



WEST VALLEY CENTRAL SCHOOL

*School and Community
Working Together*

VOLUME 32, NO. 6

JANUARY 2026

JANUARY CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- EARLY WINTER RECESS (NO SCHOOL) • 1/1 - 1/2
- PTO MEETING • 1/5
- BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING • 1/13
- MLK JR. DAY • 1/19
- REGENTS WEEK 1/20 - 1/22
- VOLLEYBALL CLINIC • 1/24
- WINTER BALL • 1/30
- FARM MARKET EVERY SATURDAY IN JANUARY

SCAN TO VIEW
EVENT CALENDAR



Breakfast with Santa



Students, parents, and staff came together on Sunday, December 14 for a special Breakfast with Santa at the school. The event served as a fundraiser for the Class of 2026 and was filled with smiles, good food, and plenty of holiday cheer as families enjoyed time together in a festive atmosphere.

A special thank you goes to the West Valley PTO for sponsoring the basket raffle, which added to the excitement of the morning. We are also grateful to Santa, Mrs. Claus, and Rudolph for stopping by and helping make the event a memorable one for everyone who attended.



DEVELOPING OUR BUDGET



BY MR. DANIEL AMODEO,
SUPERINTENDENT

Welcome to 2026—Happy New Year! I hope that students and staff have enjoyed the break and time with family and friends during the holiday season. Typically,

when we come back to school in January, we begin our formal processes for developing next school year's budget. As you can see from the Board's Corner, the process begins in January and ends with our annual budget vote on the 3rd Tuesday in May.

There are many factors and considerations that must be made when developing the budget and I would like to share some important factors for our community to be aware of when we develop our budget.

- First and foremost, we must develop a budget that will support the needs of our students and provide them with the best educational opportunities.
- The **two main components** that drive any school's budget are the **revenues** a district receives and its **expenditures**.
- All the district's expenditures are for the purposes of operating student programs

and providing opportunities for students.

- Depending on the year and the needs of our students, the district may have flexibility in reallocating some of these expenditures.
- Revenues for schools mostly come from the property tax levy along with state and federal aid.
- In some cases, school districts may have additional grant monies available and/or a PILOT (Payment in Lieu of Taxes). A PILOT is what a school district may receive for a business or governmental entity being in their school district.

In West Valley, the school and town receive a PILOT for the West Valley Demonstration Project (WVDP). The WVDP includes 3,300 acres owned by New York State that our town and school is unable to receive tax revenue from with exception of the PILOT. The PILOT the school receives is approximately \$280,000 and has not been increased since 1996. **This has been the number one factor that has created an increased tax burden for our community!**

The district has no control over increasing its revenues beyond increasing a voter approved tax levy or selling property.

- We can only advocate the state and federal government to provide more aid as costs continue to rise.

- We cannot guarantee being awarded sustainable grant monies every year.
- The school district cannot develop the town through business or residential development.
- Business and residential development has the potential to increase the district's property tax value thereby increasing the tax levy without raising individual tax burdens.
- We cannot invest in the stock market and diversify our investments.
- Finally, we have very limited ability to control the increasing costs schools face when operating.

Considering all of these factors around revenues and expenditures, the West Valley Central School district and Board of Education will be analyzing all of these factors through our budget development process. We will continue to be transparent throughout our budget process and invite our community to attend our Board Meetings.

In February's article, we will be sharing some of the ways that West Valley and other school districts are working with our state legislators to advocate for an appropriate amount of state aid and the reduction or elimination of mandates and policies that continue to increase school district costs.



HALFWAY THERE!

BY MRS. MYCHAJLUK,
PRINCIPAL

Dear Wildcat Families,

As we return from winter break, January marks an important

milestone as we reach the halfway point of the school year. January is an important time to re-establish routines and set students up for success for the remainder of the year.

It is very common for students to struggle a bit getting back into the swing of things after a long break. Families can help by encouraging consistent bedtimes, limiting electronic use during the evening hours, and reinforcing the importance of regular school attendance. These habits make a big difference in student focus, energy, and overall success.

During January, students in grades K-8 will participate in their second Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) benchmark assessments in Reading and Math. These assessments help us measure individual student growth and guide instructional decisions. Students who may need additional support in these areas will be recommended for Academic Intervention Services (AIS), and families will be notified as appropriate.

At the high school level, January Regents Examinations will take place this month (**January 20-23**). All 11th grade students enrolled in ELA will take the January Regents exam. Students who need to retake a Regents exam will be contacted directly by their school counselor, Mr. LaBrake. Families are encouraged to review the January Regents exam schedule carefully and ensure students are prepared and present on their testing days.

