

Passport to the Impossible

The 2021 version of “The Magic School Bus” is taking OHMS students to the furthest corners of the earth! The Westhill Educational Foundation supported Mrs. Prince’s grant titled, “The Passport to the Impossible”, which utilizes virtual and augmented reality to support the Board of Education’s inquiry learning goals. Students can swim on the ocean floor, walk through the ancient pyramids of Egypt, stand in the middle of a swirling tornado, visit college campuses and so much more! Mrs. Prince says, “The VR experience provides our scholars with immeasurable visual and auditory engagement. We can attend virtual expeditions as a class or explore on our own. But don’t worry, we’ll return to school in time to catch the bus!”



A Peek Inside the Primary Project Playroom

The Primary Project grant is a research based program that enables schools to strengthen and enhance school success and connections through the use of play. Shown here is our child advocate, Mrs. Lasher, in the new Primary Project Playroom at Walberta Park School.



Winter Break

February 15-
February 19



Walberta Park & Cherry Road Schools

Yoga Kids

The Site Based Team at Walberta Park was pleased to offer Yoga Kids this fall. Midge Regier returned to teach our sessions for her final year, as she is retiring from teaching yoga. Thank you to our custodians, administration and Midge for working together to safely hold classes with social distancing, health and sanitation measures in place. The yoga classes helped the children to focus on mindfulness, coordination, flexibility and calmness.



Celebrating Our Strengths

Throughout December, classrooms in Cherry Road decorated the bulletin boards in the hallways to help celebrate our character strengths. Each class collectively picked a trait they have learned about this year and created holiday themed boards to show how they celebrated this strength. It was very exciting to see our halls decked with positivity during this holiday season.



Holiday Happenings

At Cherry Road the worldwide pandemic did not hamper our holiday spirit. While some time honored traditions were not able to happen, some new celebrations were able to emerge. This year instead of holding individual classroom parties and activities, WEST planned holiday celebrations for all Cherry Road students. WEST organized parent volunteers to man three stations that rotated through the cafeteria all while the students stayed in their assigned seats keeping them all socially distant. Students participated in a holiday bingo game, a craft making station and a holiday snow cone snack with holiday activity sheets. Unfortunately, due to the Cherry Road moving to remote instruction, only Cohort B has been able to participate in this celebration. Cherry Road is working with WEST to reschedule this activity for Cohort A students.



Donations Galore

Working with WEST and the Westhill social workers, the elementary schools worked together to collect winter outer wear, as well as gift cards and money to help those in need. Like last year, we were overwhelmed with donations even during a pandemic. Both the gift card initiative, headed up by the Westhill social workers, and the clothing drive, headed up by WEST, were great successes. A very large thank you is sent to the WEST organization and our social workers for organizing and facilitating these programs and to all our families for their generous donations this year.

Onondaga Hill Middle School

Students of the Month

November

5th Grade: Emma Collacchi is a very dedicated student who gives her best effort in everything she does. She is a terrific friend to others and often helps the virtual learners when she attends class in person. Emma's positive attitude is present daily and makes us all smile!

6th Grade: Giana DeTomaso is respectful, friendly, considerate of others and always tries her best. We appreciate Giana and all her hard work during this hybrid way of learning. She's doing an incredible job!

7th Grade: Andrew Mondo is upbeat and helpful. He always participates in P2, is friendly to all of his peers and does excellent work both in-person and remotely.

8th Grade: Cadence Ramsing is one of those students who shows up every day with a smile on her face and tries her best no matter what. She always gets her work in and cares about doing a good job. She is patient, kind, hardworking and always a pleasure to be around. Keep it up, Cadence!



December

5th Grade: Brea Culligan is a fantastic role model student. She shows up to every Google Meet ready to learn, completes her assignments on time, participates with classmates and always has a positive attitude. She is doing an awesome job in 5th grade!

6th Grade: Addison Taylor is hard working, respectful and always doing the right thing whether in school or learning from home. Addison is someone you can count on to participate and always have her work done. Keep up the amazing work!

