

Dear Shamrock Community,

As we approach Thanksgiving, I want to pause to express my heartfelt gratitude to the Westfield community. My biweekly letters are meant to illuminate the foundational elements that guide our work, mission, vision, and commitments to the community. This week, more than anything, I am reminded that our strength comes from the people who make WWS a truly special place to learn and grow.

At the core of our mission is a simple but powerful belief: *high levels of learning and growth for each student* are only possible when we work together, leveraging the strengths, experiences, and talents of each person. As we prepare to gather with friends and family next week, I want to highlight the groups whose partnership, dedication, and daily actions bring our mission to life.

First, to our parents and caregivers: thank you for being your child's first and most important teacher. The values, habits, and curiosity you nurture at home form the foundation of everything we build upon in our classrooms. Your partnership, encouragement, engagement, and trust strengthen the connection between home and school and ensure that each student is supported on their journey to becoming Life Ready. We are grateful for the consistent and meaningful ways you show up for your children and for our district.

To our incredible staff: thank you for doing whatever it takes. Every day, you lean into our core values by seeking joy, showing you care, collaborating intentionally, committing to continuous growth, and demonstrating a strong work ethic. You bring expertise, compassion, and purpose to your work serving students. The impact you have on young people's lives is profound, and your dedication makes WWS a place where students feel a sense of belonging and connection, so they thrive academically, socially, and emotionally. We hire the best, and you are committed to getting better, and you continue to exemplify what excellence in education looks like.

To our students: you are the reason we do this work. Your energy, curiosity, kindness, and desire to grow fuel our commitment to ensuring you have the knowledge, skills, and character to pursue your passions the day after graduation. Thank you for bringing your best, for supporting one another, and for embracing the learning journey. You inspire us every day.

And to our broader Westfield community: thank you for your unwavering support of your schools. Whether through volunteering, partnerships, encouragement, or a shared belief in the potential of our young people, you play an essential role in helping us create an environment where all students can succeed. Our community's investment of time, attention, and care, supports and strengthens the work happening in each classroom and contributes directly to our students' success.

Thanksgiving is a natural moment to reflect, but gratitude is a practice that shapes our culture year-round. It reminds us of our shared purpose and reinforces the truth that our mission cannot be accomplished by any one person or group alone. It takes all of us—parents, staff, students, and community partners—working with intention and supporting one another.

This Thanksgiving, from the WWS Board of School Trustees and the administration, we thank you for your continued trust, your partnership, and your belief in Westfield Washington Schools. It is an honor to serve this community, and we are deeply grateful for all you do to support our students, staff, and mission.

Yours in Shamrock Pride,
Dr. John Atha