Additionally, students identified as needing extra support based on their 15-week progress reports will meet with the counseling office and/

or administration. These meetings are designed to create clear action steps and supports to help students improve and stay on track academically.

Please note that the second quarter ends on **January 30**. This is a great time for students to reflect on their progress, ask questions, and seek help if needed before the close of the marking period.

As a reminder, January weather can be unpredictable. Families should continue to monitor weather announcements, delays, or closures and ensure students are dressed appropriately for winter conditions.

We also pause this month to recognize Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day on **January 19**, reflecting on the values of service, kindness, and respect that we strive to model every day at West Valley.

Thank you for your continued partnership and support. Together, we look forward to a strong and successful second half of the school year.



BOARD CORNER

Happy New Year to our entire community! We hope that everyone enjoyed the holiday season. As we begin the New Year, the Board's work begins to focus on developing the budget for the 2026-27 school year. This is an involved process that ultimately ends with our annual budget vote on Tuesday, May 19, 2026. Below are highlights of the process and timeline we use to develop our school budget.

JANUARY 2026 - FEBRUARY 2026

- Meet with administrators to review budget requests
- Department budgets submitted to the Business Office
- Review and determine needed BOCES services and supports
- Present 2026-27 preliminary budget forecast and budget assumptions to the Board of Education

MARCH 2026

- Submit 2026-27 calculation for tax levy limit
- Present 2026-27 draft budget to the Board of Education and adoption of Legal Notice

APRIL

- Notice of school budget hearing and budget vote
- Adoption of the 2026-27 budget and Property Tax Report Card by the Board of Education
- Property Tax Report Card sent to NYS Education Department and advertised in our school newspaper

MAY

- Public Budget Hearing
- Budget notices mailed to district residents
- Annual Budget Vote and School Board Election

Although these are just the highlights of our process and timeline, we wanted to give our school community an idea of the time, effort, and care that the West Valley Central School and Board of Education invests in developing a budget for our students.

COMMUNITY EDUCATION PROGRAM

West Valley is planning to offer a variety of Community Education classes this winter. While some classes are already scheduled, we are looking for additional instructors who may be interested in teaching a class or workshop. Sessions can be offered as a single event or over multiple dates.

If you—or someone you know—would be interested in sharing a skill or expertise, please contact Carolyn Boberg, Superintendent Secretary/District Clerk, at cboberg@wvalley.org or call **716-942-3100, extension 4102.**

FREE COMMUNITY DINNER WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 28TH

Serving buffet style from 4:30 to 6:00 p.m.

MENU: Spaghetti and Meatballs, Salad, Dessert, Beverage
United Methodist Church
9372 Rt. 240, West Valley

Everyone is welcome!

The community is invited to free community dinners on the 4th Wednesday of each month January through October. Donations are appreciated, but not necessary. Come enjoy a hot meal and the fellowship of members of the West Valley community.

Regents Examination Schedule: January 2026

JANUARY 20 TUESDAY	JANUARY 21 WEDNESDAY	JANUARY 22 THURSDAY	Uniform Admission Deadlines Morning Examinations 10:00 a.m. Afternoon Examinations 2:00 p.m.
7:45 - 10:45 am.	7:45 - 10:45 a.m.	7:45 - 10:45 a.m.	
English Language Arts	Geometry U.S. History & Government	Global History & Geography II	
11:45 - 2:45 p.m.	11:45 - 2:45 p.m.	11:45 - 2:45 p.m.	
Life Science: Biology Chemistry	Algebra I	Algebra II	





In early December our kindergarten and first grade classes had an opportunity to play with their friends outside. The children had a lot of fun building snowmen, running around and playing in the snow! We are hoping to do this a few more times this year. A fun time was had by all...especially the adults!!

FUN IN THE SNOW



Mission "Spread Joy" A Gift from the Heart

Mission "Spread Joy" touched lives once again this year. Our mission was simple yet powerful: to create a handmade placemat for every resident in three local nursing homes and for those served by the Meals on Wheels program here in West Valley. Thanks to the love and dedication of our students, the Jennie B. Richmond Nursing Home, Fiddlers Green Manor, and The Pines in Machias all received enough placemats to brighten their dining tables.

From kindergarten through sixth grade, our students poured their hearts into making 257 placemats. Watching them work was truly moving—their compassion, creativity, and kindness shone through in every design. Each placemat carried not just colors and patterns, but also the warmth of a child's care and the joy of giving.

The residents received more than just placemats; they received beautiful reminders that they are cherished and remembered. The smiles these gifts brought were a testament to the power of small acts of love, and to the spirit of community that Mission "Spread Joy" continues to inspire.

