BLUE RIBBON

FALL 2026

Message from the Superintendent



Crisp mornings, crunchy leaves and Friday night lights can only mean one thing: fall has arrived in Washington Court House, and the Blue Lions are in full swing. Our hallways are buzzing, our classrooms are busy and our students are already making this a year to remember.

On Tuesday, Nov. 3, voters in our district will see a 1% school district earned income tax renewal on the ballot. This is not a new tax, and the rate would not change. The renewal would continue the existing tax, which expires at the end of 2027. You'll find the details in Treasurer Becky Mullins' update in this issue, and the Treasurer's Office is always happy to answer your questions.

Now for the fun part. From our youngest learners at the Blue Lion Early Learning Center to our seniors at Washington High School, every building in our district has stories worth celebrating. Keep reading for a Navy mom's unforgettable welcome home on Military Appreciation Night, kindness kicking off with a simple hello, hands-on learning in classrooms across the district and so much more. Every page has something to roar about.

To our students, staff, families and community partners, thank you for cheering in the stands, showing up at open houses and making every day brighter for our kids. You are what makes the Blue Lion Family so special, and I am proud to be part of it.

It's a great day to be a Blue Lion!

Dr. Chris Briggs
Superintendent

BELLE AIRE INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL

Math Hits the Hallways



Fourth graders took place value on the road during Math Scoot, hopping from task card to task card through the halls of Belle Aire. Students teamed up, compared strategies and asked each other the best question in math: "How did you figure that out?"



Lunch & Laughs

Belle Aire turned lunchtime into connection time during Start With Hello Week, sharing tables with Mr. Colburn and Mrs. New. Students rolled conversation cubes, wrote encouraging notes to classmates and covered the Affirmation Station Wall in positivity, all to make sure everyone feels seen.

BOARD OF EDUCATION DELIVERS

Promise Made, Promise Packed



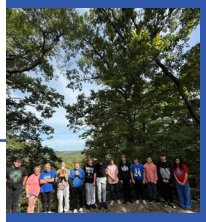
Remember when we said school supplies were covered? The Board of Education delivered, as board members Ken Upthegrove, Wendy Downing and Dr. Zach Camp helped hand out supply boxes to welcome K-8 students back. It's one less bill for families and one more way the board is investing in every Blue Lion.



Thank You, Mrs. Lynch

After more than 15 years on the Board of Education, Jennifer Lynch is stepping down as she and her family prepare to move to Franklin County. During her service, an entire generation of Blue Lions grew from first-day jitters to graduation caps, her own family included, while she worked quietly behind the scenes on their behalf. Thank you, Jennifer, for everything you've given the Blue Lion Family.

WASHINGTON HIGH SCHOOL



A 2,000-Year Field Trip

Mr. Beasley's Ohio History students stepped into a living textbook on a trip to Fort Ancient in Oregonia. From the North Overlook, they took in the Little Miami River and part of a Hopewell earthwork stretching more than three miles, a reminder that some of history's biggest chapters were written right here in Ohio.

Rain or Shine, the Class of 2027 Rises

Gray skies tried to crash Senior Sunrise, but the Class of 2027 showed up and made it a morning to remember anyway. A big thank you to the American Legion for covering breakfast and helping our seniors start their final year in style.



Treasurer Update



What to Know About the 1% Earned Income Tax Renewal

The school year is off to a great start, and it has been wonderful to see our buildings full of energy again. Fall is always a busy season in the Treasurer's Office. It is also a time when many community members have questions about how our district is funded. As always, our goal is to give you clear, accurate information so you can find the answers you are looking for.

On Tuesday, Nov. 3, 2026, voters in the Washington Court House City School District will see a 1% school district earned income tax renewal on the ballot. To be clear, this is not a new tax. It is a renewal of the same 1% earned income tax district residents already pay today. The renewal would not create an additional tax, and it would not change the current rate. The current tax expires Dec. 31, 2027. If approved, the existing 1% tax would continue beginning Jan. 1, 2028, for seven years.

Because this is an earned income tax, it is not based on property values and is not a property tax. It applies to district residents with taxable earned income, such as wages, salaries, tips and self-employment income. It is based on where you live, not where you work. Social Security, pensions, retirement withdrawals, interest and dividends are generally not taxed under the school district earned income tax.

The Board of Education placed the renewal on this November's ballot because voter approval is required before the current tax expires to avoid a lapse in funding. All revenue from the tax stays local and is used for day-to-day district operations, including instruction, transportation, student services, utilities and safety.

You can find the full finance facts on our website at wchcs.org under the Treasurer's Office page. If you have questions about the renewal, our forecast and budget, or how the tax applies to your situation, please contact the Treasurer's Office directly. We are always glad to share the facts.

