



# HAT'S HAPPENING

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

DECEMBER 2013

## 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter Accomplishments



**High School High Honor Roll**



**High School Improvement Roll**



**5th and 6th Grade October  
Students of the Month**



**7th and 8th Grade October  
Students of the Month**

# Holiday Events



## Williamson High School Drama Presentation of A Christmas Carol

Friday, December 6, 2013 at 7:00 pm  
Saturday, December 7, 2013 at 7:00 pm

## Williamson High School Vocal and Instrumental Holiday Concert

Tuesday, December 10, 2013 at 7:00 pm  
(Snow Date ~Friday, December 20, 2013)

## Elementary School Musical – “Pinocchio Jr.”

Friday, December 13, 2013 at 7:00 pm (Middle School Auditorium)  
Saturday, December 14, 2013 at 7:00 pm (Middle School Auditorium)

## 4th Grade Concert

Tuesday, December 17th at 7:00 pm (Elementary Gymnasium)

## 7th and 8th Grade Concert

Wednesday, December 18th at 7:00 pm

## 5th and 6th Grade Concert

Thursday, December 19th at 7:00 pm



# Old English 卐 Awards

*The Old English 卐 Award is presented to the student in each class who had the highest average in the course.*

# High School . . .

*"We make a living by what we get. We make a life by what we give."*

*~ Winston Churchill*

Let me begin by wishing everyone a happy and healthy holiday season! It seems like just days ago that we began the 2013-14 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 2013-14 school year so far include:

- 181 students earned merit, honor, or high honor roll (52% of the student body!)
- 33 students earned Student of the Month honors over the course of September and October
- The Varsity MasterMinds Team is off to a tremendous 4 – 0 start to the season and the JV Team is doing quite well at 3 - 1
- The Model UN Debate Club competed in their first event of the year at the Model UN Conference in Hilton



*Boys Soccer Team - Section V Champions  
Congratulations to the Boys Varsity Soccer Team  
who captured a 3rd straight Sectional Title and  
advanced to the NY State Tournament*



*John E. Fulmer*  
*Middle School Principal*

## Middle School . . .

We have successfully completed our first 10 weeks of the school year and have witnessed a great deal of growth and development from the students. The faculty continues to encourage students to stay organized and give their best effort. Our academic and behavioral expectations remain high for all students.

Our new report card more accurately identifies students' progress toward meeting the new Common Core Learning Standards. Students' work habits will be in a separate column, alongside individual achievement scores for each class. Students are proud of their accomplishments and teachers are continuing to work diligently to instruct and challenge them. Students are encouraged to seek assistance if needed and be responsible for their learning. Together with families, we encourage students to put forth their best effort and engage in learning.

Our discipline has again decreased significantly over the first quarter of the year. For the first two months of the school year disciplinary referrals were down 22% from the previous year.

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

- **Student Association** – officers have been elected and many activities are planned for the future.
- **Book Fair** - All students were given the opportunity to purchase discounted books and school supplies. Students purchased over \$3000 worth of books this year.
- **Travel Club** – Forty 8th grade students traveled to historic Boston in October.
- **International Club and Newspaper Club** – Active clubs with over twenty participants.
- **Odyssey of the Mind** – Two teams from the Middle School will participate in regional competitions.
- **Drama Club** – Sixty-five students saw War Horse and participated in a Rochester Broadway Theatre League workshop.
- **Distance Learning** – Twenty-five 7th and 8th graders actively participated in a symposium with the Women's Hall of Fame.
- **Educational Field Trips** - 6th grade students went to the Rochester Museum and Science Center for a Mission to Mars; other grade level trips are planned.
- **Red Ribbon Week** – A week-long focus on educating a drug free lifestyle school wide included capturing a great deal of school spirit.
- **Modified Athletics** - Over 100 students participated in extra-curricular athletics at the Middle School during the fall season.
- **Report Card Night** – Over 73% of Middle School parents picked up their students' report card and had an opportunity to speak directly to classroom teachers.
- **MAP (Measures of Academic Progress) Testing** – All students in the Middle School participated in this standardized testing that allowed students, teachers and parents to immediately know of reading and math ability levels.
- **Olweus Program** – Weekly meetings and activities occur throughout the year to discuss anti-bullying strategies.



