



## Welcome to the 2020-2021 School Year

While this is certainly a beginning unlike those to which we are accustomed, we are nonetheless excited and happy to see students back in school. As has been the case since school buildings closed last March, the day-to-day changes have become our expectation rather than the exception.

Recent positive COVID cases in area schools have provided a clear reminder that last minute shifts to remote learning occur when safety and health concerns so dictate. We need to be prepared as well, and to that end, staff in every building have been planning should that be necessary.

Thank you to the entire Westhill community for your continued support and assistance in making in-person learning a possibility. Our vigilance in mask wearing, social distancing, and hand washing both during and after school hours is crucial and consistent with the messages we receive in our collaboration with the Onondaga County Health Department. We appreciate their guidance and leadership throughout these challenges.

Have a great school year, and good health to all.



### Important Announcement

#### **Annual Emergency Release Drills Early Dismissal**

**Friday, October 9, 2020      Tuesday, November 24, 2020**  
**COHORT B                              COHORT A**

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

Please mark your calendar!

# Westhill High School

## Exploring Harbor Brook

High school biology students took time to create Individual Leaf Litter packs that will collect a variety of stream critters, which will be used to analyze the water quality. The students enjoy doing this outdoor lab experience every year, even with masks! The stream also decided to play "stuck in the mud" with one student (Keegan Bryant).



## Commended Student

Congratulations to senior, Cristian Malone, who was recently named as a Commended Student in this year's National Merit Scholarship Program. Cristian's performance on the PSAT/NMSQT places him among the top 50,000 out of over 1.5 million test takers nationwide. Cristian is currently in the college search process and is looking to find a college with both a strong science and music program.



## Outdoor Art Classes

Art students work outdoors while social distancing.



## High School Yearbooks Now Online

The complete collection of Westhill High School Yearbooks from 1962 through 2015 is now available online! The yearbook digitization project was possible through a grant from the Central New York Library Resources Council, and the yearbooks are now part of the New York Heritage research portal which provides information about the people, places and institutions of New York State. The project is on-going with the 2016 Yearbook and subsequent editions being added incrementally. View the yearbooks at the link on the Westhill High School Library website: <http://www.westhillschools.org/highschool> or from this direct link: <https://nyheritage.org/collections/westhill-yearbooks>.

## Substitutes Needed

Teachers  
Teaching Assistants  
Nurses  
Food Service  
Custodial

Applications can be found on our website, [www.westhillschools.org](http://www.westhillschools.org), under the District Tab.

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

# OHMS, CRS and WPS

## Books and Bites Club at OHMS

Do you love talking about books? Discussing new books? Learning about famous authors? Or better yet you just want to spend some time with your friends? Join Ms. Feeney for lunch on your remote days (TBD). If you're interested in participating in this new club, go to the library website <https://bit.ly/33Fn6D8> for more information. #justkeepreading



## OHMS Library Offers Curbside or Classroom Take-out

We can't wait to begin checking books out to our OHMS students. No matter what cohort you are in we have books for you. If you want hardcover books from the OHMS Library, go to our website <https://bit.ly/33Fn6D8> and fill out the take-out form. We'll notify you when your books are ready for pick up. We also have access to hundreds of ebooks and audiobooks in Sora. You can download the app to your phone or read on your Chromebook. For more information on how to access Sora, visit the OHMS Library website. We are here to help you find just the right book, contact Ms. Feeney if you have any questions. #justkeepreading



## Thanking Others

Mrs. Vertucci's class is learning about community helpers and thanking people for helping others. The students wrote thank you notes to WEST for their donation of playground equipment for recess.



## Back to School Books

Kindergarten students in Mrs. Cooper's classroom make back to school books.



# Welcome New Staff Members

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Daniel Allen  
WHS  
Special Education



Tiffany Arcscott  
WPS  
Teaching Assistant



Samuel Brown  
CRS  
Teaching Assistant



Kristi Carter  
WPS/CRS  
School Psychology Intern



Danielle Cieply  
OHMS  
Music



Mary Beth Cregg  
WHS  
Clerical/Health Aide



Chloe Doherty  
Districtwide  
Teacher Aide (Technology)



