JOIN OUR TEAM AS A SUBSTITUTE EMPLOYEE!

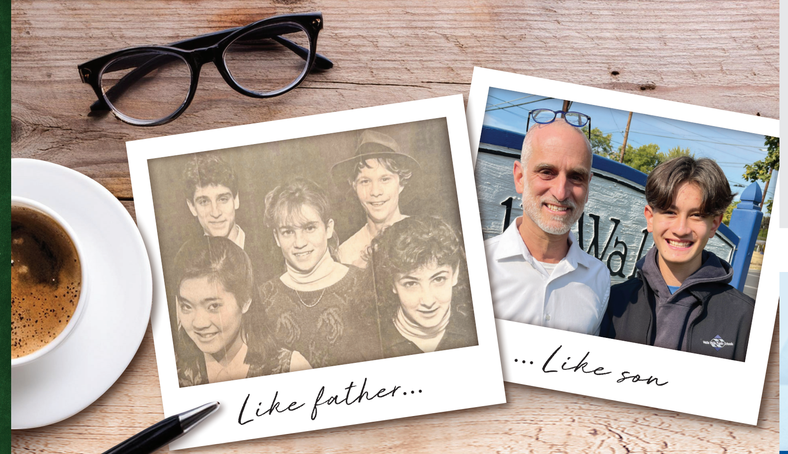
Walla Walla Public Schools is seeking dedicated and enthusiastic individuals to join our team as Substitute School Employees. From classroom teachers and para-educators to custodians and school bus drivers, we have job opportunities for you. Benefits include flexible hours, a big impact on students and often a pathway to full-time employment. You can work as many as 30 to 40 hours per week in many of these positions!

SUBSTITUTE HOURLY WAGES:

Para-Educator	$17.86
Custodian	$19.39
Secretary	$20.41
Teacher	$25.20

IT'S AS EASY AS 1, 2, 3!

1. Visit the WWPS website and click on JOBS
2. Select the substitute job you are interested in
3. Submit a job application



A student voice on the local school board runs in the Leavitt family

Growing up in Ithaca, New York, in the 70s and 80s, Noah Leavitt's experience was much like that of his son, Ari Kim-Leavitt, who is a lifelong Walla Wallan. Both cities have about 30,000 residents and a strong connection to education. Ari, a junior at Walla Walla High School, recently began his first term as a Student Representative on the School Board. Almost 40 years earlier, Noah served in the same role on his local school board while he was a senior at Ithaca High School.

"I grew up in a household with an incredibly strong commitment to public education," said Noah, who is the Co-Director of the Career and Engagement Center at Whitman College and also serves as the College Liaison for Community Affairs. "My wife Helen and I want these values to be passed down to Ari and his younger sister, Talia."

Their efforts seem to be paying off, as Ari is excelling in school. He takes numerous Advanced Placement courses, is a member and officer of various clubs, and serves on the Superintendent's Student Advisory Council. "Education has always been a prevalent topic in our house," Noah noted.

"Forty years ago, my dad was sort of a pioneer when he served as a student representative, and now I get the chance to follow in his footsteps," said Ari. "I look forward to sharing what students are experiencing with the school board, and bringing back information to my peers, so they have a better perspective on the work of the board."

Noah has been in Walla Walla for the past 20 years. He has served as a volunteer to support families and kids on several boards of organization, including The Health Center, Blue Mountain Action Council and Heart to Heart. Noah has also supported WWPS directly as a member of the Sharpstein PTA, a guest speaker and advocate for the new WWPS Foundation. He serves as Whitman's representative to the Elevate roundtable and supports various education-related initiatives, including the Gates-funded Horizons Project to increase post-secondary access.

Ari, who attended Sharpstein Elementary and Garrison Middle School, enjoys playing tennis, traveling, bike rides and playing the drums in his free time. When asked about being compared to his father and sharing some of his traits, Ari responded that "like father, like son" was just fine with him.

The Leavitts exemplify how a commitment to public service and education can be passed down through generations, making a lasting impact on their community.

-the end.

Board of Directors:

Alayna Brinton
Ruth Ladderud
Kathy Mulkerin
Derek Sarley
Terri Trick
Ari Kim-Leavitt, Student Rep.
Eva Maxwell, Student Rep.

