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WINTER 2018

# COMMENTARY

## Westlake Elementary School Update

Although the opening of the new Westlake elementary school is a distant event, a lot of work is going on behind the scenes to ensure a successful start to the 2019-2020 school year.

Professional staff are collaborating on not only the physical space, but also aligning teaching strategies. Grade-level conversations are taking place between professionals, who created a building schedule that incorporates all of the elements critical to ensuring success for our students.

After a September 2017 groundbreaking ceremony, site work began in November. Throughout the process, the district has stayed true to promises made on the campaign trail. Following are what we pledged to the community, and how we are following through on the project:

### **We will design a building that incorporates student-centered learning principles while becoming an asset in the community for the next 50 years:**

- Lesko Architecture met with various internal stakeholders to gather input on the design and use of space.
- To address concerns from parents about the size of the building, students will be divided by grade-level wings that will create a PK-K house, 1-2 house and 3-4 house to create a more intimate environment.
- The project is the result of a years-long process that began with the 20/20 Vision Committee and continued through the Strategic Planning process. A permanent improvement fund creates a separate maintenance fund for capital expenses, including safety, security, technology updates, transportation needs and building maintenance. This completes Phase II of the Master Facilities Plan.

### **The district is committed to working with the city in a true partnership to create something that is good for the whole community:**

- In April 2017, the Board of Education and City of Westlake reached an agreement on a joint land exchange and infrastructure deal that places the new school on Center Ridge Road next to Westlake Porter Public Library.
- The city pledged to fund about \$1 million in improvements on Center Ridge Road, including a traffic signal and turning lane.
- The city significantly reduced permit fees for the project.
- February 2017: The district places \$24.41 million in bonds on the market in a competitive sale to gain the best interest rate for the community. The result will be the collection of fewer tax dollars.
- December 2017: The district sold \$9.19 million in bonds through a bank qualified sale at a lower rate, creating a significant savings during the repayment period of the life of the bonds.
- We maintained our AA+/stable long-term rating on current debt, reflecting the strength of the Westlake community and solid financial management practices.
- Construction Manager At-Risk is a model that protects the district from contractor errors and guarantees a maximum price for the project. Vendors assume responsibility for cost overruns – not the district.

### **What to Know:**

- The 152,000-square-foot, two story PK-4 elementary school is located at 27555 Center Ridge Road.
- The Westlake High School Tech Class will take drone video of the project as it progresses and post it to our website.



## Letter from the Superintendent



I hope that you and your family are enjoying the winter season and embracing the snow! I am happy to report that many positive things are in motion in Westlake.

As we look forward to continuing on our path to success, I would like to shed light on some of the great work happening at the elementary level. I am proud of how direct and purpose-driven the staff

has been in planning the consolidation of our four elementary schools into one new building for the 2019-2020 school year. Staff members from every elementary grade level have been meeting with directors to prepare for the changes. For example, the teachers of English Language Learners and the team of gifted instructors have revised their handbooks and determined guiding principles. Each grade level has been working together to align themselves with the opening of the new building. We are coming together to gradually create the culture that we envision for the new elementary building. We only get one chance to open a new building. Please bear with us as we work to get it right and unite the four individual building cultures into one.

While the elementary schools are working to prepare for the new building, the practice of reviewing and aligning content and standards is happening at every grade level throughout the district. The various grade level teams are conducting full reviews of how to be more content-focused. Just as the growth of the new elementary culture is underway, we are also working to deliver a district-wide culture of inclusion, collaboration, open-mindedness, respect and inspiration as part of our strategic plan for Westlake.

As you read this newsletter, it is my goal that you will know what a wonderful educational opportunity we have to offer here in Westlake and that it is made possible by our outstanding students, staff and community support. We are proud to provide our schools and community with countless opportunities to improve and support one another. Our district already demonstrates high levels of success. However, our goal is to move forward and reach even greater standards. While we appreciate the progress we're making, we know there are areas in which we need to grow. Let's celebrate the success we've had and continue to confront and resolve the challenges we face ... together. Thank you for your ongoing support.

**Scott Goggin, Superintendent**

# 2018 BOE MEETING SCHEDULE

All meetings begin at 6 p.m. at Parkside unless otherwise noted.

