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FALL 2026

WESTERVILLE CITY SCHOOLS

The Voice of the 'Ville

PREPARING STUDENTS TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE COMPETITIVE AND CHANGING WORLD IN WHICH WE LIVE

A Message from the Superintendent



Happy fall! As an educator, the beginning of autumn feels more like a new year reset to me than January does. For anyone with children in school or working in a school, fall is a time of new beginnings. The excitement of our students and staff is palpable, and our buildings feel alive with our students back in the hallways. Even if your school days are long behind you, I hope that fall gives you that nostalgic feeling of school days gone by, and that as the air chills and you pull the sweatshirts from your closet, you can fondly remember your days of cheering on your favorite team or waiting for a friend by your locker.

This school year, we are excited to continue to refine our Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS), with an emphasis on strengthening our core instruction at all levels. We will continue to provide updates on this work throughout the year, and you can learn more about it on our website at www.westerville.k12.oh.us/teaching-learning/mtss.

We welcomed many new faces to our staff this year, including some Westerville alumni, who are featured in this edition of our newspaper. We employ 1260 certified, or licensed, staff and 1122 classified staff in our District. We are fortunate to have a skilled group of employees to work with our students every day.

We are continuing to struggle to fully staff our transportation department, which continues to be a challenge nationally. If you have ever thought about driving a school bus or MyVan, we would be grateful if you visit our website to learn more about the opportunities within the Westerville City Schools. In addition to transportation positions, we also have food services positions available. Many of these positions are part-time and are great for parents looking to pick up some hours while their children are at school.

Our goal with this newspaper is to continue to share information about our District with our community. I have been very encouraged by the initial feedback from the first couple editions, and I hope you find the content of this edition helpful as a community member.

Have an amazing fall!

***Angie Hamberg,** Superintendent*

Welcome (back) to Westerville City Schools

They left as graduates of Westerville. Now, they've returned to the schools and community that helped inspire their careers. Meet the new educators, nurses, counselors and mental health specialists that are now back in the District, this time serving the next generation of Westerville students.

Meet some of the Westerville alumni...


Megan Banks


Melani Gardner


Jordan Jacobs


Maeve Mahoney


Corbin McGuffin-Noll



Rachel Nicodemus

MEGAN BANKS *Westerville South, Class of 2019*
Also attended: Wilder, Emerson and Hanby elementaries and Blendon Middle School
Where you can find her: teaching Geometry, Algebra 2 Essentials and Math Studio at Westerville South
Why did you want to return to Westerville to teach?
I wanted to come back to Westerville (and especially South) to teach because I genuinely love this community. I had so many great teachers who were role models to me, and I couldn't be more excited to have them as my colleagues. In just the first couple days of being back, I have felt so much support from the whole staff. I have also continued to be involved in Westerville's high school summer theatre program since 2021 (as assistant choreographer), and love how much Westerville supports the arts. There's no place I'd rather be.

MELANI GARDNER *Westerville North, Class of 2015*
Also attended: Cherrington and Hanby elementaries, Walnut Springs Middle School
Where you can find her: teaching fourth-grade at Whittier Elementary
What does it mean to you to come back to Westerville?
I knew Westerville was where I wanted to be. It's been home to me for so long and I couldnít imagine working anywhere else.

JORDAN JACOBS *Westerville North, Class of 2013*
Also attended: Hanby and Wilder elementaries and Blendon Middle School
Where you can find her: serving as a mental health specialist at Huber Ridge Elementary
What does it mean to you to come back to Westerville?
I've had so many great memories and experiences with the people I've met along the way. I tell people all the time, if people are looking at schools and districts, I went to Westerville and had a good experience. I'm so excited to be a part of it.

MAEVE MAHONEY *Westerville Central, Class of 2020*
Also attended: Alcott Elementary and Genoa Middle School
Where you can find her: teaching half-day kindergarten at Hawthorne Elementary
Why did you decide to go into teaching?
I am from a family of educators, and have had so many incredible teachers in my life who have impacted and inspired me greatly. My mom taught at Westerville Central until 2010. Additionally, Laura Kerns at Alcott Elementary was my third grade teacher, and was there for me at a time I needed someone in my corner the most. It is my goal to be there for my students and make them feel cared for and loved each and every day just as my teachers always did for me.

CORBIN McGUFFIN-NOLL *Westerville Central, Class of 2017*
Also attended: Fouse Elementary and Genoa Middle School
Where you can find him: teaching Modern World History and U.S. Government at Westerville Central
What does it mean to come back and teach in the school you graduated from?
It means a lot. It shows there's a big commitment to the community here and giving folks a chance to come back and create a cycle of inspiring kids and hope that maybe one day they want to come back and teach. It's also good to be back in a place that I know had a lot of really good things going for it when I was in school and seeing that continue.

RACHEL NICODEMUS *Westerville South, Class of 2015*
Also attended: Annehurst Elementary and Heritage Middle School
Where you can find her: teaching fourth-grade at Huber Ridge Elementary
What are you most looking forward to now that you're back in Westerville?
I'm looking forward to seeing what it's like in Westerville as an educator. Growing up as a student, I had so many good experiences and I'm excited to give back to the community I grew up in from the start. I want to provide the same sort of experience, if not even better than what I had, and just be able to help students grow and find out who they are because I had so many good teachers along the way that helped me find out who I am.

A letter from the Board of Education Vice President

Dear Westerville Community,



Jennifer Aultman

When mid-August hits, our entire community feels the changing rhythm of life in the Westerville City School District. Back-to-school truly includes everyone, so welcome back! Our warm, sleepy summer mornings have faded away and briskness fills the air as buses roll down our streets, students walk and bike to school through our neighborhoods, and the sounds of joyous recess and exciting sporting events fill the air around our schools. For some of us, back-to-school has meant waking up earlier to pack lunches, getting kids to the bus stop on time, or searching for that missing calculator at midnight. But for everyone in our community regardless of whether we have students in our family or not, back-to-school means that the clockwork of our community is wound up and ticking once more. It's an exciting time!

Each year, my gratitude grows as I see the many ways that our community supports all students--from the preschoolers, kindergarteners, and new arrivals who nervously walked through our doors for the first time this fall, to the high school seniors and transition program students who have grown with us for over a decade and are figuring out their next steps. Collectively, we ensure that our community's schools are safe, welcoming, and inspiring. New roofs and HVAC systems replace end-of-life systems to keep our schools comfortable. Updated curricula and technology help our students learn to thrive in careers we couldn't imagine a decade ago. Above all, our exceptionally committed, skilled, and caring staff teaches, encourages, challenges, transports, feeds, and guides our students to discover their fullest selves. As a parent sitting in the car line during those early high school morning drop offs, I am in awe of all that must function in harmony to make school happen, and happen well. As a Board of Education member, a district parent and aunt, and a Westerville alumni and alumni spouse, I deeply thank our community for supporting Westerville City Schools.

