



MOUNT PLEASANT

Central School District

FROM THE HEART

SUMMER 2023



CONGRATULATIONS CLASS OF 2023



FROM DR. PETER GIARRIZZO, SUPERINTENDENT

Dear Wildcats,

Congratulations to the entire Mount Pleasant Family for successfully reaching the end of the school year! Each year, the last weeks of school provide us the unique opportunity to look back with gratitude and look forward with excitement. In one of the speeches I gave at a moving up ceremony in June, I quoted Andy Rooney "Everyone wants to live on top of the mountain, but all the happiness and growth occurs while you're climbing it." One of the best parts of the ceremonies for HES, CES, and WMS is celebrating a milestone, but knowing that our journey together will continue in September. This year, each ceremony was a meaningful celebration of hard work and accomplishments of which to be proud. Thank you to all our community organizations and to each of you who worked to make this year a success.

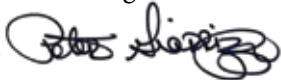
After an unprecedented high school experience, the Class of 2023 stood together on our new turf field for their graduation. What better way to celebrate the end of a school year than with these fine students, my colleagues, The Board of Education, families, and friends to celebrate a truly momentous occasion. Each speech mentioned the bright future ahead for this resilient, hard-working, flexible class. As our seniors bid farewell to their high school years, it is my hope that their time at Westlake has provided them with inspiration to ignite the flames of determination, resilience, and purpose. It has become somewhat of a tradition for me each year to pick a song and frame my graduation speech around it. This year, I selected Van Halen's "Right Now." I encouraged the graduates to step into the world with confidence, knowing that they have the power to make a difference, quoting the lyrics, "It's your tomorrow. C'mon, it's everything. Catch that magic moment. Do it right here and now. It means everything!"

Please join me in congratulating the Westlake High School Class of 2023.

I am amazed by what we are able to accomplish together. This year our students excelled academically, in the fine and performing arts, and in athletics. We now look ahead! We have made hires in each of our schools and updated learning spaces as well as increasing the safety and security in our facilities. The responses to our survey in June informed and confirmed much of our summer planning and the focus of the 2023-2024 school year, which will include major improvements to the instructional program. We look forward to sharing a more comprehensive capital improvement plan very soon!

I wish you a restful August and look forward to our students returning on Tuesday, September 5th.

With kind regards,



SAVE THESE DATES

- 8/31 HES Meet & Greet
CES Back to School BBQ
WMS Bagels & Locks
Details will be sent from each school
- 9/5 Schools Open for Students
Kindergarten at 9 am
- 9/7 Modified Sports Start
HES Back to School Night
- 9/14 CES Back to School Night
- 9/21 WMS Back to School Night
- 9/28 WHS Back to School Night

FULL FALL SCHEDULE:



ONCE A WILDCAT, ALWAYS A WILDCAT!



At the Board Meeting on June 14, we celebrated our retirees - a combined 228 years of service to Mount Pleasant! Please join us in congratulating Carmen Bates, Carlo Capano, Frank Chiera, Debra Fishman, Carol Gold, Ellen Igo, Carolyn Kaufman, Donna Pirro, Ann Reilly, and Mary Knopp. WMS Assistant Principal Christine Parrottino announced her retirement after the end of the school year.

Congratulations and thank you to all our retirees!

GET TO KNOW WESTLAKE'S VALEDICTORIAN & SALUTATORIAN

VALEDICTORIAN ALEJANDRO GOMEZ

Proudest accomplishment: Getting into Columbia University. I'm going to be the first person in my family to attend university, so it holds a special place in my heart not only as a win for me, but as a win for my family and community.

Influential Person: My mother. From teaching me the foundations of my morals, to the importance of education, she's taught me to be a hardworking individual who is ambitious and persevering. She's taught me to be a humble and kind person who is selfless and caring for which I will be forever grateful.

Favorite Westlake memory: Doing the musicals at my school. They're always so much fun, and I've made a lot of long lasting friendships because of it!