BOARD

Focus on Education

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Walla Walla Public Schools

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COMPREHENSIVE NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

Walla Walla Public Schools does not discriminate in any programs or activities on the basis of sex, race, creed, religion, color, national origin, age, veteran or military status, sexual orientation, gender expression or identity, disability, or the use of a trained dog guide or service animal and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. The following employees have been designated to handle questions and complaints of alleged discrimination:

- *Title IX Coordinator & Civil Rights Compliance Coordinator*
  DR. MINDY MEYER, Dir of Human Resources
  364 S. Park Street
  Walla Walla, WA 99362
  (509) 527-3000
  mmeyer@wwps.org
- *Section 504/ADA Coordinator*
  BARB CASEY, Director of Special Education
  364 S. Park Street
  Walla Walla, WA 99362
  (509) 527-3000
  bcasey@wwps.org

Walla Walla Public Schools is an Equal Opportunity Employer and complies with all requirements of the ADA.

Where are they Now?

Washington's Most Sought-After Graduates



GWEN (DAVIS) DILDINE

Gwen (Davis) Dildine, a proud member of the Wa-Hi Class of 2002, is not just a dedicated small business manager; she's a nurturing coach, an advocate for youth sports and a devoted family member. Gwen's journey began on the courts and fields of Walla Walla High School, where her passion for sports took root. A former Wa-Hi volleyball player, who continued her athletic journey at Colorado State University and Washington State University, she now gives back to the volleyball program that shaped her youth. "Volunteering at Wa-Hi is so fulfilling," Gwen shares.

Outside the gym and track, Gwen's heart truly shines through her love for the outdoors. Her family-developed website, Outside Walla Walla, showcases the valley's rich outdoor recreation opportunities.

Gwen attributes much of her positive outlook to the impactful lessons learned from her educators, particularly Eric Hisaw. "He taught me the importance of a positive attitude and hard work," she reflects. "I still remember his encouragement both in the weight room and on the track. Those lessons have guided me throughout my life."

Family is Gwen's anchor. Married to Steve Dildine, a firefighter/EMT, personal trainer, and volunteer football coach, the couple is raising two children: Allen, a 7th grader, and Joanna, who is in 4th grade.

Gwen carries with her the wisdom of one of the poems Coach Hisaw gave to the team before a meet: "You do your best…you take what comes and you run with it."

VERSIÓN EN ESPAÑOL DISPONIBLE EN EL SITIO WEB DEL DISTRITO --- WWW.WWPS.ORG



Walla Walla Public Schools

Focus on Education

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DISTRICT TEAMS WITH YONDR TO CREATE PHONE-FREE MIDDLE SCHOOLS

This fall, Walla Walla Public Schools introduced a new way to help its students thrive. All Pioneer and Garrison Middle School students are using district-provided magnetized locking Yondr pouches to securely store their personal electronic devices during the school day. By minimizing cell phone use, the district hopes to boost classroom engagement, encourage face-to-face interactions and create a healthier school environment.

This initiative is a response to concerns about distractions, social media habits, cyberbullying and academic performance. This partnership reflects a commitment to finding creative solutions to support student behavior and enhance learning experiences for all students.



FOR MORE INFORMATION:
Visit the WWPS Yondr Frequently Asked Questions webpage.

HOW IT WORKS:

ARRIVE
Upon entering the phone-free space, student places their phone inside a Yondr pouch.

SECURE
Once inside the phone-free area, the pouch is locked. Student maintains possession.

OPEN
Student steps outside the phone-free zone and taps pouch on an unlocking base.

“Superintendent’s Message”



Walla Walla Public Schools mails the Focus on Education newsletter to the homes of residents three times per year. This publication serves as a platform to keep our community informed and connected to the school district.

We appreciate your involvement and support. The Board of Directors and I value your input and welcome your ideas as we strive to “Develop Washington’s Most Sought-After Graduates.”

