



HAT'S HAPPENING

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

DECEMBER 2014



Holiday Events



Williamson High School Vocal and Instrumental Holiday Concert

Tuesday, December 9, 2014 at 7:00 pm (High School Auditorium)

7th and 8th Grade Concert

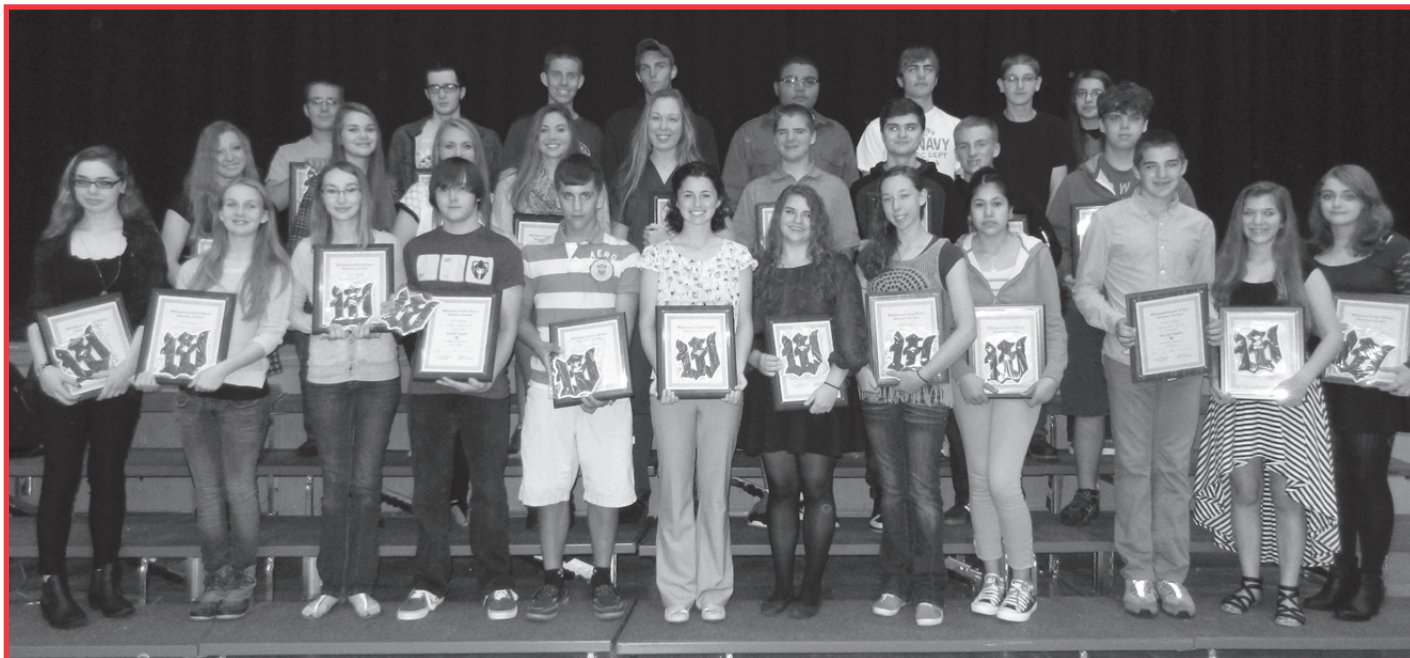
Thursday, December 11th at 7:00 pm (Middle School Auditorium)

4th Grade Concert

Tuesday, December 16th at 7:00 pm (High School Auditorium)

5th and 6th Grade Concert

Thursday, December 18th at 7:00 pm (Middle School Auditorium)



Old English W Awards

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



The Addams Family



High School . . .

"Every child deserves a champion: An adult who will never give up on them, who understands the power of connection and insists they become the best they can possibly be". Rita Pierson

Greetings Williamson Families!

As we settle into the second marking period, it seems surprising that the year is already a quarter of the way completed. Students have been making us proud in the classroom, on stage, and on the field.