After high school: I plan on attending Columbia University, and building up my career (not that I know what it's going to be). I plan on pursuing mathematics in the future and ultimately, having fun and being happy.



SALUTATORIAN KENDALL SPEARMAN

Proudest accomplishment: Without a doubt my work in the theater. It is somewhere I can feel challenged, but I always enjoy moving past these challenges or exceeding my own expectations.

Influential Person: My mom. She has always been incredibly supportive and trustworthy of me which has given me the space I needed to grow and learn life lessons myself. She is the most considerate person I know and I could not be more thankful to have her by my side.

Favorite Westlake memory: This year in my Calc class when Mr. Amann came to observe. I made a giant chocolate lava cake to celebrate as Mr. Amann had heard that we have cake in that class to celebrate birthdays. I like that we always had those mini celebrations for people in the class and it made the class seem like a small family.

After high school: I am completely clueless of what is coming next for me after high school. Whatever I end up doing, I find excitement in the existence of potential and freedom. I just hope wherever I find myself in a year from now, I can be content with my choices.

SENIOR WALK



HAWTHORNE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Hawthorne 2nd graders shined brightly at their Moving Up ceremony! The grade lined up by class, with their teachers for one last time and processed onto the field to the sounds of “Pachelbel’s Canon” for one grade-wide Moving Up celebration- all together as one class!

Principal Anne Stern welcomed guests and Superintendent Peter

Giarrizzo addressed the students first by pointing out to them that they are the Hawthorne Elementary Class of 2023, the Columbus Elementary Class of 2026, the Westlake Middle School Class of 2029, and the Westlake High School Class 2033.

He told that class that he was proud of their hard work the past three years, and reminded them that they each have a little magic inside them. He quoted Roald Dahl’s *The Minpins*, saying “‘Those who don’t believe in magic will never find it.’ As you move up, believe in your magic. It will help you. The future is bright with all of you!”

The ceremony was jam-packed with music! Under the direction of Connie’Marie Rao, students sang, “Stand By Me,” “Count on Me,” “Moj Bubbrec,” “Eh Cumoari,” and for the grand finale, a Hawthorne Class of 2023 original “We are Wildcats” and “We are All in this Together.”

The ceremony closed with Mrs. Stern formally recognizing these newly minted 3rd graders and met them for high fives and pictures on the field to the sounds of Vivaldi’s “The Four Seasons, Spring”

“The first part of your journey is complete: You have learned how to be wonderful partners, teammates, friends, readers, writers, mathematicians, athletes, and artists. You have helped friends, told the truth, used your words to solve a problem, and made sure others were included. You have made us proud.”
-Anne Stern





COLUMBUS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Our Columbus Wildcats lucked out with a picture perfect day for their moving up! The fifth grade, accompanied by their teachers and wearing handsome dark blue mortarboards to commemorate the occasion, processed out into the side field of Columbus to “Pomp and Circumstance.”

Principal Mike Cunzio welcomed students and families and Dr. G kicked off the festivities, “You arrived at Columbus via Zoom in the middle of a pandemic. Connecting and building community was tough, but you did it! I have high hopes and aspirations for the deep, purposeful, fun learning which awaits you at WMS. We will always have your back. We look forward to watching you reach your potential, and giving you what you need to reach the best version of yourself.”

My wish for you is that you'll boldly go where no other Columbus class before you has gone. Congratulations!”
-Mike Cunzio

“The end of your time here is very different from the start,” said Principal Mike Cunzio, “I’m glad we had the opportunity to have fun this year: 4th grade science test (you are the last class to roll golf balls across the ramp, last class ever to do that!), first class to have an end of the year trip to Playland, we celebrated your 1000th day of school since kindergarten, we had some ducks and even one chicken! You learned how to gather evidence to support your



arguments - and I know for a fact you know how to argue. My wish for you is that you’ll boldly go where no other Columbus class before you has gone. Congratulations!”

WMS Principal Anthony Mungoli closed the ceremony saying, “It was great to hear your voices sing today - I look forward to more of that next year! Now it is time to move your tassel to the other side! Congratulations Sixth Graders!”