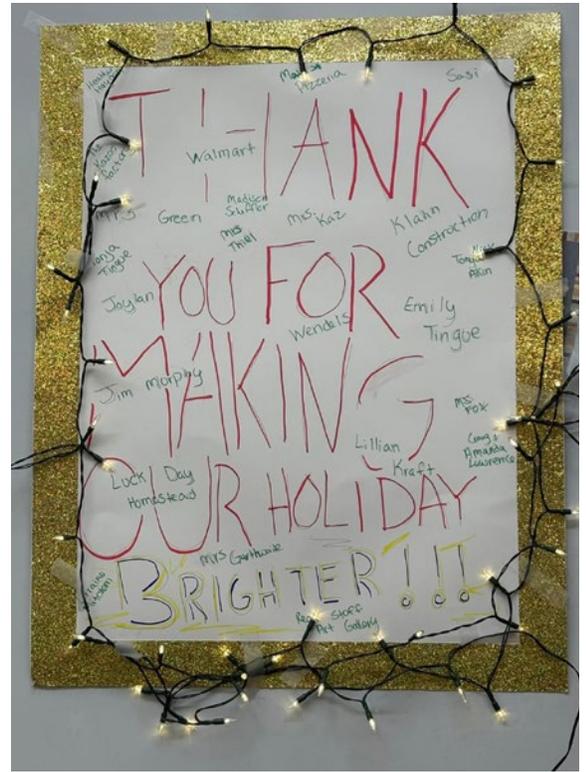


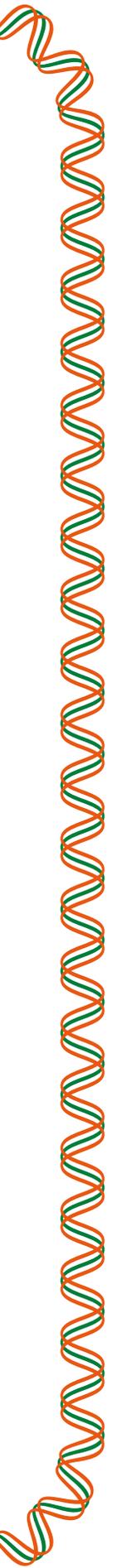
Santa's Workshop

With the assistance of a generous community and local businesses, the West Valley PTO hosted its second annual Santa's Workshop on December 3. Students walked through a festive doorway and into "Santa's Workshop" where they were greeted and assisted by volunteers of the PTO, National Honor Society, and National Junior Honor Society. The volunteers helped each student write their shopping lists, pick out items for family members, and wrap their gifts so they would stay secret until Christmas. Each student was able to keep a candy cane and ornament for themselves.

In conjunction with Santa's Workshop, the PTO held a Holiday Market with homemade crafts and baked goods for sale. Money raised from the sale goes toward school events and purchases that benefit West Valley students and staff. The PTO strives to create memorable opportunities for West Valley students and support the school's staff in doing the same.

A huge thank you to all the staff, students, community members, and businesses who volunteered their time or donated items, gift cards and checks. These events would not have been possible without all of your support!





AWKWARD STAFF

PHOTOS





POETRY COMES ALIVE

Slam poet Marquis “Ten Thousand” Burton recently visited West Valley, sharing his talent and story with students in grades 3–12. During his visit, Marquis demonstrated live freestyle poetry, inviting students to call out random words and then weaving them into original poems created on the spot. His engaging performances captured students’ attention and highlighted the creativity and power of spoken word.



FREE Community Clothes Closet



Location: Behind St. John the Baptist Church in Bingham Hall

The Community Clothes Closet will be open Saturdays from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. and Wednesdays from 1-4:00 p.m. (or by appointment).

Donations of gently worn, undamaged, clean, and seasonal items are welcome.

Besides clothing and shoes, we accept donations of bedding, kitchen and household items for Cattaraugus County residents. Upon request, we can fulfill a need of furniture items.

For questions or to make an appointment, please contact Jacque Conrad at 716-942-3836 or Elise at 716-942-3291.

FEEDMORE WNY WEEKEND BACKPACK PROGRAM

If any family wishes to participate in our **Weekend Backpack Program**, please contact Mr. LaBrake anytime during the school year. The goal of the Weekend Backpack Program is to provide nutritious and easy-to-prepare meals for children to take home on weekends. This program is provided to you **completely free of charge!**

Each week your child will be provided with a bag of nutritious, non-perishable food to be eaten over the weekend. The food will be placed in your child's backpack at the end of the school day and is intended to be opened once your child is home. The program will continue throughout the 2025-26 school year. Participation in the Weekend Backpack Program **will not affect your family's eligibility for other food assistance programs (such as SNAP, WIC, or food pantry access).**

To enroll your child/children in the program, contact Mr. LaBrake. Please call with any questions at 716-942-3100, ext. 4148 or send an email to mlabrake@wvalley.org.