Dr. Wade Smith
Superintendent
(509) 526-6715
wsmith@wwps.org
Twitter: @WallaWallaSup

VISION 2030

Cultivating 21st Century Skills for Tomorrow's Leaders

When our district embarked on its year-long outreach and engagement process to help inform our current Vision 2030 Strategic Plan, a common theme emerged across various stakeholder groups – the importance of 21st Century skill development. Our parents, business community, post-secondary partners and former students all pointed to the significance of developing lifelong skills that will benefit graduates regardless if they are college, military, trade school or workforce bound following high school.

Just one year into our Vision 2030 plan, I am pleased to report that our efforts are already paying off. A committee of faculty and community partners have identified skills that will be taught, pre-k through high school, to all WWPS students. From learning about respect and developing personal strengths at the elementary level, to personal responsibility and fostering grit during the middle school years, to leadership and communication skill development at high school, we have advanced a scope and sequence to ensure all students graduate with the necessary “soft” skills for success.

In addition to 21st Century skill building, we have also implemented a series of robust financial literacy courses and opportunities for students. Whether taken in conjunction with our recently-developed Driver’s Education Program, through the JROTC program, or stand-alone classes like Personal Finance and Financial Math, hundreds of WWPS high school students are now being exposed to this essential, lifelong skill.

Finally, we are doubling down on our efforts to ensure our high school students have the opportunity for real-world experiences prior to graduation. Through internships, worksite learning and career-connected exposure, we are actively placing students in businesses, clinics, industries and jobsites across the valley. Whether they are interested in becoming a nurse, plumber or engineer, during these “on the job” exposures students not only gain trade-specific hands-on experience, they also develop essential professional skills.

Regardless of the post-secondary path taken by students following graduation, our Vision 2030 Strategic Plan is helping fulfill our vision of “Developing Washington’s Most Sought-After Graduates.”

Jobsite Experience Partners Wanted

If your business is interested in learning more about serving as a possible jobsite experience for our students, please contact:
Christine Schumacher, *CTE Program and Partnership Coordinator*
at cschumacher@wwps.org or 509-526-2000.



DELIVERING ON OUR PROMISE

“We are so thankful to the community for making these projects a reality for our students, faculty and families. We will continue to be great stewards of our community’s resources to ensure we deliver on every promise made to voters.”

–SUPERINTENDENT DR. WADE SMITH

Capital Levy Projects Well Underway

Since June, contractors and heavy equipment have been actively working at Walla Walla High School, Pioneer Middle School, and Garrison Middle School, following the historic Capital Levy approved by voters on February 13, 2024.

“We have partnered with Hellas Construction and many local contractors which has enabled us to expedite our projects, many of them finishing well ahead of our preliminary schedule,” said Superintendent Dr. Wade Smith.

Progress that's been made:

WALLA WALLA HIGH SCHOOL
- JROTC Raider Course completed
- Artificial turf completed at Trident and Blue Devil Fields
- Tennis courts nearing completion
- Field lighting has been installed
- Klicker Track has been resurfaced
- Safer track throwing area with new shot put, javelin and discus implements are wrapping up

