

Dake Junior High

October Newsletter

SEPTEMBER 25, 2026

Message from the Principal



Dear Families,

As we move further into the school year, I want to take a moment to sincerely thank each of you for making our Open House such a wonderful success. The evening was a tremendous reminder of the strength of our school community and the powerful partnerships that exist between home and school.

We have had a fantastic start to the year, and I could not be more proud of our students. Every day, they arrive ready to learn, grow, and challenge themselves to be better than they were the day before. Their kindness, perseverance, and positive attitudes continue to inspire us.

At our school, we believe in the idea of "Winning the Day." This means giving our best effort each day, embracing opportunities to learn, and making choices that help us grow academically, socially, and emotionally.

Success is not about being perfect; it is about making progress, learning from challenges, and striving to improve daily.

I am incredibly proud of this community and grateful for the trust you place in us. Our administrative team, teachers, and staff are deeply committed to making a positive difference in the lives of every student. Each day, they work tirelessly to create meaningful learning experiences, foster strong relationships, and model the values we hope our students will carry throughout their lives.

Most importantly, I want to thank you, our families. Your support, encouragement, and dedication at home make a tremendous impact. The hard work you put into raising responsible, respectful, and caring young people does not go unnoticed. Together, we are helping our students become not only successful learners but also outstanding young adults.

When schools and families work together, amazing things happen. Thank you for being such an important part of our journey. I look forward to all we will accomplish together as we continue to Win the Day and get better every day.

Sincerely,
Tim Baker

Dake Contact Information

Principal: Tim Baker | tim_baker@westiron.monroe.edu

Asst. Principal: Claire Hamilton - Grade 7 | claire_hamilton@westiron.monroe.edu

Asst. Principal: Alexa Hogestyn - Grade 8 | alexa_hogestyn@westiron.monroe.edu

Secretary to the Principal: Cameron Wright |
cameron_wright@westiron.monroe.edu

Main office: 585-342-2140

Attendance: 585-336-3143

Fax: 585-336-3034

Website: <https://dake.westirondequoit.org/>

Counseling Office Secretary: Shannon Pollock |
Shannon_Pollock@westiron.monroe.edu

Student TEAMS Info:

- Topaz 8th grade
- Opal 8th grade
- Emerald 8th grade
- Amythyst 7th grade
- Sapphire -7th grade
- Ruby - 7th grade

Nurse: Kristina Sodeman

Health Clerk: Kim DiMarco

Health Office: 585-336-2964

Transportation: 585-336-2992 | [Web page](#)

District Office: 585-342-5500 | [District website](#)

Looking Ahead

Oct. 8 - Go Home Early Drill (school will release at 2:45)

Oct. 9 - NO SCHOOL (Superintendent's Conference Day)

Oct. 12 - NO SCHOOL (Indigenous Peoples Day)

Counseling Corner /Student Wellness



Welcome
BACK TO SCHOOL

HAPPY FALL!

It's a great time for fresh starts and new beginnings in the Dake counseling office. Throughout first quarter, Dake's School Counselors were busy welcoming students back to the building. In August, counselors work to finalize schedules and plan orientation for incoming 7th graders to ensure a smooth transition to Dake.

SUPPORTING OUR 7TH GRADERS

In September, counselors visit all 7th grade classrooms sharing information with students about how to access support at Dake and who is part of the support team. Counselors meet with all 7th grade students individually to explore how students are doing socially, emotionally, and academically. In addition, students discuss goals for the school year, strengths, challenges and opportunities to build connections at Dake.

LOOKING AHEAD

During the month of October, 8th grade students see counselors in classroom lessons focused on incorporating wellness into future decisions.

Support staff continue meeting with students individually and in groups as needed.

WELCOMING A NEW TEAM MEMBER

In addition to our work with students, the counseling office welcomed Maureen Willard as a new counselor to the team!

Attendance Matters: We Love Seeing You Here

Attendance Matters!

As we come to the end of September, we are taking a closer look at student attendance. To that end, we are updating parents and guardians with a letter that will be arriving next week. This letter, mandated by New York State, offers a look at student's attendance (provided they have missed a day of school) and delivers caregivers with an avenue to remedy any attendance stumbling blocks. Parents, School Counselors and Administration will work together to put a plan in place to meet the needs of all Dake students.

If you have questions or concerns about this or any attendance matter, please call 585-336-3143.

PTSA News

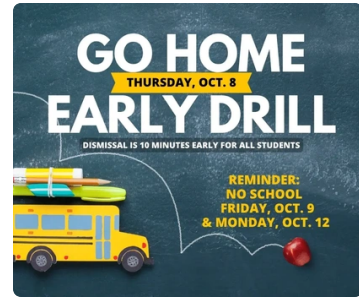
The PTSA will be hosting activity nights for both 7th and 8th grade students in November:

- 8th Grade Activity Night will take place on Friday, November 6th.
- 7th Grade Activity Night will take place on Friday, November 13th.

More details to come this Fall!