**MARCH 12**

**AUG. 13**

**MARCH 26 AT  
HOLLY LANE**

**AUG. 27 AT  
WESTLAKE  
PORTER PUBLIC  
LIBRARY**

**APRIL 9**

**APRIL 23 AT  
BASSETT**

**SEPT. 10**

**MAY 14**

**SEPT. 24 AT  
LBMS**

**MAY 21 AT  
PAC**

**OCT. 8**

**JUNE 11**

**OCT. 22 AT  
HILLIARD**

**JUNE 29**

**NOV. 26 AT  
DOVER**

**JULY 9**

**DEC. 10 AT  
DIS**

**JULY 23**

## BOARD CHANGES LEADERSHIP, ADOPTS MEETING SCHEDULE

At its Jan. 8 organizational meeting, the Westlake Board of Education installed Joe Kraft as president and Barb Leszynski as vice president for 2018. Members John Finucane and Leszynski

also were sworn in to new four-year terms after the fall election. They join members Dr. Robert Stoll and Dr. Carol Winter on the Board.

The Board also approved a tentative meeting schedule and took care of housekeeping details. You can find minutes and details on our website, [www.wlake.org/board-of-education](http://www.wlake.org/board-of-education).





## WHS Seniors Named Presidential Scholars Candidates

Two Westlake High School seniors were named U.S. Presidential Scholars candidates. Ryan Karpuszka and Patrick Lee are among 110 students from Ohio to be recognized for this prestigious award.

Each year, up to 161 students nationwide are named Presidential Scholars, one of the nation's highest honors for high school students.

Application for the U.S. Presidential Scholars Program is by invitation only. Students must score exceptionally well on either the SAT or ACT and submit candidacy materials, including essays, self-assessments, secondary school reports and transcripts. Candidates are evaluated on their academic achievement, personal characteristics, leadership and service activities, and an analysis of their essay.

About 800 candidates are named semifinalists and will be forwarded to a commission for further review. In April, the Commission on Presidential Scholars selects up to 161 U. S. Presidential Scholars. Students chosen as U.S. Presidential Scholars receive an expense-paid trip to Washington, D.C., in June and the U.S. Presidential Scholars medallion at a ceremony sponsored by the White House.

In 2015, three WHS students were named candidates – Aswin Bikkani, Nicholas Craven and Kartik Dhinakaran – with Aswin going on to be named a semifinalist. In 2016, Alex Ikezawa was named a candidate. And in 2017, Justin Krantz was named a candidate.

## Westlake Writers Recognized in Ohio Library of Congress Letter Writing Contest

Four Westlake student letters are among the Top 20 in the state in the Library of Congress' Letters About Literature Contest.

Deb Schrembeck's and Sara Latkowski's Language Arts classes at Lee Burneson Middle School, and Donna Dieterich's classes at Dover Intermediate School (DIS), participated in the reading and writing contest. Students are asked to read a book, poem or speech and write to the author (living or dead) about how the book affected them personally. Letters are judged on state and national levels.

At LBMS, Lillie Forbes' letter to Shelley Pearsall, author of "Crooked River," was named to the Top 20 and moves on to Level IV judging. She joins DIS writers Anna Mancino who wrote "The Kissing Hand" author Audrey Penn, Bernadette Slattery who wrote to "Glass Sword" author Victoria Aveyard, and Grace Sugaski who wrote to "Bluestar's Prophecy" author Erin Hunter, also named to the Top 20 for their level.

There were 3,036 entries from Ohio, including 1,213 at the middle school level and 1,017 from grades 4-6. Nationally, about 8,000 letters make it to state-level judging. State-level winners will be announced later this month.

Only first-place state winners advance to national competition. Judges include authors, publishers, librarians and educators from all 50 states. All of the state finalist letters will be forwarded to living authors in hopes of a personal reply. Tens of thousands of students from across the country enter the Letters About Literature contest each year. National winners will be recognized at a ceremony in Washington, D.C., in May.





## Westlake Academic Challenge Teams Finish in Top 10 In Nation

Both the Westlake High School and Lee Burneson Middle School Academic Challenge Teams finished in the Top 10 in the nation in the Questions Unlimited Fall 3-2-1 National Competition.

