







WILLIAMSPORT AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

FALL NEWSLETTER 2018

Developing responsible citizens through excellence in education



FOUNDATION'S ANNUAL GOLF TOURNAMENT RAISES \$12,567

The WASD Education Foundation held its 13th annual golf outing at The Williamsport Country Club on June 11 to benefit its newly established Athletic Program Endowment Fund.

An early afternoon shotgun start sent 96 golfers onto the course.

The golf tournament, historically held every June, has benefited the WASD athletic program. The event has earned an excess of \$65,000 since its inception to benefit the program's capital needs, such as the WAHS Fitness Center, which opened in 2014, and the improvements made to STA Stadium

from the Foundation's \$2.7-million Return to Glory capital campaign.

Event proceeds have been designated for the Athletic Program Endowment Fund at WASDEF. Established in 2017, the endowment fund will provide a permanent funding source to help offset the capital improvement and/or program needs of the athletic department.





WASDEF ACCEPTS GRANT TO SUPPORT 'MINDFUL' **WORKSHOPS FOR STUDENTS**

The WASDEF accepted a \$7,640 grant in June on behalf of the WAHS art department from the Tree House Fund at the First Community Foundation Partnership of Pennsylvania.

Funds will be used to support supplemental exhibition programming centered around The Gallery at Penn College exhibit "Mindful: Exploring Mental Health Through Art" for WAHS and other Lycoming County high school students.

Two one-day student events will feature guest artists who will offer public workshops to help demonstrate how the arts can support positive mental health.

WAHS art instructor Andrea McDonough Varner (above, right) said the goals of the project are to further the community dialogue on mental health issues; create a collaborative, therapeutic art experience; and provide students with creative tools for managing stress and expressing emotion.

MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP NAMED FOR SCOTT A. HARMON '88

During his time at WAHS, Scott Harmon was a student-athlete: He excelled in football and track and was a member of the winning Eastern Conference Championship football team and record-holding track team.

But for those who knew him, he was known for much more: his smile, his heart, positivity and zest for life.

Scott was a beloved family member, friend and co-worker who devoted his time to coaching youth sports.

Scott passed away suddenly while vacationing in Hawaii in June 2018. Within a week of his passing, his friends established a scholarship in his name to benefit college-bound football players who embody the spirit of teamwork, sportsmanship and fair play. By the end of the summer, more than \$17,650 was raised.

"He smiled a lot — every day," said Travis Dawson, a friend of Scott's. "In the rain and snow, heavy days and light days, he drove up



Route 15 to the northern tier, saying, 'At least I'm enjoying the ride."

"He was everybody's best friend," said friends Cris and Jenna Morrone. "He had a huge heart and was always smiling. He had a passion for sports, but loved football the most. He

was a great player on the field, but an even better coach. He had a way to connect with kids and get them to perform their best for him."

Both Dawson and the Morrones said Scott's energy, "intensity and love" for the game, his players and life in general was unmatched.

"He was a great friend, coach and person," the Morrones said. "It was an honor to be his friend and he will be missed by many."

Gifts can still be made to the Scott Harmon Memorial Scholarship Fund through the WASDEF website: www.wasdeducationfoundation.org. Contributions also can be sent by mail with checks made payable to WASDEF and sent to the address below.



Williamsport Area School District Education Foundation

2780 West Fourth Street, Williamsport, PA 17701

Phone: (570) 327-5500, ext. 40602

Visit us on the web at www.wasdeducationfoundation.org Like us on





NEWSLETTER • FALL 2018

Board of Education

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BOARD MEETINGS

Oct. 9 Oct. 16 Nov. 6 Nov. 20 Dec. 4

All meetings begin at 6 p.m. and are held in the District Service Center Board Room.

The Williamsport Area School District newsletter is published twice a year for alumni, families, friends and community. Portions of the newsletter may be reprinted without permission as long as it is credited.

The Williamsport Area School District is an equal opportunity education institution and will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, and handicap, in its activities, programs, or employment practices as required by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX Ed. Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. For information regarding civil rights or grievance procedures, services, activities, and facilities that are accessible to and usable by handicapped individuals contact: Anne M. Loque, Director of Human Resources Williamsport Area School District 2780 W. Fourth Street Williamsport, PA 17701, phone (570) 327-5500, ext. 40210.

Thanks to Albright Studio Photography for providing selected photos for this edition!



A MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

Dear Community,

Welcome to the start of the 2018-2019 school year! The start of a new school year is always an exciting time, not only for students but for our families and staff as well.

In that spirit, the start of this school year presented a unique challenge handed down to us by Mother Nature that resulted in having to work to remediate moisture and mold-related issues in some areas of our buildings. Understandably, this occurrence created inconveniences. For that, I'd like to extend my appreciation to our school community for their patience and understanding as we diligently worked to ensure a safe environment for the return of our students and staff.

In reflecting on that challenge, it occurred to me that, in the business of education, we know that responding to challenges is what helps to shape a person, a leader, a student. As we move through the new year, we believe you'll see new ways in which we're challenging our students academically with a stronger focus on career and college readiness.

I invite you to read through the following pages to learn more about how we're building on an exciting, progressive "Future Ready" mindset. In some cases, that concept has become more than just a phrase but also a physical space, like with our FutureLabs at the intermediate and middle schools. Programmatically, with the support of more than \$1 million in grant funding, we're embedding new systems to help further guide and define our students' future plans.

I'm looking forward to a year of new growth and new levels of success.

Sincerely,

Sam

Dr. Timothy S. BowersSuperintendent

WASD's New Business Administrator Begins

Wanda M. Erb took on her role as the district's new business administrator this summer.

Erb comes to the district from Northern Tioga School District (NTSD), where she served as its business manager since 1994. She replaces Jeffrey Richards, who retired in April.

Erb brings more than two decades of professional experience to WASD. Beginning in 1988, she worked concurrently as an administrative assistant to the superintendent at NTSD and as a remote computer instructor for Pioneer Hi-Bred Inc., based in Des Moines, Iowa, until 1990. In 1994, she took on her administrative post

as NTSD's business manager.

Since 2009, she's been an adjunct professor in Wilkes University's School Business and Leadership Master's Degree Program.

A Pennsylvania Certified School Business Administrator (PCSBA) and a Registered School Business Administrator (RSBA),

Erb earned her Bachelor of Science in Business Administration from Mansfield University and her Master of Science in School Business Leadership from Wilkes University. She is a Certified Administrator for School Finance and Operations and holds a Superintendent PK-12 Commission Qualification Letter.

around wasd



WITH FUNDING PROVIDED BY THE WASD EDUCATION

FOUNDATION and the First
Community Foundation Partnership
of Pennsylvania, 2018 grads LJ
Boone and Cameron Crossley
worked last year to upgrade and
bring 21st century technology to
the planetarium at WAHS. In May,
the two re-dedicated the space
in an unveiling of their work in a
demonstration of the new full-dome
experience.

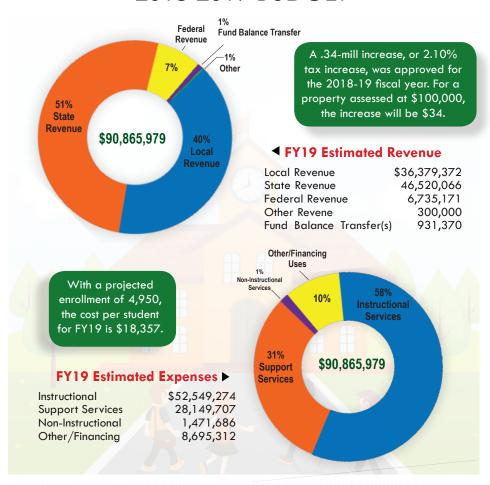


IN JUST FIVE WEEKS, JACKSON PRIMARY STUDENTS raised more than \$2,100 in change to benefit their building's PTO. To recognize their effort, Woodlands Bank treated the four classrooms that raised the most to a pizza party on

the eve of the last day of school.

THE BUILDERS CLUB AT WAMS
DONATED \$700 to four community
agencies in May, contributing
\$100 to Make-a-Wish Foundation,
\$150 to the Central Pennsylvania
Food Bank, \$150 to the James V.
Brown Library's Adopt-a-SummerReader Program, and \$300 to
the Children's Miracle Network at
Geisinger.

BY THE NUMBERS > 2018-2019 BUDGET



WASD TO RECEIVE UP TO \$1M IN SUPPORT OF COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS PROGRAM

The district will receive upwards of \$1 million in grant funding over a threeyear period to implement the National Math and Science Initiative's (NMSI) College Readiness Program at WAHS, beginning this school year.