Because back-to-school includes everyone in our community, I invite you to participate. Come to an athletic event (have you ever witnessed the intensity of a flag football game?), enjoy a music concert (do you most love band, orchestra, or vocal music?), and be inspired by a theater performance (can you believe how talented these young people are?). Consider starting a scholarship program in memory of a loved one. Donate an instrument so a student can discover the joy of music. Attend a Board of Education meeting to learn what happens in our schools. Take a QPR community member training to support student mental health. Thank a teacher, a bus driver, a media clerk, or any other Westerville City Schools staff member whose tireless dedication supports our kids and our community. Most of all, encourage the students in your family and in your neighborhood--your support brightens their days and their future.

Thank you for being part of the Westerville City School District. Welcome back to school, everyone!

Sincerely,
Jennifer Aultman, *Vice President of the Westerville Board of Education*

Board of Education Meeting Schedule

All meetings are held at 936 Eastwind Dr. Westerville, OH 43081

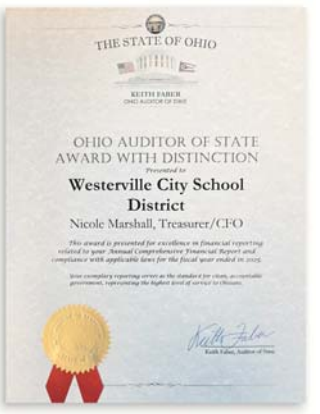
September 14, 2026 • 6:00 p.m.
October 12, 2026 • 6:00 p.m.
November 23, 2026 • 6:00 p.m.
December 14, 2026 • 6:00 p.m.

District honored for 14th consecutive year with Auditor's Award with Distinction

The WCSD Treasurer's Office has again been recognized by the State of Ohio with the Auditor's Award with Distinction following a clean audit for fiscal year 2025 with no findings or citations.

This is the 14th consecutive year the District has earned this award. The District is among an elite group of public entities as the auditor's office conducts approximately 6,000 audits annually and fewer than 4% of them qualify for this award.

The District also received the highest rating in the Star Rating System (StaRS). StaRS monitors transparency in government and measures compliance to Ohio's open records laws.


THE STATE OF OHIO

KEITH FABER
OHIO AUDITOR OF STATE

OHIO AUDITOR OF STATE
AWARD WITH DISTINCTION

Presented to

Westerville City School District

Nicole Marshall, Treasurer/CFO

This award is presented for excellence in financial reporting related to your Annual Comprehensive Financial Report and compliance with applicable laws for the fiscal year ended in 2025.

Your exemplary reporting serves as the standard for clean, accountable government, representing the highest level of service to citizens.

Keith Faber, Auditor of State

In its FY 2025 audit, the District received four stars, the highest achievement for meeting the requirements of the law and having implemented all of the recommended best practices. The District has earned this recognition and achieved the highest rating every year since the award's inception.

STAY CONNECTED

Great things are happening every day in Westerville City Schools. Don't miss a moment.



Welcome to the 2026-27 school year



NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS
Newsletter



WE ARE THE 'VILLE
Podcast

Learn more online at **WWW.WCSOH.ORG**

www.facebook.com/WCSOH
@mywcsd
YouTube @WCSDOhio

FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA

WELCOME OUR NEW ADMINISTRATORS

Get to know Ashley Dias, Whittier Principal



What inspired you to become an educator, and what led you to Westerville City Schools?
Growing up, I was deeply inspired by my mother, who served as an elementary school principal in Columbus City Schools and showed me the incredible impact an educator can have. As a proud graduate of Westerville City Schools myself, having attended Robert Frost, Heritage, and Westerville North, my heart has always been in this community. I feel exceptionally fortunate to serve the very district that played such a pivotal role in shaping who I am today.

What do you hope every student feels when they walk through your school's doors each day?
I want every student who walks through our doors at Whittier to know, without a doubt, that they matter. My goal is to create a safe, welcoming environment where every child feels seen, deeply cared for, and excited to learn each day

As you begin your first year, what are you most excited about, and what are your top priorities?
First and foremost, I am thrilled to meet our wonderful students and build strong partnerships with their families. My top priority is to create an engaging learning environment where every child's individual needs are met both academically and social-emotionally, ensuring they have the support and high-quality education they need to reach their full potential.

Outside of school, what are some things you enjoy doing with your family or in your free time?
Outside of school, I enjoy kayaking with my husband, making candles, and spending time with my nieces and nephews. Our two dogs also keep us busy and bring a lot of joy to our home.

If there's one thing you'd like every student, staff member, and family to know about you, what would it be?
I want our community to know that I hold my role as a leader with immense gratitude and care; every decision I make begins and ends with what is best for our students. Partnering with staff and families to educate, support, and protect the children of our community each day is my greatest responsibility, and it is an absolute honor to serve in this role.

Get to know Katie McCune, Hanby principal



What inspired you to become an educator, and what led you to Westerville City Schools?
Growing up, I was rarely seen as one of the smart kids, and I was often made to feel like I wasn't enough. Today, a picture of that little girl hangs in my office. She is my daily reminder that every single student is capable of extraordinary things. As educators, our job is simple yet vital: to find that spark and foster their genius.
I have been in Westerville City Schools since graduating from college. I went to OSU for my undergraduate degree and everyone spoke so highly of Westerville, I knew I had to be a part of it.

What do you hope every student feels when they walk through your school's doors each day?
My hope is for students to walk through our doors and think of Hanby as their second home–a place where they can grow as individuals, learners, and compassionate members of a community. A place where they feel safe to take risks, ask big questions, and discover who they are.

As you begin your first year, what are you most excited about, and what are your top priorities?
I'm most excited about meeting our incredible students. Having served in education for many years, I love that every school year brings fresh energy, new opportunities, and meaningful challenges. It is truly the students who keep me grounded and remind me daily why I chose this field. My top priority this year is ensuring that every student, staff member, and family feels safe, valued, and supported as we build on the wonderful work already happening at Hanby.

Outside of school, what are some things you enjoy doing with your family or in your free time?
Outside of school, you can find me floating on the water. My husband, Josh, and our three kids–Audrey, Summer, and Jake–are total lake lovers. We spend most of our time making memories tubing, wakeboarding, and relaxing on rafts. In the winter months, we swap the lake for the land to go four-wheeling and hit the slopes with skis and snowboards.