7th Grade: Hadley Goode is a great student. She works hard and is very conscientious. She has shown a great deal of determination and perseverance this year!

8th Grade: Luke Henesey always provides good insights and thoughts, and is very respectful to everyone in class. He is always very on top of his work and is very conscientious in class.



Onondaga Hill Middle & Westhill High Schools

Art Room Happenings

Dream rooms are overtaking Mrs. Feyerabend's art room. The 5th grade students are designing and building their own dream rooms, using various materials; cardboard, fabric, wallpaper, paint, plastic doo dads, wire and anything not nailed down. They're having a blast! Shown here is Addison Root's work-in-progress.



Mrs. Feyerabend's 6th grade artists created lovely wall pockets to give as holiday gifts. The students folded, curved, attached and carved their way to festive one-of-a-kind decorations. This finished wall pocket was made by Nevaeh Rowley.



Eighth grade artists in Mrs. Feyerabend's art class constructed beautiful clay mugs using the slab method just in time for the holidays! Shown here is Collin White's carrot mug.



Parent Council

Thank you to our Parent Council and the community for another successful Cherrydale fundraiser. Through your efforts, we raised approximately \$7,000 to support our various events at OHMS, including Moving Up Night, BINGO, student planners, etc. Donations are always welcome. The Parent Council Venmo account is @OHMS-ParentCouncil. Thank you!

Happy New Year Teen Zone Savers

Be a smart saver and start the year off right by making smart financial choices. Save in your Teen Zone savings account right at school, and watch your money grow! Let's make this year the best yet! Not yet a Teen Zone saver? Contact Lauri Hoover at 315.728.3474 or lhoover@empowerfcu.com to join. Membership eligibility required. Insured by NCUA.

Spelling Bee

Congratulations to Maille Alt who was our OHMS Spelling Bee Champion at our socially distanced competition in December! Maille and our runners up; Claire Deter, Godwin Kodoe and Tiernan Kenny will move on and compete in the County Spelling Bee.



Westhill High School

Student Council

This school year has proven to be a challenge for everyone in the Westhill High School community. The Student Council officers have met weekly to create spirit weeks, costume contests and plan on how they could represent the student body during the holiday weeks. They selflessly answered the call to help out by shopping and donating funds for Thanksgiving baskets and providing gift cards to families in our community. Although our food drive looked a little different this year, the Student Council officers organized the food donation drop off on Friday evening December 18th. With the generosity of Westhill students, staff and community members, we were able to donate approximately 250+ nonperishable items to local pantries.

Sora - The Digital Library

Calling all readers! Westhill students can borrow from a digital library of over 15,000 ebooks and audiobooks using the reading app Sora. As an extension of Westhill's school libraries, Sora provides a collection of reading materials for students K-12 that makes access to books available anytime, anywhere. Students can check out titles at home, on weekends or during school breaks without worrying about misplacing a book or returning it on time. Digital books automatically return at the end of the lending period. Using Sora is easy. Students select their school from a drop down list, log in with their Westhill Google account and start reading immediately in the browser of a Chromebook, or on a computer, tablet, or smartphone. Find the link to Sora at each school library's website at westhillschools.org. For questions about using Sora, contact your school librarian.

Warriors of the Month

November

9th Grade: Sean Finnerty is a great student and always has something to add to class. He is always willing to help out and always has a kind heart. He helps other students in class and has a great sense of humor.

10th Grade: Aiden Kerr is always an active participant in class whether working remotely at home or in-person at school. When others are apprehensive about speaking during Google Meets, Aiden is brave enough to volunteer his responses. His love of learning and enthusiasm serve as a model for his classmates, and his participation is highly appreciated by his teachers. Way to go, Aiden, keep up the great work!

11th Grade: Zari Abedrabbah has demonstrated maturity and purpose in her approach to learning and teachers and fellow students have noticed. She has shown tremendous perseverance in making the transition to hybrid learning. She motivates herself to complete work and always asks questions when she needs help. She comes to school with a smile on her face, has a kind word for everyone and maintains a sense of humor.

