



HAT'S HAPPENING

CITIZENSHIP • CHARACTER • EDUCATION • WISDOM • KNOWLEDGE • SCHOLARSHIP • SERVICE • INTEGRITY

DECEMBER 2012

1st Quarter Accomplishments



High School High Honor Roll



High School Improvement Roll



Middle School High Honor Roll



Middle School Improvement Roll



National Honor Society Inductees

Front row- Kira McCall, Oona Quinn, Marcella DelPlato, Katie Kolyer, Allison Henderson, Victoria Mason

Back row- Chris Allard, Joe Montondo, Nick Vitalone, Thomas Ferland, Anderson Luke, Hunter Secor, Adam Johnson



Holiday Concerts

4th Grade – December 11th, 7:00 pm

High School – December 13th, 7:00 pm

5th & 6th Grade – December 18th, 7:00 pm

7th and 8th Grade – December 20th, 7:00 pm



Old English 御 Awards

High School . . .

"If you haven't got any charity in your heart, you have the worst kind of heart trouble." ~Bob Hope

Let me begin by wishing everyone a happy and healthy holiday season! It seems like just days ago that we began the 2012-13 school year at Williamson High School and already the 2nd marking period is well underway. Our students are in a great position to build on their positive results from the 1st marking period.



*Douglas Lauf
High School Principal*

Highlights from the school year so far include:

- 168 students earned merit, honor, or high honor roll (47% of the student body!)
- 54 students earned improvement roll with a 5 or more point GPA increase over 4th marking period last school year (no failures or incompletes) and 4 more students earned sustained improvement roll by building on their previous improvement roll status with another 1 point or more GPA increase
- All our Fall Varsity Sports Teams were recognized as NYSPHSAA Scholar Athlete Teams for carrying 90.0% or higher averages during the season
- Congratulations to the Boy's Varsity Soccer Team who captured a 2nd straight Sectional Title and advanced to the Final Four within the NY State Tournament
- Congratulations to Heather Kramberg and Jacob Bailey who were NY State representatives for Cross-Country



Boy's Varsity Soccer Team



*State Cross Country
Qualifiers - Jake Bailey,
Heather Kramberg*

Middle School . . .

Nearly 70% of the students in the Middle School are on the achievement, merit, honor or high honor roll for the first quarter. Students are proud of their accomplishments and teachers are continuing to work hard to instruct and challenge the students. Students are encouraged to be responsible for their learning and seek assistance if needed. Together with families and the community, we encourage students to put forth their best effort and actively engage in their learning.



John E. Fulmer
Middle School Principal

Activities that have occurred in the first quarter of this year at the Middle School include:

- Volunteer Club - Various activities are being planned and they have already sold baked goods as a fundraiser. Students are also making gifts for the Wayne Co. Humane Society, and holiday cards for senior citizens.
- Student Association – Officers have been elected and many opportunities are planned for the future.
- Book Fair - All students were given the opportunity to purchase discounted books and school supplies. Students (and parents) purchased over \$2500 worth of books this year.
- Reading Blizzard – In November a reading incentive for 5th and 6th graders was successfully held. For every 20 minutes a student read they made a “snowball” that was thrown at Mr. Fulmer during a “blizzard” in the MS auditorium. Over 1000 snowballs were made and tossed.
- FAME – Tryouts and rehearsals began the first week of the school year and the school musical was successfully performed on November 2nd and 3rd. There were over 100 participants.
- Olweus Program – Weekly meetings and activities occur throughout the year to discuss anti-bullying strategies.
- WMS Pride – International Club highlights positive character traits expressed through different languages and customs. A mentoring group has been formed supporting the CDS Monarch Developmental Services Program.
- Red Ribbon Week – A week-long focus on educating a drug free lifestyle school wide including capturing a great deal of school spirit.
- Modified Athletics - Over 90 students participated in extra-curricular athletics at the Middle School during the fall season.
- Report Card Night – Over 68% of Middle School parents picked up their student’s report card and had an opportunity to speak directly to classroom teachers.

Upcoming events...

- Written round of the Spelling Bee – December 13th after school.
- 5th and 6th Grade Holiday Concert – December 18th @ 7:00.
- 7th and 8th Grade Holiday Concert – December 20th @ 7:00.



Mrs. Stookey's 6th grade class



Reading Blizzard

Elementary School . . .

The Elementary School has been a very busy place from September to now! Our classrooms are bursting with excited students, learning and growing every day.



Ellen Saxby
Elementary School Principal

We kicked off the school year with an Anti-Bullying assembly the last week of September. Mrs. Seniuk and Mrs. Tuchrelo led the entire building with the assembly, as we celebrated the differences in each one of us. We ended this special event by taking a pledge, as an entire elementary family, not to bully others. Our pledge also included committing to help others if they were in a bullying situation. It was a wonderful way to kick off the school year and I am pleased to say I see many students making good choices on a daily basis.