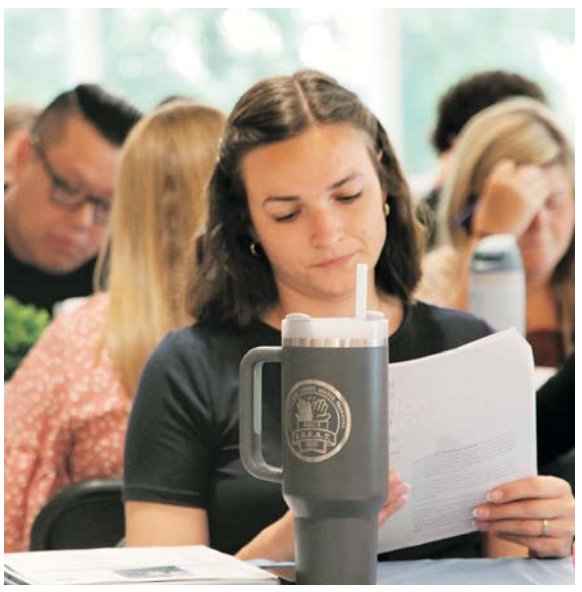
If there's one thing you'd like every student, staff member, and family to know about you, what would it be?
I lead with empathy, practice fairness, and treat every experience as an opportunity to learn. Simply put, I'm fully invested in this work and wouldn't want to be anywhere else.

WELCOME OUR NEW TEACHERS

Westerville City Schools welcomed 95 new teachers to the District this year during New Staff Orientation. The multi-day experience gave new educators the opportunity to connect with colleagues and learn more about our schools and community. ***Welcome to WCS!***





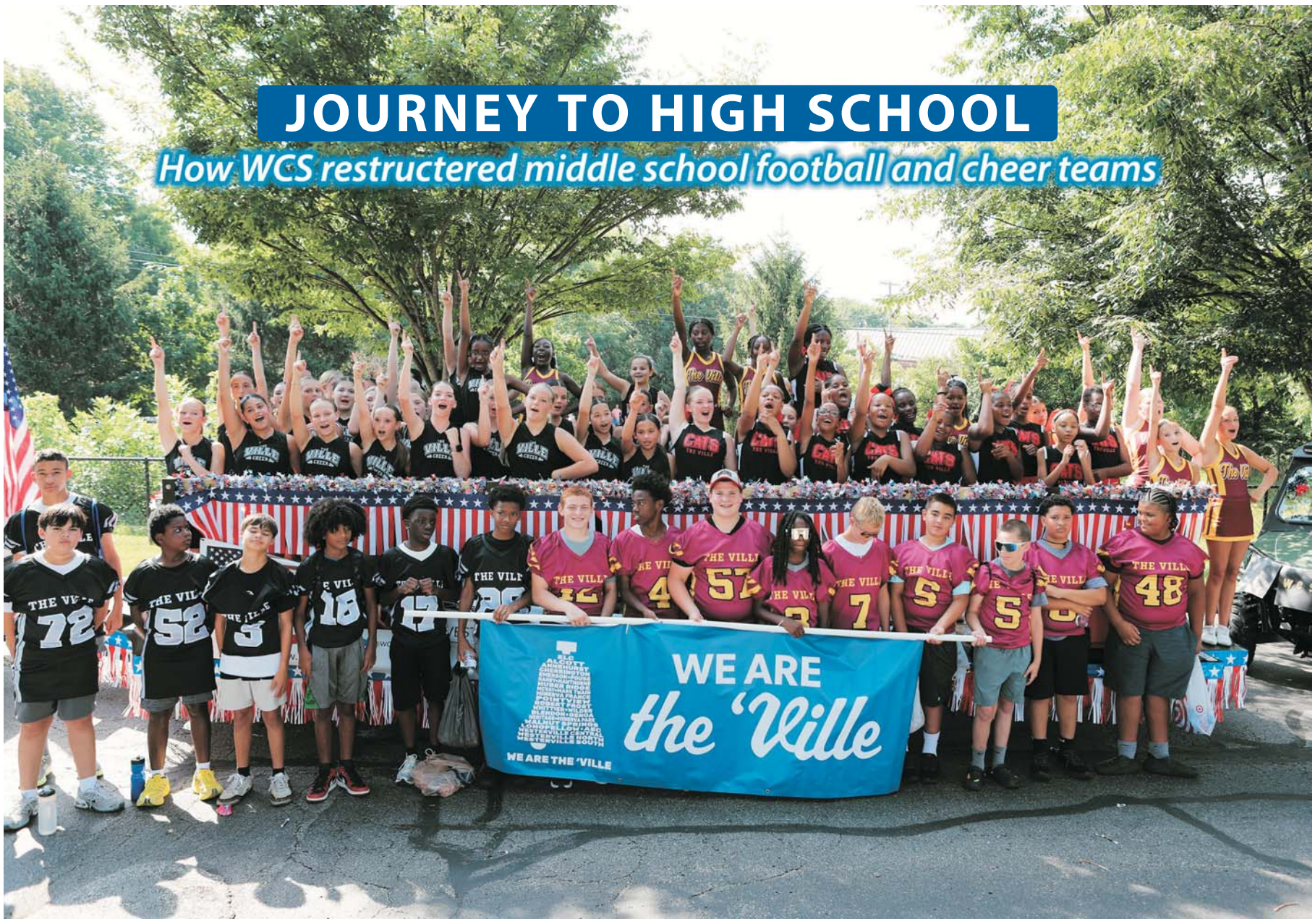






JOURNEY TO HIGH SCHOOL

How WCS restructered middle school football and cheer teams





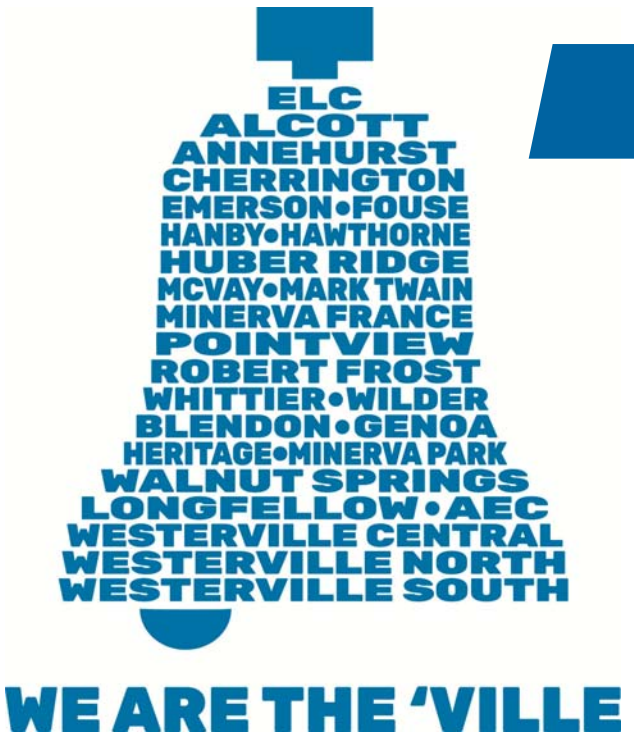
Westerville's middle school student-athletes are getting a head start on their high school journey – together.