12th Grade: Jaida Welch is the definition of kind. She is always positive and is a friend to all. Jaida can make anyone's day brighter. In addition to her kindness, her hardwork is contagious to all of those around her. Congratulations, Jaida!

December

9th Grade: Azaria White is a wonderful and hard-working student. She constantly participates and is always willing to help others. She is patient and kind with everyone in class and has a great sense of humor. Azaria has great insight to share for in class and remote activities.

10th Grade: Gisele Abdelfatah is an excellent student who is continually pushing herself to be better in the classroom. She helps lead class discussions and is willing to go out on a limb, even if she isn't sure that her answer is right. She is diligent in her work and works well with others in the classroom.

11th Grade: Ryan Grossman is always ready to learn in class. He constantly is engaged and helping other students. He is always thinking deeper about the content.

12th Grade: Tess Felter shows that Other People Matter on a daily basis. Tess is kind and open-minded. Congratulations, Tess!

Westhill High School & District News

Band Students Create Cheer Through Music and Technology

Throughout the months of November and December, Mr. Riley's and Mrs. Tapia's WHS band students learned to make music within an online Digital Audio Workstation (DAW) called Soundtrap. A DAW is an online software that allows students to experience multitrack recording, edit, and collaborate with other musicians. Our students created two separate holiday ensemble projects, one utilizing recorded band instruments only, and a second project that required the use of included additional Soundtrap loops, MIDI recordings, and digital instruments. In both projects, our students selected repertoire and collaborators, planned the musical and expressive aspects of their pieces, recorded, evaluated, re-recorded, and presented their collaborations to the ensembles. You can listen to some of the WHS Band Holiday Ensemble Projects via YouTube at this link. <http://bit.ly/WHSBandHoliday>

Chromebook Challenge

In lieu of its annual Chip In For Education 2020 spring fundraiser, the Westhill Educational Foundation held an online fundraiser this fall to help bridge a district budget gap and allow the district to purchase 100 Chromebooks needed for distance learning.

Westhill families and the greater community responded overwhelmingly to the Chromebook Challenge, and the foundation met its \$30,000 goal. The new Chromebooks will help ensure that the district has enough to loan to any student who needs one for this year's online/hybrid model of learning made necessary by the covid pandemic. (The foundation also did not make individual grant awards this year due to the pandemic.

Due to a national shortage, the district is still waiting on an order of 400 chromebooks it placed last summer to replace outdated models and to work toward having one Chromebook available per student. It has been able to purchase 75 of the 100 paid for by the fundraiser by purchasing them outside their standard BOCES cooperative purchasing. There is no word on when the additional 25 will arrive.

"When the pandemic hit last March and schools across the country switched to remote learning, the need for Chromebooks skyrocketed," said superintendent Casey Barduhn. "With the assistance of the Foundation's generous donation, we were able to place 75 devices in the hands of students immediately. The Westhill Educational Foundation continues to make a difference in the lives of students."

More than \$11,000 of the total was supplied by local businesses who had committed to sponsor Chip In 2020 and donated their sponsorship money when the event was canceled. The rest of the money came from the Westhill community, including from other school-based groups. The Westhill Booster Club, which had also been a Chip In sponsor, and WEST both donated \$1,500 and the Westhill girls' soccer program added \$200. More than 75 individuals in the school community made donations ranging from \$20 to \$7,500.

The following Chip In sponsors donated to the cause; Empower Federal Credit Union and Syracuse Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons (\$2,000); Ferrara Fiorenza PC (\$1,500); Eye Plastic & Reconstructive Surgeons of CNY and Haylor, Freyer & Coon, Inc (\$750); Bond, Schoeneck & King, PLLC, Geddes Federal Savings & Loan, Henderson Wholesale Lamps, Paulus Development (\$500); Barton & Loguidice, D.P.C. (\$300); BeerBoard, Day Automation, Dussing Land Surveying, Leonard Bus Sales, Inc. (\$250); Cameron Group LLC (Township 5), Integrated Strategic Systems, Inc., Solvay Tigers A.C., Inc., and Your Syracuse Family Dentist (\$100).