Students compete as a team to answer more than 100 questions online. There are 240 questions at the high school level and 156 questions at the middle school level.

The WHS team finished second in the nation out of 167 competing high schools and first in the state. LBMS finished seventh in the nation out of 75 competing middle schools and second in the state.

## WHS Senior a National Finalist in Stem Challenge

**Westlake High School senior Jill Eddy was one of five national finalists in Marvel Studios' THOR: RAGNAROK SUPERPOWER OF STEM CHALLENGE.**

The Challenge, supported by Walt Disney Studios, Dolby Laboratories, Synchrony Bank and Marvel Studios and the American Association for the Advancement of Science, encouraged girls ages 15-18 in grades 10-12 to use their superpower of STEM to create an original Do-It-Yourself project that can be replicated by others. Jill was one of five finalists selected to visit Los Angeles and present their projects, in person, to a panel of experts. They also had a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to be on the red carpet at the premiere of Marvel Studios' "THOR: RAGNAROK," a behind-the-scenes peek on new technology with Dolby Laboratories, a tour of the Walt Disney Studios in California, as well as attending an Ideation session with the Synchrony Bank Technology Team.

Jill sought to encourage a greater use of bicycles for everyday transportation by creating a simple, build-it-yourself bicycle anchor that allows the rider to lock a bicycle in locations that do not have appropriate areas to secure bicycles.

Jill learned about the contest through WHS Technology and Engineering teacher Scott Kutz, who runs the Techmates Club. She credits Kutz, WHS Technology and Engineering teacher Adam Purdy and Lee Burneson Middle School Technology and Engineering teacher Kurt Thonnings with supporting her interests in technology. She used her design, engineering and technology skills to create a 3D rendering of the bike lock and then create a production set.



## WHS ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL NED LAUVER NAMED OASSA ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL OF THE YEAR

Westlake High School Assistant Principal Ned Lauver was named the 2018 Ohio Association of Secondary School Administrator's (OASSA) Assistant Principal of the Year.

The OASSA Ohio Assistant Principal of the Year honor recognizes outstanding middle level and high school assistant principals who have succeeded in providing high quality learning opportunities for students. These assistant principals are acknowledged by their peers for the exemplary contributions they have made to the profession.

WHS Principal Paul Wilson described Lauver as "passionate about his role" and detailed his involvement in a variety of instructional leadership areas, including handbooks, attendance policy, master schedule initiatives, and strategic planning.

Lauver began his career as a Social Studies teacher at Carrollton High School and Wooster High School, where he also coached Speech and Debate. He served as associate principal at Edgewood Middle School in Wooster before coming to WHS as assistant principal in 2013.



## WHS Students Recognized in Scholastic Art and Writing Awards

Three Westlake High School students earned Gold Key Art Awards in the 2018 Scholastic Art + Writing Exhibition – Cuyahoga County Region and will move on to the national competition in New York.

Liv Adkins earned a Gold Key for her digital art "Gutten og Trolen," Jamie DeMeza for her photograph "The broken 4th" and Jamie Novak for her painting "RTA." Gold Key awards demonstrate the highest levels of achievement in originality, personal voice and technical skill. Gold Key art is forwarded to New York for national judging.

Liv Adkins also won a Gold Key Writing Award for her humor piece "Religion," which was also an American Voices Medal nominee, the highest regional honor. Liv's piece is one of five works from the region selected "Best in Show" that exemplify originality, technical skill and the emergence of a personal voice or vision. A panel of jurors in New York City will select one writer from each region to receive a national Medal.

Silver Key Art Awards recognize artwork demonstrating achievement worthy of recognition at the regional level. WHS students earning Silver Key Awards are Carolyn Bedell for her painting "Cheeses" and Madysen LeComte for her photograph "Caution."

Each year the Cleveland Institute of Art hosts the Scholastic Art Competition that recognizes creative achievement in area 7-12 students. The young artists compete for cash prizes, medals and scholarships. A panel of local professional artists, art educators, writers and writing educators jury the exhibit and select the awarded pieces from nearly 3,000 entries.



## First National Bank Supports School Programs

First National Bank presented a \$5,000 check to the Westlake City School District to support a college and career readiness software program, as well as the expansion of the high school Beekeeping Club project.