*8th Graders in Boston*



*Students in Computer Lab*

# Elementary School . . .

The elementary school has had a wonderful start to the new school year. Students and staff have been working very hard with the new Common Core Learning Standards that were developed nationally. In addition to all the new learning in reading and math, students are also working hard in their special area classes. Of course, we have also had some incredible learning experiences outside the classrooms including a fun-filled Big Pumpkin Day! Thank you to all the wonderful parent and student volunteers who helped to make this a successful day for our elementary students!



*Ellen Saxby*  
*Elementary School Principal*

The Common Core State Standards require students and teachers to shift in their learning and teaching in order to increase the rigor in the classroom. The transition has been a change for all of us, but one we are embracing. Parents can help by talking with their children about what they are learning in school. Ask your child specific questions about their core subjects and review homework on a regular basis. In English Language Arts/Reading your child is reading both non-fiction and fiction and more challenging material. They are talking about their reading and writing using text based answers (or evidence) and are expanding and enriching their vocabulary. In Math students are learning more about less topics and building their problem solving skills.

I have had the great opportunity to visit many classrooms and have seen these incredible learning opportunities the teachers are providing our students. The students are excited and engaged daily here at the elementary school. We look forward to a wonderful year of learning!

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



*Big Pumpkin Day*



*Fire Prevention Week*



*Wendy Havens -  
Assistant Superintendent*

## Common Core State Standards

In 2010, the New York State Board of Regents adopted the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) to make sure that all children succeed once they graduate from high school. These standards were developed through a national effort that included experts, teachers and researchers from forty-six states. They are important because they will help all children – no matter who they are – learn the same skills. This will make sure that they are ready for college and careers.

The Common Core State Standards show what students in Pre-K through 12th grade should know and be able to do in English language arts and mathematics. The standards will help all students across the State learn the same skills. The standards include changes, or “shifts,” in how teachers teach to help children succeed in the topics and skills that matter most. The New York State Education Department has developed resources for parents to help them understand the changes. The charts below are excerpts from the State materials and show some of the shifts, what you might see in your child’s backpack and what you can do to help your child.

### English Language Arts

| What’s Shifting?                                                                                                               | What to Look for in the Backpack?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | What Can You Do?                                                                                             |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Your child will now read more non-fiction in each grade level.                                                                 | Look for your children to have more reading assignments based on real-life events, such as biographies, articles and historical stories.                                                                                                                                                              | Read non-fiction books with your children. Find ways to make reading fun and exciting.                       |
| Your child will read challenging texts very closely, so they can make sense of what they read and draw their own conclusions.  | Your children will have reading and writing assignments that might ask them to retell or write about key parts of a story or book.                                                                                                                                                                    | Provide more challenging texts for your children to read. Show them how to dig deeper into difficult pieces. |
| When it comes to writing or retelling a story, your child will use “evidence” gathered from the text to support what they say. | Look for written assignments that ask your child to draw on concrete examples from the text that serve as evidence. Evidence means examples from the book that your child will use to support a response or conclusion. This is different from the opinion questions that have been used in the past. | Ask your child to provide evidence in everyday discussions and disagreements.                                |

### Mathematics

| What’s Shifting?                                                                                        | What to Look for in the Backpack?                                                                                                                           | What Can You Do?                                                                                                                             |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Your child will work more deeply in fewer topics, which will ensure full understanding.                 | Look for assignments that require students to show their work and explain how they arrived at an answer.                                                    | Know what concepts are important for your child based on their grade level and spend time working on those concepts.                         |
| Your child will spend time practicing and memorizing math facts.                                        | Look for assignments that ask your child to master math facts such as addition groupings up to 20 or multiplication tables.                                 | Help your child know and memorize basic math facts. Ask your child to “do the math” that pops up in daily life.                              |
| Your child will understand why the math works and be asked to talk about and prove their understanding. | Your child might have assignments that ask her or him to show or explain their mathematical thinking - to SAY why they think their answer is the right one. | Talk to your children about their math homework and ask them to teach you new concepts. Help them figure out ways to explain their thinking. |

To see more examples of the shifts or to access additional information please visit [www.engageny.org](http://www.engageny.org).