Under a new athletics reorganization this year, 7th and 8th grade football and cheer teams across the District have combined to align directly with Westerville's three high schools.

The goal? Build team chemistry early, ensure strong roster sizes, and deliver a consistent sports experience from day one.

In previous years, fluctuating participation numbers forced middle schools to merge teams mid-season, causing unexpected scheduling headaches for busy families, coaches, and opponents. By establishing three clear high school feeder programs, District leaders are eliminating mid-season disruptions and keeping rosters full all season long.





We are the 'Ville pledge

Through surveys, focus group meetings and informal conversations, our student athletes, coaches, administrators, athletic directors and booster groups have talked about the need for positive role models in the stands so students and the community can have a positive experience during an athletic contest. Students shared the need to be in an environment where they feel supported, respected and are provided space to grow and enjoy the game.

Sportsmanship clearly matters to our students, staff and community. In response, the District launched a sportsmanship awareness campaign.

We are the 'Ville is a reminder to students that no matter which Westerville City School they attend, it's still one Westerville. The goal of *We are the 'Ville* is to reinforce camaraderie and good sportsmanship.

Summer work brings upgrades across Westerville City Schools

Students and staff across Westerville City Schools started the new school year with refreshed facilities, upgraded classroom technology and replaced vehicles – thanks to dozens of projects completed across the District this summer.

The District's Operations team spent the summer addressing building needs, upgrading technology and preparing schools for the year ahead. The work included everything from roof and parking lot repairs to new classroom displays, network improvements and new buses.

The Maintenance team completed 16 projects focused on immediate building needs, including door replacements and repairs to boiler and HVAC systems.

Meanwhile, the Information Technology Department completed the final phase of a major project this summer: **Blendon Middle School now has 10 times more network capacity.** The network upgrade brings the school in line with District technology standards and completes the District-wide connectivity upgrade.

The Operations team also responded when unexpected needs arose. After a severe thunderstorm on August 11 toppled trees and limbs across the area, the District's grounds crew spent three days clearing debris from multiple school buildings.

Many of the planned improvements were funded through the District's permanent improvement budget, which is dedicated to capital needs. Other projects were supported by remaining funds from the 2019 voter-approved bond issue.

A SNAPSHOT OF THE SUMMER WORK PROJECTS:

FACILITIES

- Roof repairs at four buildings, including all three high schools
- Parking lot repaving at five locations, including the Transportation bus garage
- Plumbing and restroom repairs at three schools
- Concrete repairs throughout the District
- Safety upgrades to the Westerville South auditorium
- New fire alarm equipment at Westerville South
- Stage floor repairs and other auditorium improvements at Westerville Central and Westerville South, along with auditorium enhancements at all three high schools
- Grant-funded project replaced the playground blacktop at Mark Twain Elementary

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

- Hardware refreshes and equipment updates across the District
- Computer updates at five schools
- New interactive classroom displays at seven schools
- Wi-Fi, networking, storage, software and security upgrades at all buildings

TRANSPORTATION

- 16 new buses
- Six new vans for the MyVan program









How Our IT Team Keeps Learning Connected



When students walk into a classroom at Westerville City Schools, they expect technology to work. Interactive displays turn on, Chromebooks connect, internet access is seamless, and teachers can focus on instruction instead of troubleshooting.

While most people don't think about what makes that possible, it's all part of the work happening behind the scenes every day by the District's Information Technology (IT) Department.

"Our goal is to create an environment where the technology just works," said IT Director Tim Stiffler. "If we can remove one more thing from a teacher's or student's plate, it gives them the ability to focus on learning."

That philosophy recently helped the District reach a major milestone.

A PROJECT FINISHED AHEAD OF SCHEDULE

Over the past several years, the IT Department has worked to replace classroom projectors and a variety of aging display technologies with modern interactive displays throughout the District.

The original plan was to complete the replacement over a five-year timeline. Thanks to careful planning, purchasing equipment at favorable pricing, and coordinating installations alongside building construction projects, the District completed the work a full year ahead of schedule.

Even more impressive, the project finished approximately $500,000 under budget.

"The goal was to create one consistent experience for every classroom," Stiffler said. "No matter which building you're in or which teacher you have, students and staff are using the same technology platform."

MORE THAN JUST COMPUTERS

Many people think of IT as the department that fixes broken computers. In reality, the team's responsibilities extend far beyond that.

Westerville City Schools' IT Department consists of 11 staff members, including four building technicians, five computer administrators, a director and an administrative assistant.

Building technicians provide hands-on support in schools, helping teachers troubleshoot classroom technology, install software, repair devices and keep instruction running smoothly.

Behind the scenes, computer administrators specialize in areas such as servers and backups, network infrastructure, Chromebook management, application integration, and the District's physical security systems, including security cameras, door access, phones and other communication systems.

Together, the team supports more than 14,000 students and over 2,000 staff members, substitutes and volunteers across the District.

KEEPING STUDENTS SAFE ONLINE

One of the IT Department's biggest responsibilities is protecting students in an increasingly digital world.

The District uses multiple layers of online security, including web filtering that blocks inappropriate content such as gambling, violence and other unsuitable websites.

Additionly, monitoring systems can identify indicators of potential self-harm or other safety concerns, allowing staff to respond quickly and connect students with support when needed.

As artificial intelligence tools become more common, Westerville City Schools is also taking steps to ensure they are used safely and responsibly. Students have access only to approved AI tools that meet the District's security and privacy standards, and new guidance will help both students and staff understand appropriate AI use during the school year.

"We're here to partner with parents," Stiffler said. "Our goal isn't to replace what families are doing at home. It's to provide an environment at school that is safe, secure and supports student learning."