I also have been in many classrooms, visiting the incredible learning opportunities the teachers are providing our students. You may be hearing some new academic terms from your child including “math sprints”, “get the gist” and “close reading”. Your child’s teacher will be able to share much more of what is going on in the classroom. The parent- teacher conferences are a wonderful time to discuss the learning and progress of your child.

Here are some other wonderful events that have taken place in the Elementary School:

Roller Skating Parties	Big Pumpkin Day	Delphi Program
Family Olweus Meetings	Open House	School Pictures
3rd Grade Dictionary Donation from the Rotary		PTSA Fundraiser
4th Grade Dictionary Donation from the Elks		Fire Department Visit

Have a wonderful holiday season! I wish you and your family all the best.



Big Pumpkin Day Hayride



Fire Prevention Week



Wendy Havens - Assistant Superintendent

The Common Core State Standards and New York State Assessments

The Common Core State Standards (CCSS) are a set of learning skills that all American students should achieve. They set the benchmarks and guidelines for what each student should learn, not how or what teachers teach. In general, standards set a progression of skills that students learn as they move through school. Kindergarteners work on phonics and letter sounds, while eighth graders work on building vocabulary and reading fluency. The common core state standards focus on the most important topics that students need to know. In math, that means that students focus on really understanding numbers in elementary school before they start to apply that understanding of numbers to data in middle school.

As the common core is implemented in English Language Arts, students will be expected to read more difficult text sooner, spend more time reading informational text and discuss what they read at a more complex level.

Every year, students in grades 3-8 take New York State tests in English Language Arts and Math to demonstrate their mastery of State standards. Beginning in the 2012-13 school year, these tests will be aligned to the Common Core standards. Compared to current state achievement tests, common core assessments will be more difficult. Students will be analyzing and synthesizing information, writing essay responses, and answering in-depth questions to show how much they understand. Here are examples of Grade 5 ELA and math questions:

Sample New York State Assessment Questions for Grade 5

	Old Standards	Common Core Standards
English Language Arts	According to the passage, which of these birds will most likely learn to talk? A an old male bird B a young male bird C an old female bird D a young female bird Read this sentence from the passage. <i>Those sounds could be annoying noises like a baby crying, the ringing of a telephone, or the clatter of a computer printer.</i> In this sentence, “annoying” means that the noises A bother people B confuse people C sound like birds D sound like music Why do you think Mr. Naismith’s students enjoyed playing the game he invented? Use details from the article to support your answer.	The narrator of the story helps the reader understand the grandfather by A describing his face and revealing his thoughts B describing his home and quoting his speech C telling Heidi’s opinion of him and revealing his past D telling his emotions and showing his frustration When the grandfather says in paragraph 6 that Heidi is “not wanting in intelligence,” he means that she A seems to be a very bright child B says things she does not mean C impresses him with her knowledge D appears to misunderstand what he is saying Both stories are told from the perspective of an animal. How does this perspective affect how the stories are told? Compare and contrast how Black Beauty and the robin view their surroundings. Using details from both passages, describe how the animals’ perspectives influence how events are described.
Math	Manny owns 83 sets of basketball cards. Each set has exactly 504 cards. What is the total number of basketball cards Manny owns? A 4,462 B 5,544 C 41,832 D 42,662 Dante’s bath towel is 1 yard long. What measure is equivalent to 1 yard, in inches? A 3 B 12 C 36 D 108 Which number represents two million forty-five thousand five hundred five? A 2,045,055 B 2,450,505 C 2,045,505 D 2,450,055	Carson needs to purchase 5.6 meters of tape for a project. If each roll of tape contains 80 cm and costs \$5, what is the total cost of the tape that Carson must buy? Which mathematical expression is equivalent to the number sentence below? <i>Subtract 15 from 45, and then divide by 3.</i> A $15-45 \div 3$ B $(45-15) \div 3$ C $(15-45) \div 3$ D $3 \div (45-15)$ Half of a school auditorium is needed to seat 3 equal-sized fifth grade classes. Part A: Make a visual fraction model to represent the whole auditorium when each class is seated in separate sections. Part B: Write an expression to determine what fractional part of the auditorium one fifth grade class will need. Part C: What fraction of the auditorium will one of the fifth grade classes need?

continued on next page

Parent Tips

There are a number of ways that parents can support their children as the common core standards are implemented:

- As you read with your child, ask her in-depth why and how questions that encourage her to analyze and synthesize texts. For example, read three different versions of the Goldilocks and the Three Bears and ask your child to compare and contrast them as you read.
- Encourage your child to research a topic he's interested in using informational texts and original documents.
- Ask your child to explain or show how she is solving problems. Then, have her think of multiple ways to solve a math problem, or answer a reading discussion question.
- As your child works through his homework, ask him how someone might use what he's working on in "real life." Help connect thinking in school to thinking at work by explaining how you solve problems, or use math every day.