Becky Mullins
CFO/Treasurer

BLUE LION EARLY LEARNING CENTER

Our Littlest Lions Find Their Roar



In just one month, the Blue Lion Early Learning Center has turned brand-new faces into fast friends. Our youngest learners settled into their classrooms, showed off their spirit during Attendance Spirit Week and even got a visit from the Blue Lion mascot at Open House. Welcome to the pride, little ones!

CHERRY HILL PRIMARY SCHOOL

Money Lessons



Author Doug Goddard and the team from Huntington Bank turned storytime into a crash course in saving, spending and budgeting for Financial Literacy Day. Every Li'l Lion went home with a copy of the book, so the lessons (and maybe a piggy bank or two) can keep growing at home.

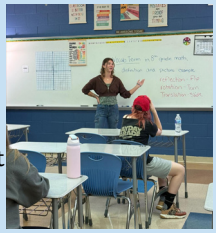


Seen & Heard

Kindergarten and first grade students got their eyes and ears checked thanks to our friends at the Fayette County Public Health Department. These quick screenings help make sure every Li'l Lion can see the board and hear the lesson loud and clear.

WASHINGTON MIDDLE SCHOOL

Where Art Meets Algebra



Washington Middle School alumna and artist Megan Downing returned to her old stomping grounds to show Miss Matthews' Math Exploration class how math shapes her artwork. Students saw firsthand that the skills they're building today could power their passions tomorrow.



Hello in Pajamas

WMS celebrated Start With Hello Week, a national annual event created by the Sandy Hook Promise organization, with Pajama Day, Twin Day and plenty of Blue Lion spirit. Beneath the fun was a big message: every student deserves to feel seen, welcomed and connected.

Teachers Hit the Books, Too



WMS teachers started the year as students themselves, digging into data together to understand what every learner needs. That teamwork shapes lessons and extra help so each student can grow.

Not a new tax.

A RENEWAL of the district's existing 1% earned income tax.

ON THE BALLOT
Tuesday, Nov. 3, 2026

%

1%

Same rate already in place. No increase.

$0

In property tax. This is an earned income tax.

Most retirees pay $0

Social Security, pensions and IRAs are not taxed.

100%

Stays local for day-to-day operations.

WHAT LOCAL DOLLARS HELP MAKE POSSIBLE

- Free breakfast and lunch
- Free school supplies
- No instructional fees
- No pay-to-play fees
- Free AP exams
- Activity transportation

Additional questions?

Scan the QR code to see all the facts or submit a question to Becky Mullins, CFO/Treasurer.

WASHINGTON COURT HOUSE CITY SCHOOLS
ENGAGE • INSPIRE • GROW

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Nailed It!

These Blue Lions reached the very top of the scale, earning perfect scores on state assessments or the highest possible score of 5 on an AP exam. That kind of result takes hard work, grit and a whole team of teachers and families cheering them on.

Perfect Scores on State Assessments

3rd Grade Math: Ryker Alderman, Noah Conley, Damien Hagler, Carleigh Newcomer, Athena Reese and Kylin Tennison

4th Grade Math: Owen Camp, Gideon Huseby and Meadow Martinez Verano

5th Grade Math: Cortland Hargo and Maycie Miller

5th Grade Science: Maycie Miller

5th Grade ELA: Maycie Miller and Jensyn Turner

Geometry: Benjamin Johnson

AP Exam Score of 5

English Language and Composition: William Johnson and Emmersyn Frederick



GAME ON

A Salute to Our Senior Lady Lions



Lady Lion Tennis honored seniors June Maddux and Lily Dawson, while Lady Lion Soccer celebrated seniors Tieryn Ivey, Olivia Haycook and Laynie Swonger. Surrounded by teammates, families and coaches Seth Leach, Brandan Ellars and Jaelyn Mason, these five Lady Lions took a well-earned bow for the heart they poured into their programs.



The Sweetest Welcome Home

Freshman cross country runner Ayoven Morales stepped onto the field at Gardner Park on Military Appreciation Night expecting to be named the Blue Lion Athletic Booster Athlete of the Week. Instead, he got the surprise of a lifetime when his mom, Senior Chief Petty Officer Francis Morales of the U.S. Navy, walked out to meet him, home from deployment aboard the USS Gridley. Welcome home, Senior Chief Morales, and thank you for your service and for letting the whole Blue Lion Family share a moment none of us will ever forget.

Middle School Fall Sports Wrap-Up

Hats off to WMS football, cross country, volleyball, soccer and cheerleading for a fall season full of hustle and heart. Our middle school athletes made us proud on the field, the court and the course, and off of them, too.



Calling All Alumni!
Once a Blue Lion, Always a Blue Lion

Whether you graduated last spring or decades ago, we want to hear what you've been up to since your days at Washington High School. A new job, a growing family, a big adventure or a favorite memory to share: your story matters to the Blue Lion Family. Contact Tammy Mongold at Cherry Hill Primary School at (740) 335-3370 or fill out our quick form by scanning the QR code and tell us how you're doing!

bit.ly/3TUJw11