# Message from the BOE President...

*"You must learn day by day, year by year, to broaden your horizon. The more things you love, the more you are interested in, the more you enjoy, the more you are indignant about, the more you have left when anything happens." – Ethel Barrymore, 1879-1959*

Education is the key to opening a world of possibilities. The more we know, the better prepared we are to discover the joys and wonder of the world around us. Our children are learning something new every day. Maybe more important, they are learning how to learn. The entire district team is committed to creating an environment that encourages curiosity while providing our students with the tools they will need to navigate a changing future. On behalf of the board, I would like to congratulate our administrators, teachers and staff on the work they have done to make the implementation of new programs as smooth as possible. It is a testament to their dedication and professionalism that instead of complaining they look for ways to succeed under difficult circumstances. At the recent NYS School Boards Association conference we heard from other boards that they have not fared as well. We will continue to advocate for our district at the local, state and national levels to ensure we can deliver quality education while meeting the needs of our community. If you haven't done so, please welcome our new superintendent Dr. Greg Macaluso. Of course, if you have any questions let us know. Please stay informed, engaged and in touch. Thank you for your support.



Michael Collins  
Board of Education President

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## **NYS STAR SCHOOL PROPERTY TAX RELIEF**

New York State has enacted new legislation that requires all homeowners who receive a Basic STAR exemption to register with the New York State Tax Department in order to receive the exemption in 2014 and subsequent years. This will not have an effect on the 2013 STAR exemption. Homeowners that currently participate in the STAR program will receive registration instructions in the mail. The registration deadline is December 31, 2013. Additional information can be found at the New York State Tax website [www.tax.ny.gov](http://www.tax.ny.gov) or by calling (518) 457-2036.

Senior citizens that are currently receiving Enhanced STAR exemptions are not impacted by the registration program. They will continue to apply annually or participate in the Income Verification Program.

The registration program is an initiative to protect New Yorkers against the cost of inappropriate or fraudulent STAR exemptions.

## **CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT UPDATE**

As part of our 2013 Capital Improvement Project, public bids were accepted on October 15th, and contracts approved at the October 23rd Board of Education meeting. A high bidder turnout provided the District with great value for this scheduled work. This

project was approved by the voters in March, 2012 and is funded entirely by state aid and the District's Capital Reserve Fund (no increase to local taxes). Work is scheduled to take place over the upcoming holiday breaks, and into the Spring and Summer months, with completion scheduled prior to the start of the 2014 school year. The project includes District-wide building improvements such as roofing at all three buildings, fire alarm replacement at the high school, water heaters, technology upgrades, and other minor building repair work.



Gary Barno  
School Business  
Administrator

# Message from the Superintendent . . .

As “the new guy” I have truly been enjoying getting to know the Williamson community. I appreciate the warm welcome I consistently receive while attending events, meeting community members, and as I conduct literally hundreds of one-on-one “getting to know you meetings.” My interactions with the faculty, staff, administration, students, community members, and board of education over the past four months have confirmed what I had believed to be true about Williamson. This is a community of hardworking people who have high expectations and, for good reason, a lot of pride.



*Greg Macaluso*  
*Superintendent of Schools*

I recall the first time my wife Monica and I set out to explore Williamson to see if we thought this community would be a “fit” for us. We headed south off of Rt. 104 and were awe struck by the beautiful rolling orchards. We were even more impressed to see the farmers in the fields trimming trees. It was 14 degrees Fahrenheit outside! Williamson does not hibernate . . . regardless of whether you are north or south of 104. The hard working mentality of this community stretches far beyond the orchards; to the faculty and staff who put their heart and soul into their work; to the volunteers who help with Grandparents’ Day and organize Big Pumpkin Day; to the students who follow the modeling of the adults working hard at their academics and extracurricular activities.

Hard work is driven by high expectations and breeds pride in Williamson. One case in point would be the Friday of Homecoming. I was invited to the high school at 7:00 am to judge the hall decorating contest and again at the end of the day to be introduced to the student body by student council. I was very impressed with the work the students did transforming the hallways into Nashville, Hollywood, Paris, and New York City. To me, these displays stood as a metaphor to the high expectations we hold in academics . . . these expectations manifest into other areas. The very well attended pep-rally at the end of the day stood as testimony to the pride our children have in their school.

I like to call it “Williamson Pride.” It is everywhere, evident in our transportation department, food service, buildings and grounds, support staff, the community and academic programs. Our faculty, staff, and administration are always eager to share what they are doing. Hard work, high expectations, and pride . . . That is the name of the game here at Williamson. I want to thank you all for such a warm welcome; I am humbled and proud to be your school superintendent.

Williamson Central School  
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