Some highlights include:

- During our annual fall pep rally we celebrated 1954 graduate Ruther Sheppard, the 'father' of our Marauder mascot for his contributions to our school. Students gave an incredibly enthusiastic and warm welcome, and we will be celebrating future Homecoming Fridays as 'Marauder Day' in his honor.
- The French Club put on our first ever Homecoming Dance, the beginning of a great new tradition here at WHS.
- 16 Students of the Month for September, 14 Students of the Month for October, nominated by teachers for excellence in effort and achievement and recognized in Forum.
- 23 students in the Select Choir performed solos or ensemble pieces at the 6th annual Cabaret concert.
- Senior Mark Saile represented Williamson at the NYS Cross Country Meet, placing 83rd of all runners competing statewide.
- The cast and crew of the Addams Family, directed by Jessica Witulski, played to a packed house November 7th and 8th.
- Each month classes can be recognized by their teachers for demonstrating attributes of the ROAR (Respectful, Organized, Accepting, and Responsible) on 'Timbit Tuesday'. Selected nominees so far include Mrs. Luke's, Mr. Stringer's, and Ms. Caraveo's classes, and are the recipients of free treats from administration.
- We have inducted our Fall 2014 Old English **III** recipients.
- 8 individuals were inducted into the National Honor Society on November 18.

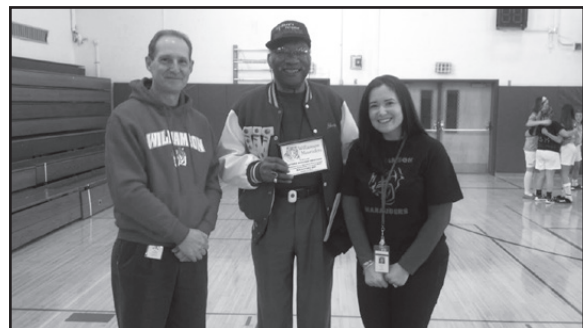
Additionally, our staff members are working extremely hard to support the needs of their students, and are trying new strategies and tools to enhance their practice. Teachers are implementing new tools such as Google Classroom, Chromebooks, and Apple tv, and are working with Common Core modules in English and Math in 9th and 10th grades, as well as focusing on literacy in all content areas.



Kathryn Avery
High School Principal



Pep Rally



Ruther Sheppard



John E. Fulmer
Middle School Principal

Middle School . . .

Our students have successfully completed their first 10 weeks of the school year. Students are continuing to learn and develop. The faculty encourages students to stay organized and give their best effort. Our academic and behavioral expectations remain high for all students.

Our report card accurately identifies student's progress toward meeting the new Common Core Learning Standards. Students' work habits are in a separate column, alongside individual assessment 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 and participating in the whole school experience.

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. A canned food drive is in progress benefiting the Williamson Come-Unity Center.
- **Roller Skating** – 5th and 6th graders have the opportunity once again.
- **Spelling Bee** – The annual spelling bee begins in December (a national qualifier is still in the Middle School!).
- **Book Fair** – All students were given the opportunity to purchase discounted books and school supplies in November.
- **Travel Club** – Forty-five 8th grade students traveled to historical 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 regionally.
- **Drama Club** – Auditions for *The King and I* took place in November and the performances will be January 22nd and 23rd.
- **Educational field trips** - 6th grade went to Rochester Museum and Science Center for a Mission to Mars; other grade level trips are planned including the Genesee Country Museum.
- **Red Ribbon Week** – A week-long focus on educating a drug and bully free lifestyle school wide. A great deal of school spirit took place. Fifty-seven students participated in hall decorating.
- **PTSA fundraisers** – Square 1 Art project had over 20 participants and gift cards are now on sale.
- **Modified Athletics** – Over 70 students participated in extra-curricular athletics at the Middle School during the fall season.



- **Report Card Night** – Over 70% 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 reading and math ability levels.
- **Olweus Program** – Weekly meetings and activities occur throughout the year to discuss anti-bullying strategies.
- **Volunteer Club** – Shoeboxes will be filled with essential personal items and delivered to the Open Door Mission.