LOOKING AHEAD

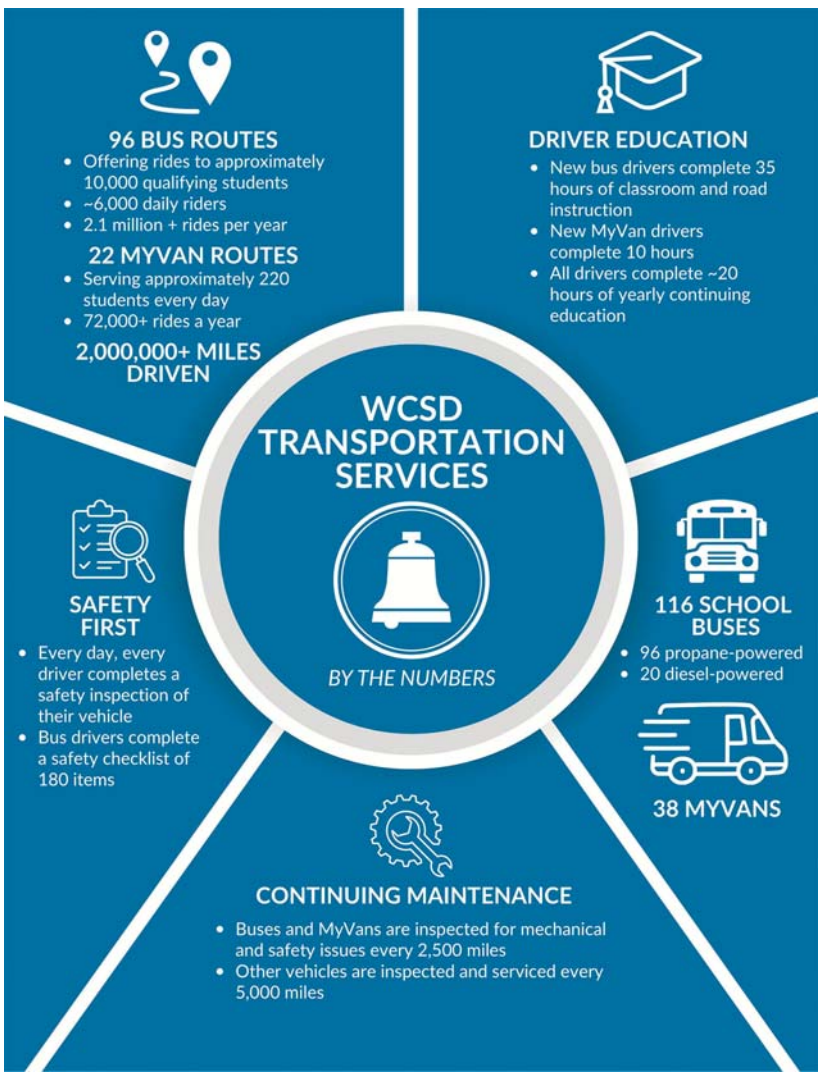
While maintaining secure and reliable technology remains the department's top priority, Tim also sees exciting possibilities for the future.

One idea he'd love to explore is creating opportunities for middle and high school students to assist with technology troubleshooting and device repairs under staff supervision.

Such a program would give students hands-on experience while exposing them to careers in information technology.

He also hopes to continue expanding opportunities in engineering, technology and 3D printing to prepare students for careers in rapidly growing fields.

"Our students have grown up with technology in ways previous generations never did," Stiffler said. "Helping them explore those interests could open the door to future careers."





Westerville Parent Council: Building Stronger Connections for Families & Schools

Behind every successful school event, fundraiser or volunteer effort is a network of dedicated parents and community members working together to support students. One organization helps bring all of those efforts together across Westerville City Schools: the Westerville Parent Council (WPC).

The Westerville Parent Council, a nonprofit organization, serves as the District-wide umbrella organization for the 35 PTAs, PTOs, PTSAs and booster groups that support Westerville City Schools.

"WPC provides leadership training, resources, networking opportunities and ongoing support to our school parent organizations," said Westerville Parent Council President Molly Phelps. "By helping these volunteer-led groups learn from one another and work together, we're able to strengthen school communities and enhance the educational experience for every student."



Hawthorne PTA members

Throughout the school year, the Parent Council hosts monthly meetings that bring together these organizations and District leaders. These meetings give a representative from those organizations an inside look at important topics impacting students while creating opportunities to ask questions and build relationships.

For parents who may be wondering how to get involved, Phelps has a simple message: just ask.

"There is a place for everyone, and every contribution makes a difference," she said. "Whether you have an hour to volunteer at a book fair or you're interested in taking on a recurring leadership role, your time and talents are valued."


Hanby PTA members

She encourages families to begin with the support organization at their child's school. Most PTA, PTO, PTSA and booster groups share volunteer opportunities through school newsletters, social media and other communications, while building principals and school staff can also help families get connected.

"Getting involved is a great way to build relationships, strengthen your school community and support students," she said. "No matter how much time you can give, your involvement can have a lasting impact."

Phelps also hopes families understand that the Parent Council is about much more than meetings.

"I wish every Westerville family knew that the Parent Council is about connecting families with information, resources and each other," she said.

Each PTA, PTO, PTSA and booster group has a Westerville Parent Council delegate who attends monthly meetings, and many organization presidents participate as well. They bring information back to their school communities through newsletters, social media and other communications, helping families stay informed about District initiatives and opportunities.

In fact, that's exactly how Phelps first became involved.

"I attended a meeting as a PTA member and learned about a District program that was new to me," she said. "I was able to follow up with our building principal, and it had a positive impact on our family. I realized how valuable it was to have that connection and wanted to help share those insights with other families."

That experience eventually led her to become president of the Westerville Parent Council.

Families interested in learning more don't have to wait for an invitation. The first step is simply reaching out to the support organization at your child's school to get connected.

WESTERVILLE PARENT COUNCIL GROUPS

- Alcott PTA
- Annehurst Elementary PTA
- Cherrington PTA
- Emerson Elementary PTA
- Fouse Elementary PTO
- Hanby PTA
- Hawthorne Elementary PTA
- Huber Ridge Elementary PTA
- Mark Twain Elementary PTA
- McVay PTA
- Minerva France PTA
- Pointview PTA
- Robert Frost PTA
- Whittier PTA
- Wilder PTA
- Blendon Middle School PTO
- Genoa Fine Arts Boosters
- Genoa PTSA
- Heritage Middle School PTSA
- Minerva Park PTSA
- Walnut Spring Middle School PTSA
- Westerville Central Academic Boosters
- Westerville Central Athletic Boosters
- Westerville Central Music Boosters
- Westerville Central Theatre Boosters
- Westerville North Academic Boosters
- Westerville North Athletic Booster Club
- Westerville North Music Boosters
- Westerville North Theatre Boosters
- Westerville South Academic Boosters
- Westerville South Athletic Boosters
- Westerville South Instrumental Music Boosters
- Westerville South Theatre Boosters
- Westerville Special Needs PTA



McVay Woods History Trail Debuts

The nature path near McVay Elementary is getting a vibrant upgrade. Thanks to a partnership with the Westerville Public Library, the path will soon transform into the McVay Woods History Trail – a living lab where students and community members can explore local history, flora and fauna.

The outdoor display panels were originally installed in 2020 by first-grade teacher Olivia Bechtel to give families safe, outdoor access to books during the pandemic. When maintaining the story trail became too time-intensive, English Learner teacher Heather Lewis approached the library about taking over the displays.

Because the site sits less than a mile from the Storybook Trail at Johnston-McVay Park, library staff suggested turning the path into a dedicated history walk.

Westerville History Museum Manager Jackie Barton spearheaded the research alongside museum specialist Katy Kaslow and retired teacher Debbie Bennati.