WESTLAKE MIDDLE SCHOOL

“WMS teachers, we are all grateful to you,” said Superintendent Peter Giarrizzo. “Middle school students can be goofy, aloof, full of wonder and joy, create tumult for themselves and their parents and teachers. Miguel de Cervantes said, ‘In order to attain the impossible, one must attempt the absurd.’ This is your time to try new things, students. Westlake has your back! I encourage you to be bright, be brave, be beautiful, be brilliant, be you! We are proud of you! Congratulations!”

The eighth grade band collaborated one last time on “The Red Cape.” Then student speakers addressed their peers. “Many of you may be nervous about moving up. It is so much pressure! Here is my advice: love what you do; take initiative; if you believe you will succeed; put school ahead of distractions; and treat people with respect. Together we can achieve what we are after. Good luck to us!”

The second quoted Sheryl Sandberg, “Leadership is about making others better.” She continued, “We have faced difficulties but we showed up and did our job. Life is tough but so are we! This is just the beginning of our journey. We are strong. We are resilient. We are Westlake!”

WHS Principal Keith Schenker closed the ceremony by welcoming his newest students, congratulating them, and presenting the WHS Class of 2027.





"Being on this field is incredible; it's the future." He complimented them for who they are and congratulated them, "You are inquisitive, active, you love to be involved. You have strong convictions, but are still willing to listen. You appreciate the value of the smile and the laugh." -Anthony Mungioni



CONGRATULATION

After a decent amount of weather-related concern, the highly anticipated WHS Class of 2023 Graduation on the new turf field went off without a hitch.

"Guys we made it!" Class President Jean Galletti kicked off the historic event and then Principal Keith Schenker stepped up to the podium, welcoming the audience to the 59th Westlake graduation ceremony. "This is the 21st year that I have given a graduation speech. Let me start by telling you that you are well prepared for the future, but please pay attention, because there will be a quiz at the end of this speech!" He continued, "I didn't use ChatGPT to write this speech, but I was tempted. Mr. Schenker used the movie "The Matrix" to frame the rest of his speech, complete with his infamous props - a red and blue pill! "How do we find meaning in a complex life? It all begins with a simple choice - will you swallow the red or blue pill?" He closed by saying, "America allows us to forge our own path, but you need to take that first step. Congratulations Class of 2023!"



WESTLAKE HIGH SCHOOL
CLASS OF 2023



NS CLASS OF 2023!



Salutatorian Kendall Spearman said, "Success is collaborative. Thank you parents! To my fellow graduates, I hope you find ways to create success, whatever that means to you and I hope you never forget the people who brought you there."

The class selected retiring music teacher Carlo Capano to be the faculty speaker, and he did not disappoint, "Amazing! You had no idea what was coming when you entered WHS. I say you're amazing because of hard work and perseverance. I encourage you to work hard, but take time for yourself - make time for yourself. Pressures will always be there, stress crescendos!" Great advice Mr. Capano!

Valedictorian Alejandro Gomez said, "Buenas tardes! Thank you to my family, especially my mom. It's easy to overlook the small things. I encourage you to craft a scrapbook in your mind and in the spontaneous small moments find importance. The road is long. Let us carry on and try to have fun in the meantime. My advice is to live in the moment, take charge, go out with no regrets, hold those you love close, and be the one that takes the chance."

The final speaker of the afternoon was Dr. G, "As you bid farewell to your high school years, it is my hope that your time at Westlake has given you the inspiration to ignite the flames of determination, resilience, and purpose. Step into the world with confidence, knowing that you have the power to make a difference. Thank you all very much, and good luck to the Class of 2023 - the world is waiting for you."