Elementary School . . .

The elementary school has had a wonderful start to the 2014-2015 school year. Students, teachers and staff are all working hard to make this year a successful learning experience. We have a strong emphasis on reading, writing and math skills here in the elementary school which is evident in all our classrooms, including the special area classes. The increased rigor in the classrooms has challenged and motivated our students. Students are reaching new goals in their personal learning, which has been evident in our increased number of "I Can" awards. I am very proud of all the hard work both students and teachers are showing on a daily basis!



Ellen Saxby
Elementary School Principal

The learning for our elementary students extends past the classroom. Our students also have had wonderful learning opportunities outside the classroom, including a trip to the Williamson Fire Hall and Big Pumpkin Day. A big thank you to our Big Pumpkin Moms, Michelle Kuhl and Jody Schmeelk, and all the wonderful volunteers that helped make this such a special day for our students!

The year will continue to bring our students additional learning opportunities. Make sure to read the monthly newsletter to get the most up to date information about what is happening in the elementary school. 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. We look forward to a wonderful year of learning!

Have a wonderful holiday season!





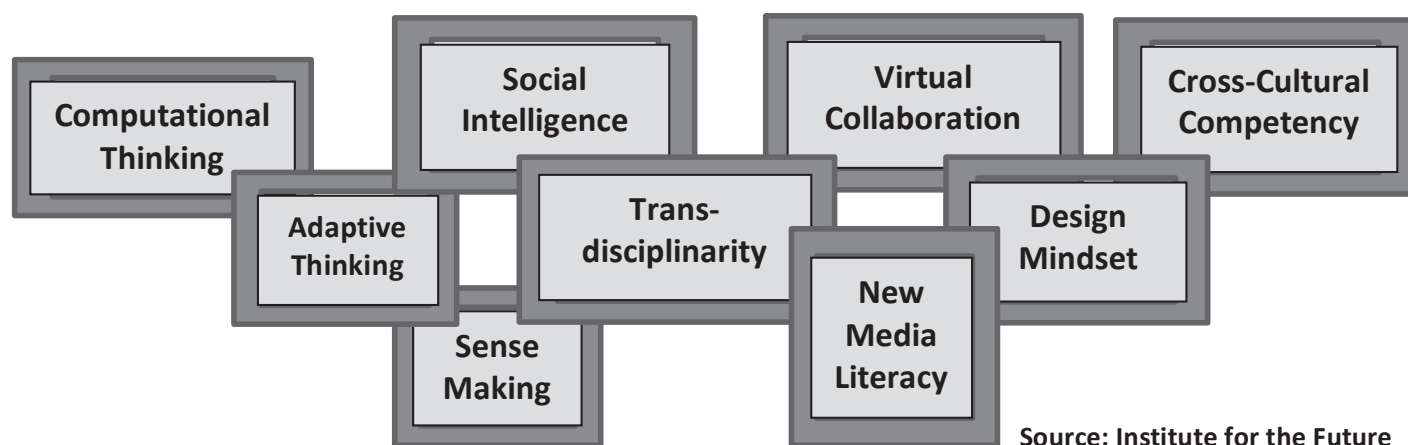
*Marygrace Ferrando -
Assistant Superintendent*

COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS

A Strong Team of **THINKERS**

I am impressed with the dedication of Williamson's parents, community members, and school staff as we work together to provide a quality educational experience for our children. Over the last several years we have implemented **new state standards** in math and ELA. This year, we have new standards for social studies, and updated science standards are on the way. Schools now have approval to provide more flexible pathways for graduation that honor student choice and interest. **Why all of these changes?** The current changes we are experiencing in education are born out of the need to provide students with the tools for **their** futures. The skills, concepts and knowledge our children need are **vastly different** from those that drove the workforce of our generation(s).

According to **Future Work Skills 2020** research, these are the skills that will drive our future workforce:



In support of this vision, the new standards focus on higher level thinking, collaboration and problem solving. Across all grade levels and content areas, there is a stronger emphasis on more complex thinking like **analyzing, supporting, interpreting, creating and evaluating**.

