off to a great start. The cost of the program is funded by New York State through the Universal Prekindergarten Expansion Funding.



Welcome New Staff Members



Emily Baker
OHMS
Teaching Assistant



Alexa Colletta
WHS
School Social Worker



Rebecca Fesinger
OHMS/WHS
Social Studies



Morgan Gehm
CRS
Teaching Assistant



Alexander Gilmore
WHS
Science



Danielle Goodrich
WPS
Grade 1



Lasha Homer
WPS
Teaching Assistant



Deborah Kristoff
OHMS
Teaching Assistant



Natalie Lyons
OHMS
Grade 6 Long-Term Substitute

Welcome New Staff Members



Samantha Maki
CRS
Teaching Assistant



Jherrett Maroney
OHMS
School Social Worker



Dawn Neyhart
WHS
Teacher Aide



Amy Pendergast
OHMS
Teacher Aide



Maryam Shah
CRS/OHMS
ESL



Paige Smith
OHMS
Grade 5 Long-Term Substitute



Joanna Tomlinson
WHS
Special Education
Long-Term Substitute



Adrienne Torrey
WHS
Mathematics



Angela Warne
WHS
Mathematics

District News

Renovation Work at Westhill High School

Renovation work is progressing well at the high school. The south side of the second floor academic wing along with the former library space has been gutted. Work continues to create new instructional spaces in both areas. Work is slated to be completed in these areas in February, at which point renovation work will commence on the north end of both the first and second floors of the academic wing.



Westhill Educational Foundation

In Spring 2022, the Westhill Educational Foundation funded a grant to bring the All Kids Bike Program to Walberta Park School. Through this program, students will have the opportunity to learn how to ride bikes in their physical education classes. The bikes were delivered over the summer, and teachers are looking forward to being able to use them with students this fall.

The Westhill Educational Foundation exists to supplement curriculum with exciting projects such as this. Please visit our website <https://www.westhillfoundation.com/> and follow on Facebook and Twitter for information about the Foundation and for updates throughout the year.



Upcoming Westhill Reunions

Class of 2002- November 4, 2022
Class of 2001- November 25, 2022

For more information about events or to be connected to a class representative for any of the above reunions, email the Westhill Educational Foundation at westhillfoundation@gmail.com.

Are you having a class reunion? Want to get your Save the Date published or find out how the Westhill Educational Foundation may be able to help you? Email us at westhillfoundation@gmail.com!

Thanksgiving Recess

Wednesday, November 23rd -
Friday, November 25th

District News

I. Introduction

Providing an orderly plan for dealing with an emergency is part of the responsibility of Westhill Central School District officials. Emergency situations range from man-made problems such as power outages, fires, and bomb threats, to nature-made situations like windstorms, ice/snow storms, and floods. Emergencies range from highly dangerous, life-threatening situations to problems that are mere inconveniences. Schools and parents need to have general plans for dealing with a wide range of emergencies. The following information is intended to familiarize you with our general procedures for school emergencies.

II. Possible Response Actions

The nature of the emergency will determine the type of response action. If possible and timely, an emergency response team will convene at a command site to implement response actions. If possible and appropriate, the assistance of the fire department, ambulance, and police will be sought. The primary consideration in determining response actions will be the health and safety of students and staff.

- A) Cancellation of School - School officials may determine that school will not be in session for one or more days due to an emergency.
- B) Evacuation - Evacuation is necessary for situations ranging from routine fire drills to conditions where it is no longer safe or appropriate to have students in the school building. Evacuation requires all building occupants to exit the building and wait a safe distance from the building until the danger has passed. In some circumstances, however, the nature of the emergency may deem that the students be transported and held temporarily at another location.
- C) Early Dismissal - An early dismissal is announced in the event of a system failure such as loss of heat or other utility in the building, or in response to inclement weather. In inclement weather, due to the time it takes to coordinate early dismissal, many times it is better to wait until dismissal time to send students home. Road crews normally schedule their time to coincide with the dismissal time of schools.
- D) Sheltering in Building - School officials may decide to keep students in school in an emergency until the situation returns to normal or until dismissal or evacuation can be arranged, if it is determined that it is not safe to send them home. A lock down drill is a type of sheltering situation where students remain in their classrooms and windows and doors are locked.

III. Communication Systems

Internal: Communication inside the building will be via the public address system if possible. Otherwise, messengers will be used to relay warnings. Administrators have access to cell phones/radios to assist them with emergency communications.

External: In the event of an emergency, we will notify the following television stations: 3 - NBC, 5 - CBS, 9 - ABC and 10 - YNN.

Westhill CSD uses ParentSquare to keep in touch with you via text message, email or through the app regarding important events, closings, and alerts. Please ensure that your information is up to date in PowerSchool. If you are not currently receiving communication via ParentSquare, please contact the main office at your student's school building.

IV. Emergency Planning Committee

- Steven Smith Emergency Management Coordinator, Assistant Superintendent for Business Administration
- Edward Wittkowski 1st Alternate Coordinator
- Darcy Woodcock 2nd Alternate Coordinator, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction
- Stephen Dunham Superintendent of Schools
- Lee Roscoe Westhill High School Principal
- Daniel Dolan Westhill High School Assistant Principal
- Mark Bednarski Onondaga Hill Middle School Principal
- Kathryn Ta Onondaga Hill Middle School Assistant Principal
- Jeremie Auge Cherry Road School Principal
- Beth Kramer Walberta Park School Principal
- Marietta Lachenauer Director of Special Education
- Richard Gunther Food Service Director
- Michele Rether School Transportation Supervisor
- Beth Nagraj Coordinator of Health Services
- Jennie Smarrelli Director of Physical Education, Health and Athletics
- Katie Harmon Director of Instructional Technology

We hope we will never have to implement our plans, but we will strive to be prepared just in case. It is very important for every family to have a contingency plan explained to students should an unplanned early dismissal occur. Calls directly to or from parents would not be practical in a true emergency. We urge families to plan ahead for possible school related emergencies, especially early dismissal.

V. Communication Liaison for the District: Stephen Dunham, Superintendent of Schools

BOARD OF EDUCATION
Westhill Central School District
400 Walberta Road
Syracuse, New York 13219-2214

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The Westhill Central School District does not discriminate on the basis of age, color, religion, creed, disability, marital status, veteran status, national origin, sex or race in its employment practices or educational programs.

School Board Recognition Week October 17 - October 21, 2022

The graphic features the word "THANK" in large, bold, multi-colored block letters (pink, orange, yellow, green, blue). The word "you!" is written in a black cursive script, overlapping the "ANK" part of "THANK".

In appreciation of your dedicated service to our
students, families, staff and community!