WEST VALLEY FOOD PANTRY

Food Pantry Hours:

1st, 3rd, and 5th Wednesdays
Open from 3-7:00 p.m.

2nd and 4th Wednesdays
Open from 12 -4:00 p.m.

If you need emergency food, please call Amy Frank at 716-942-6657 and she will set up a day and time.

LOCATED AT A NEW ADDRESS!
9348 Route 240, West Valley

**THE FOOD PANTRY IS IN NEED OF
THE FOLLOWING ITEMS:**

*CANNED FRUIT
SIDE RICE/NOODLE DISHES
SPAGHETTI SAUCE*

*CANNED VEGETABLES
SALAD DRESSING*

*PAPER TOWELS
TOILET PAPER*

We would like to thank the community for their continued support.



ACCESS WEST VALLEY'S FOOD SERVICE MENUS ANYWHERE!

View daily breakfast and lunch menus, check nutrition information, download a printable version, or save to your phone.



Scan the QR code or visit:

www.wvalley.org/departments/food-service



HAND, FOOT, & MOUTH DISEASE: WHAT FAMILIES NEED TO KNOW

WVCS HEALTH CORNER

Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease (HFMD) is a common viral illness, especially in young children. While it can sound concerning, most cases are mild and resolve on their own with supportive care.

WHAT IS HFMD?

HFMD is caused by a group of viruses, most commonly known as Coxsackievirus. It spreads easily in childcare and school settings, particularly during winter months when children are indoors more often.

COMMON SYMPTOMS

Symptoms usually appear 3-6 days after exposure and may include:

- Fever
- Sore throat
- Fatigue or decreased appetite
- Painful sores or blisters in the mouth
- A rash or small blisters on the hands, feet, and sometimes the diaper area

HOW IT SPREADS

HFMD spreads through:

- Coughing or sneezing
- Close personal contact
- Contact with stool (diapering, bathroom use)
- Touching contaminated surfaces or toys

Children are most contagious during the first week, but the virus can remain in the body for several weeks.

WHEN SHOULD A CHILD STAY HOME?

Children should stay home if they:

- Have a fever
- Are not feeling well enough to participate in school
- Have open, weeping blisters

They may return once they are fever-free for 24 hours without medication and feeling well enough for school activities.

TREATMENT

There is no treatment for HFMD. Care focuses on comfort:

- Encourage fluids to prevent dehydration
- Use pain relievers as directed for fever or discomfort
- Offer soft foods if mouth sores are present.

PREVENTION TIPS

- Frequent handwashing with soap and water
- Cleaning and disinfecting commonly touched surfaces
- Teaching children to avoid sharing cups, Utensils, and food
- Covering coughs and sneezes

WHEN TO CALL A HEALTHCARE PROVIDER

Contact your child's provider if:

- They are not drinking fluids
- Symptoms worsen or do not improve
- Signs of dehydration appear (dry mouth, fewer wet diapers, lethargy)

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to reach out to the school health office.



WEST VALLEY CENTRAL SCHOOL

5359 School St. • West Valley, NY 14171
(716) 942-3100

BOARD OF EDUCATION

George Kazmierczak, President
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Jennifer Schultz, Business Administrator
John Collins, Assistant Principal, CSE/CPSE/504 Chairperson
Rachel Mychajluk, Principal/Curriculum Coordinator

NON PROFIT
ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
Permit No. 5
West Valley, NY

OR CURRENT RESIDENT

POSTAL PATRON LOCAL



Thanks to the WV PTO and our generous donors, every elementary student and teacher was able to get a book from the Scholastic Book Fair! Your support made it possible, and the students are already enjoying their new books.



EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSINGS

West Valley Central School District uses ParentSquare to send an automated message regarding school closings and cancellations of after-school activities. The message is sent to your household phone number and to the emergency contacts that you listed at the beginning of this school year. If this information has changed or you would like to verify what is on file, please call Dana Westfall at 716-942-3100, extension 4111. The district also contacts the following radio and television stations:

Channel 2
WBEN 930 AM

Channel 4
WPIG 95.7 FM

Channel 7
Big Oly 107.1
& 105.5 FM



Love fresh fruits and veggies?

Stop by to purchase fresh, healthy, affordable
and locally grown produce!



West Valley Central School

5359 School St.
West Valley, NY 14171



EVERY SATURDAY
10:30am-11:30am



The Farm Market accepts credit, debit, cash, SNAP, and Apple Pay!

FeedMore
wny