To learn more about the Common Core Standards you may view the National PTA's Parents' Guide to Student Success: <http://www.pta.org/4446.htm> or the New York State Education Department's EngageNY website: <http://engageny.org/>.

Message from the BOE President...

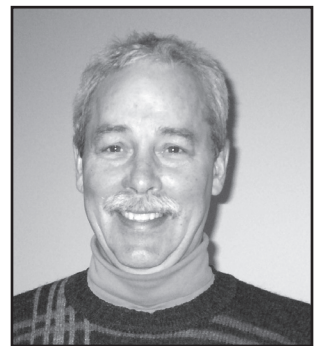
"Fewer and fewer Americans possess objects that have a patina, old furniture, grandparents' pots and pans, the used things, warm with generations of human touch, essential to a human landscape. Instead, we have our paper phantoms, transistorized landscapes. A featherweight portable museum. "

-Susan Sontag, American writer, 1933-2004

In the daily rush to "keep all the balls in the air" we sometimes lose sight of the reasons why we are juggling. At the recent New York State School Boards Association conference in Rochester, we had the opportunity to share ideas and experiences with districts from across the state. The common denominator is that we are all being held accountable for doing more with less. Perhaps more important, the mood was not one of despair or resignation. On the contrary, boards and districts are accepting the challenge and looking for ways to navigate the myriad details. We are exploring a number of options to not only meet the needs of our students today but also provide a foundation for the future. We are reaching out to our political representatives to enlist their aid at the state and federal levels. We will continue to keep our community up-to-date on our progress.

While it is certainly important to recognize the challenges we all face, it is equally important to take a moment to acknowledge that overall, we live and work in a community that respects traditional values of integrity, scholarship and citizenship. In fact, those words are carved in stone at the Middle School. With a respect for tradition comes an appreciation for our heritage. This is the perfect time of year to take a moment to consider where we have been and look forward to where we are going.

On behalf of the board, we wish you a happy and healthy holiday season. Please stay informed, engaged and in touch.



Michael Collins
Board of Education President



Message from the Superintendent . . .

Superstorm In Public Education

As I thought about what to write in this edition, I spent a lot of time deciding on how to best frame where we are. There are some days this year, that I feel engulfed in a superstorm and after Sandy hit earlier this fall, I realized that there was a parallel to be drawn between what happened with Superstorm Sandy and what is happening in public education.

As with Sandy, public education is facing the convergence of many factors that stand to change the future. We are faced with a property tax cap, a ceiling on the amount of state aid the district can receive, a "Gap Elimination Adjustment" to the amount of state aid we received in the past, no real mandate relief from the state, a Race to the Top Initiative that has cost the district hours of time and unexpected expense, and soaring pension and medical costs. Pointing fingers will not solve any of these issues. However, if some of these issues are not solved, public education across New York State will face educational and/or fiscal insolvency.

As a district, we are holding our own for now. We have cut positions, shared with other districts and received concessions from our unions. We will continue to do what is in our realm of control. My real concern is not for this year or next year, but rather for five years from now. Some of the problems listed in the paragraph above need to be solved for public education to remain solvent. The solutions for these are far beyond our district's control. We have heard about the governor's commission on education this year and last. Last year, the focus was on mandate relief and there were no recommendations that were enacted. This year, the majority of the commission is made up of bankers, charter school advocates and many others who have little or no knowledge of public education. Their recommendations have not yet been made public.

The governor's budget is made public in January. Once that is shared, the district will need to move forward with budget planning for next year. I hope I am incorrect in believing that there will be no significant action on the part of the governor and legislature, but after eleven years in this position, I have my doubts. We can not stand by idly for another year, we need changes made now. I am asking that you become an active participant in the problem-solving process. You can do this in several ways. Beginning at the end of January and continuing until the end of April, we will be posting budget related information to our web-site (www.williamsoncentral.org) and on our Facebook page (www.facebook.com/williamsoncentralschool). The best way to be informed is to come to our Board meetings. At each of the meetings (January 30, February 27, March 13, April 10, April 24, Budget Hearing - May 8), we will begin the meeting with a budget presentation followed by a period for public comment. We hope that you will consider attending all or one of these.

Thank you for your continued and future support.



Maria Ehresman
Superintendent of Schools

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