What can we do outside of the school day to support this emphasis on THINKING?

- ❖ Encourage your child to read widely about many different topics and cultures
- ❖ Find the mathematical thinking that happens every day and talk about it with your child
- ❖ Ask questions that start with **WHY** and **HOW** instead of **WHAT**, **WHEN** and **WHERE**
- ❖ Encourage brainstorming and consideration of alternative solutions
- ❖ Enjoy and experience the arts
- ❖ Foster imagination and creativity
- ❖ Ask your child to find the **similarities and differences** they see in things around them
- ❖ Help them explore and investigate topics of interest

Together – in school and out - we will continue to build a strong team of thinkers!

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



Michael Collins
Board of Education President

In the daily rush to "keep all the balls in the air" we sometimes lose sight of the reasons why we are juggling. 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 importantly, they are learning how to learn. 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. We sincerely appreciate the continuing community support. 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, 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.

We wish you a happy and healthy holiday season. Please stay informed, engaged and in touch.

Capital Improvement Project Update

The 2013 Capital Improvement Project is almost complete! This project, originally approved by the voters in March of 2012, includes various building improvements such as roofing at all three buildings, fire alarm replacement in the High School, replacement of stage rigging in the High School auditorium, drainage and paving in the parking lot, water heaters, technology upgrades, enhanced building security items, some flooring repair work, masonry restoration at the Middle School building main entrance, acoustical panels in the cafeteria, and other building improvements. The project was fully funded through state aid and the District's capital reserve fund at no increase to local taxes. I would like to thank all those involved in making this a very successful project from the beginning phases to now, including former School Superintendent Maria Ehresman, Director of Buildings & Grounds Terry Pulver and his entire staff, and Watchdog Building Partners, LLC who have done an excellent job in managing this project. Also, many thanks to our faculty and students for their patience and understanding while much of this important work was being done.



Gary Barno
School Business
Administrator

Message from the Superintendent . . .

Tips to Keep Your Children Safe Online

As social media becomes more accessible and more the norm, we are increasingly becoming aware of the benefits and potential hazards it poses. Over the next few years we will see social media platforms being used more and more in the classroom. There are multiple benefits to moving in this direction. Electronic learning provides a wealth of instant information that can individualize learning, extend learning beyond the classroom, provide faster feedback, and even lighten backs.

Social media can be a safe and beneficial tool, if used properly. What follows is a list of topics that you should be aware of and talk to your children about:

- Use a Strong Password

A strong password defends against identity theft. A strong password is one that contains multiple characters and is not easy to guess but is easy to remember. You can use symbols and numbers to write a phrase like “I graduated from high school in 2012” becomes “igfhsi2012”.

- Anyone Can be Watching

Remind your children that what they put online can be viewed by anyone. Advise them to ask themselves: Would I say this or send this picture to my parents? Would I talk like this in front of my grandmother? In order to protect their reputation, they must always be mindful of the fact that what they share online could end up in the wrong hands.

- Be sure to talk to your children about oversharing

This is particularly important when it comes to sharing personal information such as your home address, phone number, birth date, Social Security number and other personal information.

- Only Upload Appropriate Images

The pictures that you put online now can follow you for life. Your children are starting a digital timeline that can later be seen by potential employers and others down the road. Be sure that your children are aware of the fact that the goofy or seemingly funny photo they post now can follow them for life.

- Keep the Conversation Going

Helping your children stay safe and out of trouble online is not a onetime conversation. Keep the lines of communication open so that they are continually reminded of the risks and know that you are there to help if they need you.

Social media is here to stay . . . It is a powerful tool that can be productive and fun to use. Starting a conversation with your children now about how to use this tool safely can ensure that they will have a positive experience online moving forward.



*Greg Macaluso
Superintendent of Schools*

Williamson Central School
PO Box 900
Williamson, NY 14589

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
WILLIAMSON, NY
PERMIT NO. 52

PATRON - LETTER CARRIER ROUTE
RURAL BOXHOLDER
PO BOXHOLDER