The foundation is grateful to each and every donor for their continued support and for helping it reach the \$30,000 goal. Follow the Foundation on Facebook for all the latest updates.



District News

Transportation to Nonpublic Schools

Following the guidelines of Section 3635 of New York State Education Law, the Westhill Central School District is advising the parents of students seeking transportation to a nonpublic school that a written request must be submitted to the Westhill Board of Education by April 1st of the preceding year. New residents may submit their request after the April 1st deadline, but must do so within thirty days after establishing residence in the district and must also submit a residency affidavit. The school board may refuse to grant a late transportation request where additional expenses and new transportation arrangements would be necessary. A formal transportation request form may be received directly from the nonpublic school at the time of enrollment and must be completed and received at the Westhill Central School District prior to April 1, 2021. The transportation request form and residency affidavit may be found on the Westhill CSD website under Transportation.

On days in which public schools are scheduled to be closed, in accordance with the Westhill School District calendar, the district is not obligated to transport to the nonpublic schools. Under no circumstances may transportation be provided on legal holidays or Saturdays.

Notice of Annual Inspections

Notice is hereby given that the annual inspection for 2020-2021 of the school buildings, concession stand, and bus garage of the Westhill Central School District for fire hazards, which might endanger the lives of students, teachers, employees therein, has been completed and the report thereof is available at the Westhill CSD Building and Grounds Office during office hours from 8:00AM to 4:00PM. For more information, please contact the following individual: Edward Wittkowski, Superintendent of Buildings and Grounds, L.E.A. Asbestos Designee, 315-426-3396 for inspection by all interested persons.

Notice of Availability of Asbestos Management Plan

As provided under the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act, (AHERA-EPS 40 CFR 763), Westhill Central School District hereby makes known the steps it has undertaken to comply with AHERA and the availability of asbestos management plans.

1. Beginning in 1989, all district owned facilities were inspected for asbestos and management plans were developed for each building according to the requirements of AHERA. Triennial reinspections are conducted every three years. Onondaga-Cortland-Madison BOCES of Syracuse, NY completed the 2004 AHERA Triennial inspection and update to the asbestos management plans.
2. Periodic Surveillance of asbestos containing building materials is conducted every six months.
3. All custodial and maintenance staff have undergone 2-hour Asbestos Awareness Training.
4. All response actions taken are within federal and state guidelines.

Management Plans may be viewed at the Westhill CSD Building and Grounds Office during office hours from 8:00AM to 4:00PM. For more information, please contact the following individual: Edward Wittkowski, Superintendent of Buildings and Grounds, L.E.A. Asbestos Designee, 315-426-3396.

Paint Westvale Purple

Even though the 2020 PWP 5k Run/Walk in April was canceled due to Covid-19, the race committee was still able to make several charitable donations thanks to the generosity of sponsors who donated their sponsorship money and runners who donated their race registration fees. In the spring, the committee donated a total of \$2,500 to five winning charities from our district-wide essay contest. These charities were the ALS Association Upstate New York Chapter, Second Chance Canine Adoption Shelter, the Tuberous Sclerosis Alliance, Autism Speaks and the Ronald McDonald House. In December, the committee donated \$2,500 to the Westhill Holiday Sharing program, which helped provide holiday food and gifts to district families in need.

The race committee is working on plans for some sort of 2021 event in mid-May. Check your email if you were a registered runner in 2019 or check our Facebook page for the latest updates.

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

Non-profit Organization
U.S. Postage PAID
Permit No. 3523
Syracuse, New York

BOARD OF EDUCATION
Lisa M. O'Reilly, President
Roseanne Scrimale, Vice President
James K. Wickersham
Andrew Starowicz
Patrick Cassidy

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.

