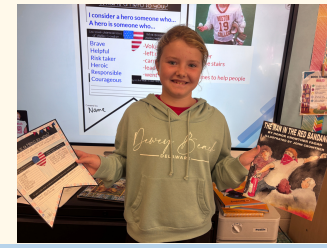


THE WILDCAT WEEKLY

A Note from Dr. G

Volume 6 Issue 2



Superintendent's Corner

It's been a great second week of school! Congratulations are in order for Aanya Mishra, who has been named a NYSSMA All-State Conference Alto-2 Alternate. Students auditioned months ago in a rigorous process, and Aanya's selection reflects the highest distinction in New York State for young musicians. We're so proud of her hard work and dedication.

In the WHS garden, Sarah Mackin's students are seeing the fruits of their labor. Back in June, they planted peas, peppers, tomatoes, basil, and rosemary, and after a summer of growth, students are now harvesting their own herbs and vegetables as they return to the classroom.

Our libraries are buzzing again too after a quiet summer. Mount Pleasant Library's Miss Debbie visited the brand-new Hawthorne library tree and encouraged them to get library cards, check out books, and explore new STEM kits. Thank you to HES Library Media Specialist Ms. Diaz for coordinating. At CES, Ms. Finno is hosting class meetings to reinforce good library habits and hear all about the books students read over the summer. She's also gathering student feedback to help plan read-alouds and other activities that build literacy and a love of books.

Ms. Valvano and Ms. Castignoli's students took time to remember and reflect on September 11. They read *The Man in the Red Bandana*, a picture book honoring 9/11 hero Welles Crowther, and then broke into small groups to discuss what makes someone a hero and answer questions about the story. Students wrapped up the lesson by coloring patriotic designs to decorate their classroom, a meaningful and age-appropriate way to honor the day.

Let's Vote for JuJu!

Our Flag Football Star QB Juliana DiMarino has been selected as a Week 1 nominee for USA Football's 2026 Heart of a Giant Award!

Vote once a day every day through September 27 at usafootball.com/heart-of-a-giant/vote



The Week Ahead

9/14 - WHS PTA Meeting 7 pm; MTPEF Meeting 7 pm

9/15 - WHS College Application Workshop for Seniors and Parents at 7 pm in the Library

9/17 - WMS Back to School Night 7 pm

9/19 - Kindergarten Ice Cream Social 1 pm on the HES Playground; WHS Homecoming Dance 7:30 pm

Noticing the Good

This morning, sixth graders gathered behind Westlake Middle School to mark the 25th anniversary of September 11th at the district's memorial. Principal Anthony Mungioli spoke to students about kindness and empathy, values that connect directly to the spirit of service and community shown in the aftermath of that day.

The memorial itself, first planted by WMS staff and students in 2002 as a living symbol of peace and hope, continues to be lovingly cared for by our community. Each year, family members of Chloe Putter, the Westlake High School senior who revitalized the site for her Girl Scout Gold Award project, return in late August to clean and prepare the space ahead of the anniversary. Across the district, all our schools held their own age-appropriate moments of silence and conversations, pairing remembrance with a focus on community service so even our youngest students could take part in a meaningful way.



In Awe of the Paw - National Merit SemiFinalist

Westlake High School senior Oliver Wu has been named a National Merit Scholarship Semifinalist! Oliver joins a group representing the top 1% of high school seniors nationwide. Semifinalists now compete for a share of nearly \$24 million in scholarships awarded to about 6,700 students. To advance to finalist status, Oliver will submit an application, an essay, and a recommendation letter. Finalists are chosen based on academic record, leadership, school and community involvement, employment, and honors received.