Go Home Early Drill is Oct. 8

The state-mandated Go Home Early safety drill is Thursday, Oct. 8 - the start of a four-day weekend. All students will be released 10 minutes earlier than usual. If you pick up your children at school, please arrive 10 minutes early. Expect students who ride buses to arrive 10 minutes early. The K-6 Extension Childcare Program will open early and remain open until 6 PM. Crossing guard schedules also will accommodate.



Note: There is also no school on Friday, Oct. 9 (Superintendent's Conference Day) and Monday, Oct. 12th (Indigenous People's Day).

Backpack and Cell Phone Expectations

A brief reminder about some updated building expectations: <https://www.parentsquare.com/feeds/84829599>

OUR SCHOOL EXPECTATIONS

SAFE. RESPECTFUL. FOCUSED. TOGETHER.



BACKPACKS IN LOCKERS

To help maintain a safe, organized, and focused learning environment, backpacks should be stored in student lockers during the instructional day.



CELL PHONES IN LOCKERS

Cell phones should remain stored in lockers throughout the school day. Limiting phone use helps students stay engaged in learning and connected with their classmates and teachers.



ACCESSING YOUR LOCKER

Students may visit their lockers during class transitions and at teacher-directed times to gather the materials they need for learning.



WORKING TOGETHER FOR SUCCESS

If a cell phone is found on a student during the school day, it will be held in the main office, and a parent or guardian will be asked to pick it up.



Thank you for partnering with us to create a safe, respectful, and distraction-free learning environment for all students.



Safety Update on motorized vehicles

Our district would like to remind families of important safety expectations regarding vehicles on school property. All motor vehicles must be licensed and registered and operated only on designated roadways and parking areas. Driving on pedestrian pathways poses serious safety risks and is strictly prohibited.

We've seen an increase in golf cart traffic at some schools. By law, golf carts must be licensed, driven by licensed drivers and follow all traffic laws. They should not be on sidewalks or near building entrances. Students who ride e-bikes to school must walk them once on campus. The speed and motorized function of e-bikes can endanger both riders and pedestrians. E-bikes should be parked in designated bike areas and not used on walkways.

Thank you for helping us maintain a safe and welcoming environment for all. If you have questions, please contact your school's main office or the district office.



Health Information Update

Physical Exam Reminder: As a reminder, New York State requires students to have a current physical examination on file with the school for grades UPK, K, 1st, 3rd, 5th, 7th and 11th, dated on or after 9/8/2025. Families are encouraged

to ensure that their child's physical has been completed and that the required documentation has been submitted to the school health office. If your child has recently had a physical with their healthcare provider, please provide the school with a copy of the examination form. Thank you for helping us maintain accurate health records and support the health and well-being of all our students. Questions? Find names and numbers to nurse **[via this link](#)**.

Extra Clothing Donations Sought: We are asking families to consider donating gently used, clean clothing to our school for students who may need a change of clothes during the school day. Accidents, spills, and unexpected situations can happen, and having a supply of clothing available helps ensure that students can remain comfortable and ready to learn. We are especially looking for items such as pants, shirts, socks, and underwear in a variety of sizes. Donations can be sent to the schools nursing office. Thank you for helping us support all of our students!

Girls Basketball Open Gym

IHS Girls Basketball will host a FREE Open Gym/Skills Clinic for girls in grades 3-8 from 6-7:15 p.m. and in Grades 7-8 from 7:15-8:30 p.m. on Thursday, Oct. 8 at the Denny Fries Gymnasium at IHS.

Sign up using this link: forms.gle/iq1nuNSvpUqpVngU8. Please share this with anyone who may want to attend. Email greg_geesler@westiron.monroe.edu with any questions.

We need parent/guardian volunteers to help coach at the 3-4 , 5-6 and 7-8 grade levels.