Nancy Downs  
CRS  
Teaching Assistant



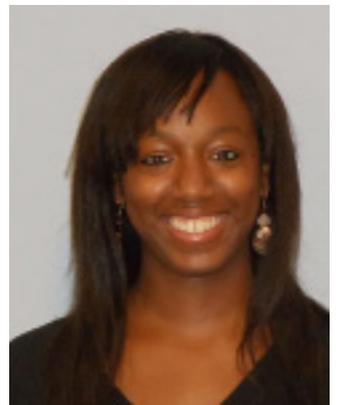
Devon Dunbar  
WHS  
Teaching Assistant



Joshua Eassa  
OHMS  
English



Ashley Evanchof  
WHS  
Science



Elizabeth Goyette  
WPS  
Teaching Assistant

# Welcome New Staff Members

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Stephanie Harp  
CRS  
Clerical/Health Aide



Amy Hathaway  
OHMS  
Science



Phillip Hudson  
Transportation  
Dispatcher



John-Henry Jackson  
OHMS  
Grade 6



Katherine Kee  
WHS  
Spanish/ESOL



Kaylee Kick  
CRS  
Grade 4 Long-Term Substitute



Melissa Mooney  
WPS  
Teaching Assistant



Katherine Rivito  
CRS  
Special Education



Sarah Schahczenski  
OHMS  
Grade 6 Long-Term Substitute



Madelyn Smith  
OHMS  
Special Education Long-Term Substitute



Robert Sweeney  
OHMS/WHS  
Technology



# District News

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## Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction

The Westhill Central School District would like to extend a warm welcome to its new Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction, Mrs. Darcy Woodcock.

Prior to joining the Westhill community, Mrs. Woodcock was the Director of Professional Development in the Syracuse City School District for a year and a half, and the principal of Liverpool Elementary School in the Liverpool Central School District for 7 years. She is in the process of writing her doctoral dissertation to earn a Doctorate in Education (EdD) degree from Walden University. She completed her administrative course work and Master's degree in literacy from SUNY Oswego. Prior to administration, Mrs. Woodcock was an elementary and middle level teacher for 11 years in Florida and the Fayetteville-Manlius School District.



## Playground Safety

We have developed strict protocols for student use of the playgrounds during school hours that include:

- A limited number of children at any one time to ensure social distancing
- Mask wearing
- Hand washing before and after use to decrease the likelihood of virus transmission
- Adult supervision

Since the opening of school, we have received numerous reports of large gatherings of children (of all ages), sometimes with adult supervision, taking place after school hours with little regard for social distancing or mask wearing. We need your help to keep our school community safe. School principals, teachers and staff have invested hours of work insuring protocols are in place for safety throughout the school day. Please help by following these same steps during non-school hours. We want, and the children desperately need, access to the playgrounds. Shutting them down, as they were last spring, is an action we are trying to avoid. Thank you all for your assistance in keeping the playgrounds a safe area of play.

## Free and Reduced Meal Program

The Westhill Food Service Department would like to bring attention to our Free and Reduced Meal Program by making parents aware that any student who qualifies for free or reduced lunch also qualifies for free or reduced breakfast.

National studies have found that a healthy breakfast is an important key to learning. Every morning our cafeterias offer a variety of whole grain products, fresh fruit and low fat milk. When children eat a well-balanced breakfast, they enjoy the benefits of improved attentiveness and have more energy. Let us help your child start the morning right!

If you have any questions about the school breakfast program or how to take advantage of the Free and Reduced Meal Program, please feel free to call Rich or Mark at 426-3153.

# 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 SchoolMessenger to keep in touch with you via text message regarding important events, closings, and alerts. Please ensure that your information is up to date in PowerSchool. If you aren't receiving texts and would like to, you can sign up by texting "Y" or "Yes" to the number 67587.

## IV. Emergency Planning Committee

- Steven Smith..... Emergency Management Coordinator
- Edward Wittkowski..... 1st Alternate Coordinator
- Darcy Woodcock..... 2nd Alternate Coordinator
- Casey Barduhn..... Superintendent of Schools
- Lee Roscoe..... Westhill High School Principal
- Daniel Dolan..... Westhill High School Assistant Principal
- Mark Bednarski..... Onondaga Hill Middle School Principal
- Jennie Smarrelli..... Onondaga Hill Middle School Assistant Principal
- Brett King..... 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

## V. Communication Liaison for the District: Casey Barduhn, Superintendent of Schools

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.

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## School Board Recognition Week October 19 - October 23, 2020

*It's Board of Education  
Appreciation Week!*

*many  
thanks!*

Thank you to the Board of Education  
for your many hours of dedicated service!

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