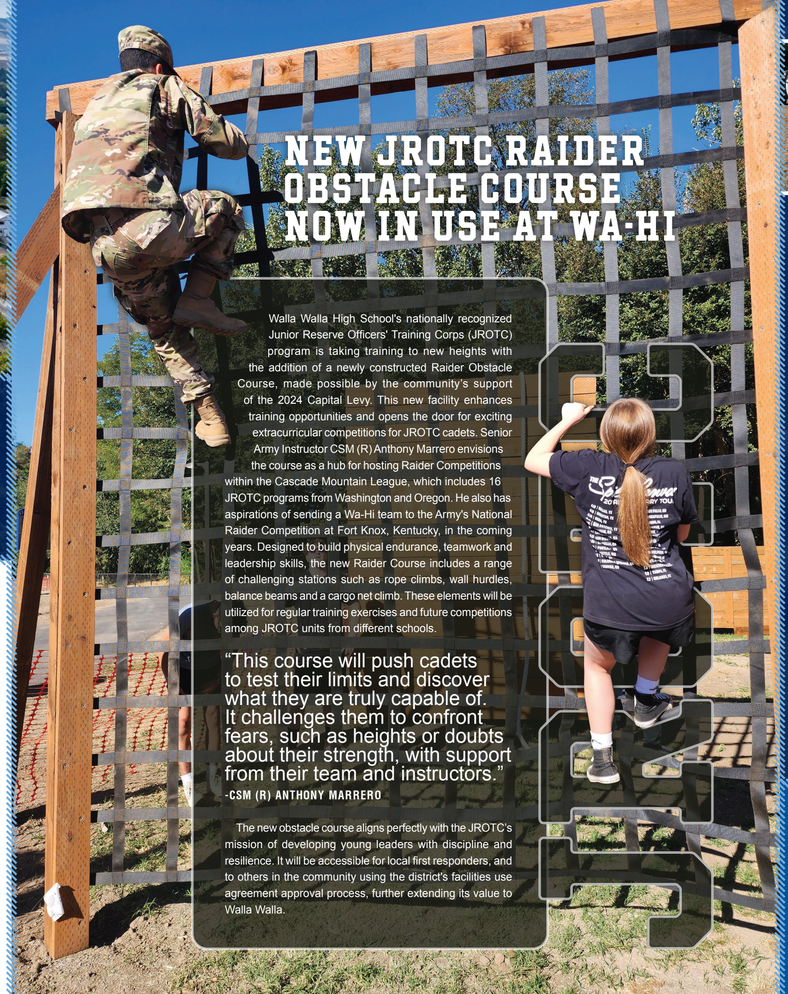
GARRISON MIDDLE SCHOOL
- The track has been resurfaced

PIONEER MIDDLE SCHOOL
- The new all-weather track will be completed in October

Projects still to come:

WALLA WALLA HIGH SCHOOL
- Lighting projects will begin this winter for baseball and softball fields at Murr Sports Park and will be completed by spring.
- Restroom complex at Trident Field will be completed by spring.
- Grandstands, concession amenities, restrooms and more, at Blue Devil Field. Construction starts late fall and will finish by the start of the 2025-26 school year.

GARRISON MIDDLE SCHOOL
- Tennis court improvements begin June 2025 and will be completed in September 2025.



NEW JROTC RAIDER OBSTACLE COURSE NOW IN USE AT WA-HI

Walla Walla High School’s nationally recognized Junior Reserve Officers’ Training Corps (JROTC) program is taking training to new heights with the addition of a newly constructed Raider Obstacle Course, made possible by the community’s support of the 2024 Capital Levy. This new facility enhances training opportunities and opens the door for exciting extracurricular competitions for JROTC cadets. Senior Army Instructor CSM (R) Anthony Marrero envisions the course as a hub for hosting Raider Competitions within the Cascade Mountain League, which includes 16 JROTC programs from Washington and Oregon. He also has aspirations of sending a Wa-Hi team to the Army’s National Raider Competition at Fort Knox, Kentucky, in the coming years. Designed to build physical endurance, teamwork and leadership skills, the new Raider Course includes a range of challenging stations such as rope climbs, wall hurdles, balance beams and a cargo net climb. These elements will be utilized for regular training exercises and future competitions among JROTC units from different schools.

“This course will push cadets to test their limits and discover what they are truly capable of. It challenges them to confront fears, such as heights or doubts about their strength, with support from their team and instructors.”
-CSM (R) ANTHONY MARRERO

The new obstacle course aligns perfectly with the JROTC’s mission of developing young leaders with discipline and resilience. It will be accessible for local first responders, and to others in the community using the district’s facilities use agreement approval process, further extending its value to Walla Walla.



Capital Levy Projects Support Local Businesses

Local contractors are making their presence known on the campuses of Wa-Hi, Pioneer MS, and Garrison MS. General Contractor Hellas Construction has been actively engaging local and regional construction companies and suppliers for various aspects of these projects. The logos on the trucks of these local contractors are now a regular sight, reflecting a significant collaboration that supports local businesses while upgrading community school facilities.

LOCAL AND REGIONAL CONTRACTORS & SUPPLIERS:

- Eagon Excavating
- Hays Electric
- Smith Brothers Landscaping
- Humbert Asphalt
- Nelson Construction
- ESF Solutions
- PBS Environmental
- Moreno & Castillo Construction
- Numerous local goods & materials suppliers

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THESE EXCITING PROJECTS:

Visit the district’s Capital Levy webpage