According to NMSI, WASD is among just 22 school districts across the state to receive such funding over the last four years to support the installation of its College Readiness Program, which works to ensure "more students have access to the challenging classes that will prepare them for future success."

Further, "the three-year program dramatically increases the number of students taking and earning qualifying scores on Advanced Placement (AP) math, science and English exams and has a proven track record of improving results for traditionally underserved and female students."

Assistant Superintendent Dr. Susan L. Bigger said the district was notified in

February of the grant opportunity by Sen. Gene Yaw through whose office it surfaced.

The grant will provide data-driving partnerships for goal setting; teachers will receive course-specific training, mentoring, year-round support and classroom-ready materials; and students will have access to classroom and lab supplies, as well as specialized study sessions led by national experts.

NMSI reports that the program has made a "dramatic and lasting difference" in more than 725 high schools across the country. Here in Pennsylvania, 10 southwestern county high schools have already implemented the program, three of which led the nation in the percentage of increase in AP scores.



147th COMMENCEMENT: CLASS OF 2018

Congratulations to the Class of 2018—you made it! Best wishes to our recent grads as they move into their future this year. We're proud of all you've done and can't wait to see what you'll do. Best of luck, and remember, once a Millionaire, always a Millioniare.

332

students were awarded their high school diploma

\$53,926

were awarded in scholarships and awards by the WASD Eduation Foundation



"Being a Williamsport Millionaire is not just a four-year commitment, but a lifetime commitment. Your place, no matter where you go to college, where you're stationed at in the military, where you start a job, where you start a family ... will always be waiting for you here at

CODY SHIMP

President, Class of 2018











the top of the hill."









WITH FUNDING FROM THE WASD EDUCATION FOUNDATION,

Stevens Little Libraries popped up in the neighborhoods Stevens Primary serves. The self-serve libraries can be found at the River Valley Regional YMCA and Firetree Place, as well as at the entrance to Stevens.



STUDENTS PARTICIPATED IN THE ANNUAL FOUR-DAY SUMMER STRING CAMP at WAHS in July.

Participants received training in level-appropriate orchestra, experienced classroom music geared toward team building and musicianship, and more.

CAST MEMBERS FROM WAHS'S

"MAKIN' IT" took home five Ray of Light awards in May. Nominated in eight categories, awards won were: Best Performance by a Supporting Actor, Rhamir Hatcher; Best Performance by a Supporting Actress, Annika Waffenschmidt, Best Performance by a Lead Actor, Quahme Powell; and Best Ensemble Work in a Play. In addition, 2018 grad Anna Vaughn Stewart earned the Distinguished Contribution Award for her benefit production, "In Relation to Alex."





WASD LAUNCHES BRAND-NEW WEBSITE WITH IMPROVED FEATURES

The district launched its new website over the summer.

Using Watsontown-based marketing firm MojoActive, the website was re-built using the latest design features with a more responsive interface, is sleeker and more intuitive to provide an improved online experience.

Along with MojoActive, the six-month project was co-led by the district's public relations and technology departments. Last winter, with input from stakeholder surveys, a district committee examined the site to determine its future with a new structure, function and purpose.

With enhanced features and functionality, the content-rich website was constructed with not only the userexperience in mind but also with a primary focus on the district's mission of "developing responsible citizens through excellence in education."

The new website was completely re-constructed to give visitors a more comprehensive overview of the district and the opportunities available to students. Each page has been streamlined to provide easier navigation for district families, employees, the public and prospective families. It also was brought into compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), which will allow those with visual and physical disabilities to access content.

WASD's new website will be updated on a regular basis with district news and events. It is located at the same address: www.wasd.org.



INFINITE INSPIRATION ▲ This summer, students attended a four-day workshop focused on creativity. The Visual Art and English departments designed instruction and experiences that allowed students to explore a variety of media and genres. Guest artists and writers inspired students each day by sharing creative processes. Students were invited to submit the visual and written pieces that they wished to be included in the upcoming publication, "Infinite Inspiration." The workshop was funded by the First Community Foundation Partnership of Pennsylvania through Educational Improvement Tax Credit (EITC) donations.



Discovery and Exploration: 'FutureLabs' Provide New Learning Opportunities at Intermediate, Middle Schools

Students at the intermediate schools and Williamsport Area Middle School found a new learning experience waiting for them when they returned from summer vacation this year. That's because the three buildings have each added specially-designed classrooms to support innovation: FutureLabs.

he concept of STEM (science, technology engineering and math) has steadily gained ground across the educational landscape in recent years, and WASD has been no stranger to its growth.