While the District's grounds crew cleared the trail, current and former students created original artwork for the new display panels. These illustrations capture the rich timeline of the land, featuring:

- The past: Ancient glaciers, early inhabitants, a former horse racetrack, a sugar shack and historic orchards.
- The present: The active vernal pool and woods that now shelter birds, raccoons, butterflies and native wildlife.

During school hours, the trail will serve as an interactive classroom for McVay students. During non-school hours, it opens to the public as a local retreat for learning and observation.

"It is important to preserve and protect our natural resources for the students to grow in understanding of the world around them," Lewis said.

Building a Stronger Foundation: Westerville's Focus on MTSS Tier 1 this School Year

At Westerville City Schools, we believe every student deserves the support, encouragement and opportunities they need to succeed in school and beyond. One of the ways we make that commitment a reality is through our Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) framework.

MTSS is a step-by-step system that helps schools identify what each student needs and provide the right support at the right time. Some students may need additional support in a particular area, while others may need enrichment or additional challenges to continue growing. MTSS helps teachers, staff and families work together to make sure every student has an opportunity to thrive.



Over the past year, Westerville City Schools made significant progress in building a strong foundation for MTSS. Schools developed the framework and began establishing a clear 'skeleton' for all three tiers of support.

There is still work to do to refine and strengthen the system, but that foundation gives us an important place from which to grow. This year, our focus is shifting more intentionally to Tier 1 – the core instruction and support every student receives.

Why Tier 1? Because the strongest MTSS system begins with a strong foundation for every student.

We have also begun using new tools and processes to better identify a student's specific area of need. Instead of simply knowing that a student is struggling, educators can increasingly pinpoint where the gap exists and what needs to happen to help close it.

That information allows teachers and staff to respond more intentionally – using strategies, instruction and interventions that are connected directly to what a student needs.

MTSS is built around three levels of support:

- **Tier 1: Core Instruction:** Every student receives high-quality instruction and support in the classroom. Teachers use effective strategies designed to help all students learn and grow.
- **Tier 2: Targeted Support:** Students who need additional support receive targeted instruction, often through small groups or specific strategies designed to address an identified need. Tier 2 can also provide enrichment for students who are ready for additional challenges.
- **Tier 3: Intensive Support:** Students with more significant or individualized needs receive intensive, personalized support, either one-on-one or in small groups, focused on their unique needs.



While the tiers provide different levels of support, they are not separate programs or destinations. They are part of a connected system designed to ensure students receive what they need as their needs change.

MTSS is more than an academic framework. It is about supporting the whole child – academically, socially and emotionally.

And it takes all of us. Every student should be able to identify an adult in their school with whom they feel connected. That person may be a classroom teacher, counselor, coach, bus driver, custodian or building secretary. Every role matters, because every connection matters.



"Our work is about making sure every student knows they belong here and has a genuine opportunity to be successful," said Kate Thoma, Director of Curriculum and Instruction, PK-12. "If we don't figure out how every student belongs and how every student can be successful, then what are we doing? That's why we are here every day."

The work of MTSS will continue to evolve. The foundation is in place, and now Westerville City Schools is focusing on strengthening Tier 1 so that every student benefits from high-quality instruction and support from the start.


Jen Carlson


Adam Jarvis


Larissa Riegel


Kelley Stocker

Teacher credentialing programs bring more College Credit Plus courses to WCS

Westerville high school students have expanded opportunities to earn college credit without leaving their school this year.

Thanks to a grant from the Educational Service Center of Central Ohio, four teachers – Jen Carlson at Westerville North; and Adam Jarvis, Larissa Riegel and Kelley Stocker at Westerville South – completed 18 credit hours of graduate coursework this summer and earned credentials to serve as volunteer adjunct faculty for Columbus State Community College. Last year, the District had 6 fully credentialed educators to teach College Credit Plus (CCP) classes across the three high schools.

Now, about 100 students are enrolled in either Composition I and Intro to American Government college courses at their high school classrooms this year.

Expanding on-campus CCP offerings helps break down barriers to higher education, giving students a head start on college during the high school day at no cost to families.

A new season for student theatre takes the stage

The curtain is rising on another year for student theatre! The upcoming lineup of productions across the District's middle and high schools features familiar favorites alongside plays and musicals making their Westerville stage debuts. This year's schedule includes:

FALL
Westerville Central
Radium Girls, Sept. 25-28
Westerville South
Lost Girl, Oct. 2-4
Westerville North
Past Midnight, Oct.15-17



WINTER
Westerville Central
You're A Good Man, Charlie Brown, Nov. 20-22
Westerville North
The Other Side of Christmas, Dec. 10-12
Westerville South
Spamalot (School Edition), Jan. 21-24



SPRING
Westerville North
Mamma Mia, April 8-11
Westerville Central
Mean Girls, April 16-18
Westerville South
Kiss Me, Kate, April 22-25



SCHOLARSHIP SHOWS
Westerville South: Nov. 14
Westerville Central: Jan. 22
Westerville North: May 6-8

MIDDLE SCHOOL
Walnut Springs: ***Disney's Descendants: The Musical*** at Westerville North, Feb. 12-14
Genoa: ***How to Train Your Dragon Jr.*** at Westerville Central, Feb. 26-28
Heritage: ***The SpongeBob Musical*** at Westerville North, March 11-13
Minerva Park: ***15 Reasons NOT to be in a Play***, March 11-14
Blendon: ***Midsummer Nights Dream*** at Westerville South, March 12-14



PURCHASING TICKETS

Scan the QR codes below to visit the ticketing sites for the respective schools

Westerville Middle Schools | Westerville Central High School | Westerville North High School | Westerville South High School



Superintendent Gold Appreciation Card now available for Westerville City School District Residents Age 60+

Westerville City Schools invites senior citizens living in the District to pick up their 2026-27 Superintendent's Gold Appreciation Card–a free card that offers complimentary admission to select school events.

The Gold Card program was created to show appreciation to the senior community within the District for their continued support of Westerville students and programs.

The Gold card offers free admission (when available) to sporting events, concerts, musicals and plays. It is valid for the entire 2026-27 school year.

Cards are available weekdays, 7:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. at:
Westerville Early Learning Center: 936 Eastwind Drive, Westerville

They are also available during regular business hours at:
- **Westerville Senior Center: 350 N Cleveland Ave.**
- **Blendon Township Senior Center: 6340 Hempstead Road**
- **Genoa Township Administration Office: 5111 South Old 3C Highway**

WESTERVILLE VS. WESTERVILLE

2026–27 Rivalry Sports Schedule

MARK YOUR CALENDAR
Come out and support our Westerville athletes.