FNB opened a new Westlake branch last summer and approached the school district about giving back to the community. Discussions led to a \$5,000 donation to expand the Naviance program to include middle school students, and the creation of a pollination-friendly learning garden to compliment the Westlake High School apiary.

Beekeeping Club officers Henyah Dardir and Claire Brewer, along with WHS science teacher Melissa Barth and WHS Principal Paul Wilson accepted the check from FNB Regional President Boyd Pethel, Retail Banking Executive Todd Hays and Westlake Branch Manager Johnny Sikora.

## Grade Levels Connect Through Fairy Tale Unit

Deb Schrembeck's seventh-grade Language Arts classes researched and wrote fairy tales customized to second graders at Dover Elementary School.

The Lee Burneson Middle School (LBMS) assignment requires stories to be at least five pages, include images and an About the Author page, and focus on the child receiving the story. Students created their fairy tales based on questionnaires second-grade students filled out about themselves, including their desired vacation spots, a list of family members, and favorite books and movies.

Stories were assembled into hardbound books that the LBMS

students presented to their Dover partners.

Schrembeck started the fairy tale unit in 2009, but took a break in 2014 because of the amount of work required. She started it back up this year after a fellow teacher – who has a second grade student – reminded her of the impact of the books even years later. She also wanted to give her students a break from state testing preparation to nurture their creative sides.

"I know the books will be keepsakes," Schrembeck said. "I've received emails from as far as Jordan from family members who appreciated their family's details being shared in a book."



## 8th Grade Technology and Engineering Day

Scott Kutz and Adam Purdy's Westlake High School Technology & Engineering students became the teachers during an 8th Grade Technology & Engineering Assembly at Lee Burneson Middle School.

WHS TechMates engaged middle school students in activities while explaining the opportunities available in the Technology & Engineering program at the high school.

The high school TechMates presented to about 300 eighth-grade students during the assembly, presenting on computer graphics, computer assisted design, construction technology, and drones.



## WESTLAKE 4TH GRADER HELPS CITY MISSION THROUGH SOCKTOBER

A chance meeting with a homeless man on the streets of Columbus set in motion a plan by a Dover Elementary School fourth grader to create Socktober.

Last fall, the Hill family took a trip to Columbus when Ryan noticed a homeless man on the street. They shared a few dollars with him and moved on, but a few rainy days later Ryan couldn't shake his concern for the homeless. What do they do in bad weather?

Ryan and his mother, Jennifer Hill, searched Cleveland homeless shelters online and found The City Mission. When Hill explained that's where the homeless can go in the rain and snow, Ryan's next question was "How do we help them?"

Hill reached out to The City Mission and learned that socks and underwear are their most needed items. Chief Development Officer Michael Parry said The City Mission shelters an average of 250 men, women and children at its Crossroads men's center and Laura's Home at any given time.

Last year Ryan collected more than 2,500 pairs of socks. This year he collected 1,650. Ryan and his family dropped off their collected socks before Thanksgiving.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**MARCH 9 & 10** 33rd Annual Green & White Revue

**MARCH 13** LBMS Encore/Jazz/Brigade & DIS Greensleeves Special Group Concert, 7 p.m.

**MARCH 16** PTA Dollars for Scholars at WHS

**MARCH 19** State of the Schools at the Westlake Schools Performing Arts Center, 6 p.m.

**MARCH 24** WECPTA Kiddie Klostet at WHS

**APRIL 15** Kiwanis Pancake Breakfast at WHS

**MAY 2** Senior Citizen Appreciation Dinner, 5 p.m.

**MAY 12** Music a la Mode at WHS, 10 a.m.



**Westlake City School District**  
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Principal: Paul Wilson  
27830 Hilliard Blvd.  
440.835.6352

### LEE BURNESON MIDDLE SCHOOL

Principal: Amanda Musselman  
2260 Dover Center Road  
440.835.6340

### DOVER INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL

Principal: Nicholas Miller  
2240 Dover Center Road  
440.835.5494

### BASSETT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Principal: Jim Sanfilippo  
2155 Bassett Road  
440.835.6330

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2300 Dover Center Road  
440.835.6322

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24356 Hilliard Blvd.  
440.835.6343

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Principal: Beth Dagostino  
3057 Holly Lane  
440.835.6332