Otoniel Aguirre Veliz
Clemente Elian Alonzo
Gregorio
Daniel Jose Alvarez
David Amchir
Andrea J. Amendano
Gianna Marie Argento
Kiley Rose Astorino
Dylan A. Austin
Matthew J. Bigley
Patrick Thomas Bisaki
Vangelis Bishkoff
Christopher G. Blasone
Gabriella Violet Borello
Alicia Botha
Giana Calandriello
Antonio Michael Campagna
Anthony Noah Caramihai
Allasandra Castellone
Medina Celaj
Robert Joseph Ciliberti
Sofia Gabriella Clark
Michael Eugene Clarke
Gabrielle Cohen
Max Cohen
Alma L. Corona
Daniel Robert Costa
Alyssa Victoria Costello
John Cross
Alanis Cruz
Natalie Sara Dable
Samantha R. DeLouise
Francesca Grace DeMartino
Matthew DiDomizio
Ryan James Dierssen
Rocco F. Dominguez
Tyler Henry Eaton
Katherine Andrea
Espino Fuentes
Kayla Nicole Falcone
Francesco Louis Fiorenza
Paul Robert Fusaro
Jean Galletti
Alejandro Gomez
Damian Frederick Gramajo
David Irving Green
Michael Joseph Griffin
Samantha Michele Haag
Aidan David Hawkins
Kelly E. Horan
Tyler Laurence Howard
Julia Lee Hudd
Wilson Jiang
Kylie Ellen Kaufmann
Christina Rose Kelly
Christian J. Knapp
Kevin James Kraus
Leanna LaGrippe
Rebecca O. Last
Aidan Patrick LeBel
Logan Scott Lee
Morgan Leitch
Natalia Leite
Ella Page Lingeza
Zoe Jun Lisa
Julie Ann Lomurno
Marc Robert Malandrucolo
Liza Maleri
Joseph Douglas Margolis
Nicholas Vincent Marotta





Michaela Flynn Martin
 Michael A. Marto
 ToniAnn Mastracchio
 Katherine Rose McCarthy
 Matthew Louis McClure
 Caroline E. McKeon
 Mary Catherine McLynn
 Albert Mehmedovic
 Isabella Mehmel
 Joseph Alexander Miele
 Yerri de Jesus Miguel
 Melchor
 Eric James Miller
 Marco Minda
 Roberto Molina
 Joseph G. Morrone
 Luca John Mulhare
 Gabriella Nazaruk
 Jack Neglia
 Christian Occhipinti
 Sami Leigh Oswald
 Lena Marie Palushaj
 Tara Christina Panzer
 Andrew In Young Suh Park
 Anthony Persampieri
 Sophia M. Pintavalle
 Paul Anthony Pryor
 Jillian Grace Raguso
 Thomas Hugh Reynolds
 Denisse Rivera Saenz
 Ivanna Rivera Saenz
 Lucas Rodriguez
 Devin Thomas Ryan
 Erika Sanchez Lara
 Daniella Alessandra
 Sanchez Ramirez
 Christopher Schoenleber
 Aidan Michael Schutt
 Samantha Grace Schwan
 Luke Shaw
 Thomas Richard Sherman
 Alexander Thomas Shkreli
 Ryan David Smyth
 Joseph Andrew Soderquist
 Kendall L. Spearman
 Paige A. Spearman
 Luca Matteo Stanco
 Alexis Stratigakis
 Elise Rose Stuetz
 Nicolas Suh Subieta
 Alia Sofia Tarchoun
 Rachel Liz Thomas
 Christina B. Tinelli
 Cristel Valeska Torres
 Cantos
 Anthony William Tothill
 Joseph Thomas Tricomi
 Chloe Eve Vigilio
 Naya Vulaj
 Aileen Casey Walsh
 Paulina Werynski
 Christopher Thomas
 Williams
 Dean Michael Williams
 Kathryn Marie Wilson
 Richard Joseph Wilson
 Javier Martin Wurster
 Korey Zheng
 Julia Selena Zhinin



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CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR SPRING 2023 ATHLETES!



BASEBALL



GOLF



BOYS LACROSSE



GIRLS LACROSSE



SOFTBALL



TENNIS



BOYS TRACK



GIRLS TRACK



SCAN FOR FULL FALL SCHEDULE