DATE	TIME	SPORT	HOME	AWAY
SEP 24	3:15 PM	GIRLS' GOLF	North	South • Central
SEP 24	7:15 PM	GIRLS' SOCCER	North	Central
SEP 25	6:00 PM	FOOTBALL	North	South
OCT 1	6:45 PM	GIRLS' VOLLEYBALL	South	North
OCT 20	6:45 PM	GIRLS' VOLLEYBALL	Central	South
DEC 22	4:00 PM	BOYS' BASKETBALL	Central	North
JAN 5	7:30 PM	BOYS' BASKETBALL	North	South
JAN 7	6:00 PM	BOYS' WRESTLING	North	South
JAN 16	4:00 PM	BOYS' BASKETBALL	Central	South
FEB 2	7:00 PM	GIRLS' BASKETBALL	Central	South
FEB 4	6:30 PM	GIRLS' BASKETBALL	North	South

WESTERVILLE NORTH • WESTERVILLE SOUTH • WESTERVILLE CENTRAL
Schedules and times are based on the provided sports schedule.

WCSD TICKETING PRICES

Varsity Sports	JV Sports	Middle School
Adults: $8	Adults: $6	Adults: $5
Students: $7	Students: $5	Students: $3

Tickets can be purchased online or at the gate

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Seniors Bring Creativity to the Parking Lot

For the first time, seniors at all three Westerville City Schools high schools–Westerville Central, Westerville North and Westerville South–had the opportunity to put their own creative mark on the parking lot as they started the 2026-27 school year.

Senior parking spot painting has quickly become a fun way for students to express their personalities, interests and creativity. Each design was submitted for approval by building administration ahead of time, ensuring the artwork met school guidelines while giving students plenty of room to make their spaces their own.

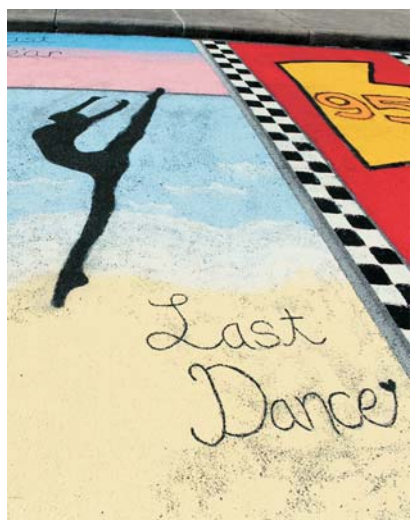
The newly painted spots bring plenty of personality and school spirit to each high school parking lot and provide seniors with a unique way to celebrate this milestone year.

We are excited to see this new tradition grow across our high schools and hope senior parking spot painting continues for years to come. It is one more way we can celebrate our seniors and give them a chance to leave their mark on their school community.



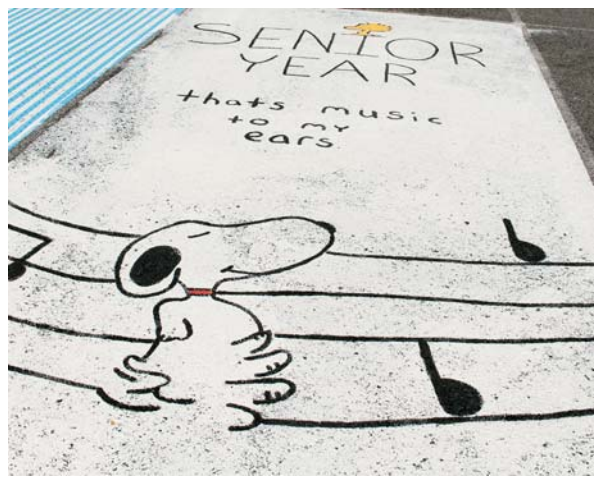














Save the date

Westerville City Schools Graduation | 05.29.2027

Westerville South 10:00 am
Westerville North 2:00 pm
Westerville Central 6:00 pm

PEER SUPPORT IN ACTION:
How Hope Squad is transforming Westerville City Schools

Now entering its sixth year in all three high schools and third year across all five middle schools, the peer-to-peer suicide prevention program empowers students to spot warning signs, offer support and connect peers with trusted adults. Later this school year, the District plans to expand the initiative to several elementary schools, furthering its commitment to a safe, connected community for every child.

Hope Squad student leaders don't act as counselors or tackle crisis resolution on their own. Instead, nominated by their peers and trained by professionals, they focus on being observant friends, prioritizing mental health awareness, and knowing exactly when and how to loop in an adult.

District leaders and staff report a clear shift: students are growing in empathy, leadership, and proactive care for one another.

This work was made possible through a strong partnership with the Westerville Education Challenge, a local nonprofit whose long-term financial support ensures mental health initiatives continue to thrive across the District.





A culture where every student feels seen, valued, and supported doesn't just happen – it's built. It takes peers who notice when someone is struggling, reach out when a classmate feels alone and make asking for help second nature.

- Hope Squad's Core Mission





Link Crew provides safety net for freshmen



Starting high school is a major milestone, and Westerville City Schools has built a safety net to support freshmen across the District.

Last year, the District launched Link Crew across all Westerville high schools to help incoming freshmen feel supported, confident, and connected from day one.

Link Crew is a nationally recognized transition program built on a simple premise: students helping students succeed. The program pairs small groups of ninth-graders with trained Link Crew Student Leaders who serve as mentors and guides. From navigating the building and managing high school classes to discovering clubs and sports, leaders are there to help freshmen find their footing.

And that support extends beyond orientation week. Leaders stay in touch throughout the entire school year, hosting check-ins and activities to keep freshmen engaged.

The benefits flow both ways. While freshmen gain a reliable guide, upperclassmen receive valuable leadership training in empathy, communication and team-building--skills that serve them long after graduation.

Link Crew shares a playbook with WEB (Where Everybody Belongs), the District's middle school transition program. Both initiatives stem from The Boomerang Project, an educational consulting group focused on peer mentorship.

Just as Link Crew supports high schoolers, WEB pairs incoming sixth-graders with trained middle school leaders. Throughout the year, WEB leaders host campus tours, tutor peers and visit classrooms to facilitate discussions on time management, teamwork and critical life skills.

Together, WEB and Link Crew create a seamless, student-led support system from sixth grade through high school graduation.

The Westerville Education Challenge raises awareness and resources for social-emotional learning initiatives across the District and has provided financial support to both programs.

Westerville City Schools Launches Legislative Committee to Strengthen Public Education Advocacy

Westerville City Schools is launching a new Legislative Committee designed to keep the community informed about issues impacting public education at the local, state and federal levels.

The committee, which will meet monthly, brings together parents, teachers, administrators and community members who share a commitment to supporting public schools. Through regular meetings, members will learn about current legislation, discuss its potential impact on Westerville City Schools, and help share accurate information with the broader community.

"Public education is stronger when our community understands the opportunities and challenges facing our schools," Superintendent Angie Hamberg said. "This committee is about building connections, encouraging thoughtful conversations and ensuring our families and community members have the information they need to be informed advocates for public education."