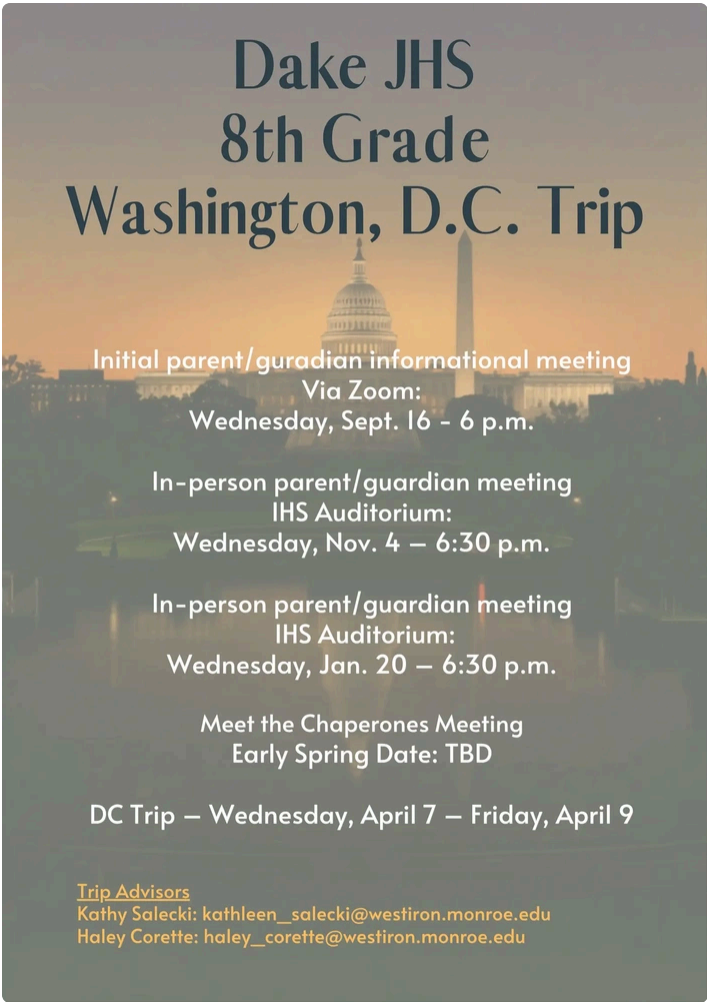


Picture Day Make Ups

Picture Day make-ups will be on Oct. 23. This day is reserved for students who were unable to attend the original Picture Day on Sept. 16th. Students can pick up a physical order form in the main office, or you can order online [here](#).

8th Grade D.C. Trip Info

See below for some important dates regarding this school year's Washington D.C. Trip.



**Dake JHS
8th Grade
Washington, D.C. Trip**

Initial parent/guradian informational meeting
Via Zoom:
Wednesday, Sept. 16 - 6 p.m.

In-person parent/guardian meeting
IHS Auditorium:
Wednesday, Nov. 4 - 6:30 p.m.

In-person parent/guardian meeting
IHS Auditorium:
Wednesday, Jan. 20 - 6:30 p.m.

Meet the Chaperones Meeting
Early Spring Date: TBD

DC Trip - Wednesday, April 7 - Friday, April 9

Trip Advisors
Kathy Salecki: kathleen_salecki@westiron.monroe.edu
Haley Corette: haley_corette@westiron.monroe.edu

Fall Festival is this Saturday!

The annual Fall Harvest Festival at Helmer Nature Center is Saturday, Oct. 3 from 1-4 p.m. Come enjoy the fall season at Helmer! Admission prices are:

- \$20 pass includes access to EVERYTHING – all games, crafts, prizes and of course, one PONY RIDE
- \$15 activity pass is good for all games, crafts and prizes.
- \$2 Adult Walkaround pass – enjoy music and demos!



Note: Additional pony rides are \$10 each. The Frios Gourmet Pops truck will be on-site. Festival games/activities include:

- Fall Crafts
 - Pony Rides
 - Live Music by Allen Hopkins
 - Cider-Making
 - Tractor Rides
 - Inflatable Obstacle Course
 - Gaga Ball
 - PRIZE BAG for the Kids
-



Community Cupboard supports students

The Irondequoit Community Cupboard's Backpack Program supports students in all schools in grades Pre-K through 6. It supplies the child with a bag of food to carry home each Friday that includes items to eat over the weekend. These might be healthy snacks, peanut butter, cereal, soup,

canned pasta meals, oatmeal, fruit and vegetables.

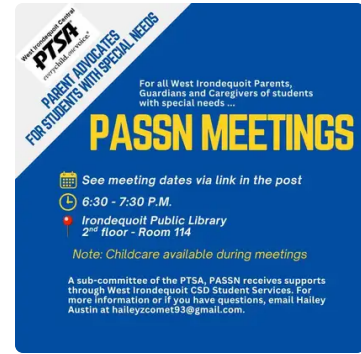
This program is not intended to supply food for the entire family but merely help with food for that child. The ICC provides this service for students who qualify through our application process. To be eligible, families must fill out the CEP Application at **[this link](#)**. All families that are approved will be mailed a consent form that must be filled out and returned.

Questions program or process? Email or call Sarah Herbert at **sarah_herbert@westiron.monroe.edu** / (585) 336-3063.

Note: Program participation is confidential.

PASSN SCHEDULE 2026-27

On behalf of the WICPTSA and PASSN, please read below to learn more about the Parent Advocates for Student Services Network and see its monthly meeting schedule. PASSN is comprised of district parent/guardian advocates of students who receive support through West Irondequoit Student Services. Meetings are a safe space for families.



Oct. 19 - Workshop with district Speech Pathologist and Caseworker, Maureen Keller.

Nov. 9 - Workshop with district Occupational Therapist, Andy Casini.

December (no meeting)

Jan. 11 – Trauma Informed Workshop with district counselors and psychologists.

Feb. 8 – Workshop on Bullying with Phil Ortolani, district Director of Health and Wellness.

March 8 - CSE Workshop with Directors of Student Services, Joanna Rowe and Amy Donk.

April 12 – Mindfulness Workshop with E-RYT 200 & RCYT, Lisa Chidsey.

May 10 – Booth Night with community resources to support your children and family

June 14 – POTENTIAL MEETING - School year recap, summer service plans & how will we stay structured this summer?

Please email haileyzcomet93@gmail.com with any questions or for more information.

[Thursday, Oct 1 at 12:33 PM]

The Dake monthly newsletter has been updated with a handful of new items.