The Legislative Committee reflects the District's ongoing commitment to transparency, community engagement and collaboration. By bringing together a diverse group of stakeholders, the committee will serve as a resource for learning about education policy and its impact on students, staff and schools.

If you are interested in joining the Legislative Committee, please contact Melanie Amato, Executive Director of Communications and Community Engagement, at amatom@westerville.k12.oh.us.



North High School sophomore turns personal trauma into legislation

After a life-threatening allergic reaction at a restaurant sent fourth-grader Julia Miller-Mathers to the emergency room, she was so traumatized she refused to eat outside her home for a year.

When a second reaction hit two years later, she took action. Miller-Mathers and her mother wrote to state Rep. Munira Abdullahi about the dangers of poor allergen disclosures. Abdullahi listened and teamed up with Miller-Mathers on House Bill 364, which would require restaurants to list the top eight allergens on their menus.

This summer, Miller-Mathers – now a sophomore at Westerville North High School – finally got her chance to advocate for the bill she helped create.

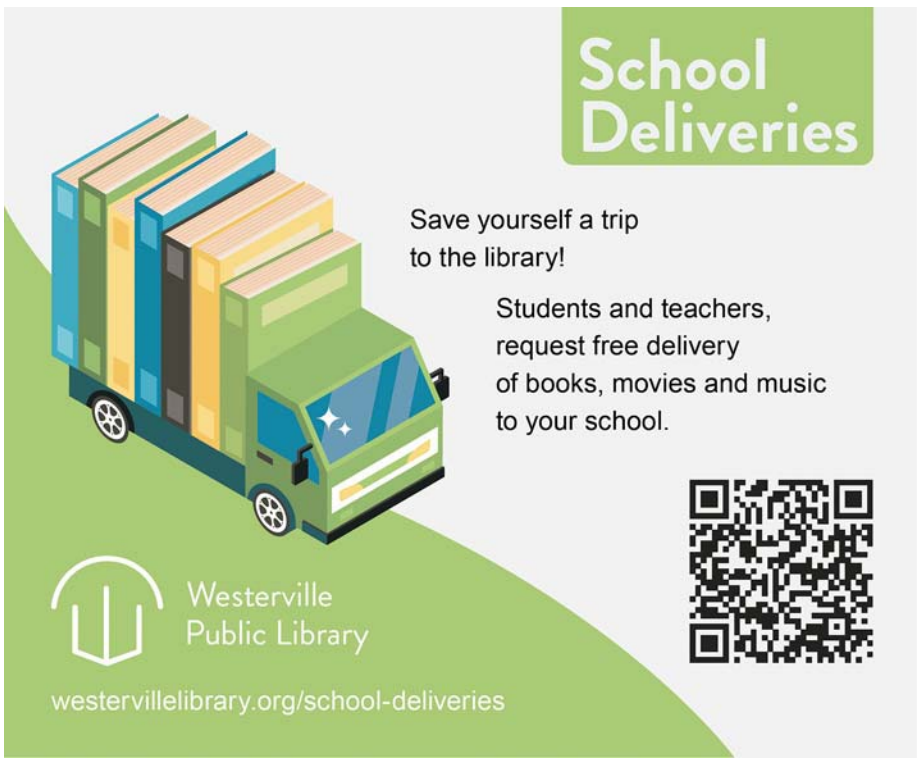
On June 3, she testified before the House Agriculture Committee:
"I know how stressful and challenging it can be to find a place that accommodates allergies, and I know that I can speak on behalf of everyone with an allergy when I say that we are tired. We are tired of our lives constantly being at risk when all we want is to enjoy a meal. We are tired of constantly having to ask personnel if something is safe. We are tired of watching some people eat freely, while we are restricted for the sake of simply not knowing.



This simple bill would not only change lives, but it would bring an enormous sense of relief to the community."

For Miller-Mathers, the testimony turned past trauma into purpose, and brought an ambitious idea to life.

"I didn't think this would go anywhere," she said. "I thought it was an idea. After being patient and waiting and working hard, I was able to come this far, which is a huge step."





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Back to School: Preschool

Westerville City Schools' Preschool Program provides a nurturing, engaging learning environment designed to help young children build the skills they need for success in school and beyond. Through developmentally appropriate learning experiences, students build early academic, social-emotional, communication, and independence skills while learning through play, exploration, and meaningful interactions.

The District's preschool services are provided at the **Early Learning Center** and **Pointview Elementary School**, with programming designed to meet the individual needs of young learners. Welcome to Westerville City Schools.















WESTERVILLE CITY SCHOOLS
WHERE YOU BELONG

Back to School: Elementary

Alcott • Annehurst • Cherrington • Emerson • Fouse • Hanby • Hawthorne • Huber Ridge Mark Twain • McVay • Minerva France • Pointview • Robert Frost • Whittier • Wilder

Westerville City Schools' elementary program serves students in kindergarten through fifth grade across 15 elementary schools. Each school provides a strong foundation in literacy, mathematics, science, social studies, and the arts while emphasizing students' social-emotional development, curiosity, creativity, and love of learning.

With a focus on meeting the needs of every learner, Westerville's elementary schools offer a variety of academic support, enrichment opportunities, and specialized programming. The district also provides magnet opportunities focused on areas such as STEAM, World Cultures, and Fine Arts, giving families additional options to support their child's interests and strengths.















Back to School: Elementary

Alcott • Annehurst • Cherrington • Emerson • Fouse • Hanby • Hawthorne • Huber Ridge
Mark Twain • McVay • Minerva France • Pointview • Robert Frost • Whittier • Wilder



Back to School: Middle School

Blendon • Genoa • Heritage • Minerva Park • Walnut Springs

Westerville City Schools' middle school program supports students through the important transition from elementary school to high school. Across five middle schools, students in grades 6-8 are challenged academically while developing greater independence, confidence, and responsibility.

Middle school students experience a broad and engaging curriculum that builds strong foundations in core academic subjects while providing opportunities in the arts, technology, athletics, and other extracurricular activities. Teachers, counselors, and support staff work together to help students navigate the middle school years, discover their interests, and prepare for success in high school and beyond.



Back to School: Middle School

Blendon • Genoa • Heritage • Minerva Park • Walnut Springs















Back to School: High School

Westerville Central • Westerville North • Westerville South

Westerville City Schools' three comprehensive high schools provide students with a wide range of opportunities to discover their interests, develop their talents, and prepare for life after graduation. Students benefit from a rigorous and diverse academic program that includes Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, career pathways, fine arts, athletics, extracurricular activities, and opportunities for college and career exploration.

Each high school is committed to creating a supportive environment where students are challenged to achieve their potential, build meaningful relationships, develop leadership skills, and prepare for their next step – whether that is college, career, military service, or another post-secondary pathway.



Back to School: High School

Westerville Central • Westerville North • Westerville South



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