While STEM concepts (or STEAM, which incorporates the arts) have already been embedded across every grade level, the district has officially adopted a curriculum and designed physical locations to bring a cohesive approach to its Future Ready philosophy and further next-generation learning opportunities.

Over the summer, the district worked with Creative Learning Systems, based in Longmont, Co., to install FutureLabs at Curtin and Lycoming Valley Intermediate schools and Williamsport Area Middle School. Equipped with cutting-edge technology, the labs are designed for students to work in teams to develop projects in the areas of scientific data and analysis, circuitry, computer graphics, media arts, mechanics and structures, alternative and renewable energy, software engineering, and robotics and control technology.

Students will use the labs beginning in sixth grade and continue through their middle school years.

"The labs are providing an unprecedented learning opportunity for our students beginning in sixth grade that strongly support our district-wide college and career readiness effort through project-based learning," said John Killian, supervisor of elementary curriculum.

Dr. Bernadette Boerckel, the district's secondary curriculum supervisor, reinforced Killian's statement, adding: "Students in the WAMS FutureLab will choose learning modules that are unique to their career interests and aptitudes."

She said the lab is a fun and safe space for students to further define and develop their career pathways by providing "engaging, hands-on, exploratory experiences across most career fields."

The middle school lab, facilitated by teacher Dustin Brouse, also will require students to collaborate, problem solve, communicate, journal, and present the outcomes of their projects.

"As we are ultimately preparing students to be successful in high school and beyond," Boerckel said, "practicing these 'soft' or 'work' skills is another driving force behind the FutureLab."



"The labs are providing an unprecedented learning opportunity for our students beginning in sixth grade that strongly support our district-wide college and career readiness effort."

sport shorts

THIS YEAR, FOR THE FIRST TIME, WAHS has introduced volleyball to its varsity sports lineup.



LAST YEAR, 27 STUDENT-ATHLETES from the Class of 2018 signed to play their respective sport at college this fall.



MIDNIGHT MADNESS According to state regulations, Aug. 13 was the first day high school football teams could practice in full pads, and the Millionaires wasted no time. They suited up to practice at the earliest possible time: midnight.

Powering through





The WASD Athletic Department earned the first UPMC Susquehanna Sports Medicine Champions Cup Award.

The health system also awarded WAHS senior **Riley Hilner** among the 18 students to earn the Student Athlete Perseverance Award.

WASD Joins National Campaign to Promote Student Attendance

A recent amendment to the Pennsylvania School Code on student attendance has WASD answering the call to join in on a national campaign to raise awareness against chronic absenteeism.

eptember is national Attendance Awareness Month, and WASD teamed up with the Count Us In campaign, organized by Attendance Works, a national nonprofit, that is encouraging school communities to champion the message "Attend Today, Achieve Tomorrow."

"Every day a student is absent from school is a lost opportunity for learning," said Dr. Richard Poole, WASD's director of student services. "Too many absences not only can affect achievement but also the social and emotional growth of the student."

Nationally, an estimated 5 million to 7.5 million students are at risk academically each year because they are chronically absent — missing up to 10 percent or more of school days in excused and unexcused absences, according to Attendance Works.

"When families understand the negative effects of chronic absenteeism on realizing their hopes and dreams for their children, we can work on improving attendance in WASD," Poole added. "Too many parents and students do not realize that just missing two days each month can be a problem, and that often leads to falling behind in the classroom. Even fewer families realize that absenteeism is a problem as early



as kindergarten, and building the habit of attendance in the early grades can influence their children's chances of graduating from high school."

By joining the campaign, the district hopes to motivate students and parents by promoting the academic and social benefits of attending school more regularly.

While the district rolls out its initial effort through September, an attendance committee plans to work through the year to expand and strengthen campaign efforts for the 2019-2020 school term. Poole said it's the committee's goal to more broadly mobilize the Williamsport community behind the "Attend Today, Achieve Tomorrow" message.



Future Ready: Teacher in the Workplace Grant to Help More Strongly Prepare Students for 21st-Century Workforce

A new venture in career education launched this summer, thanks to a \$24,000 grant that paired WASD teachers with 16 places of business and industry in the area in an effort to more strongly prepare students for a 21st-century workforce.

n June, WASD was among 48 programs across the state to receive one of Gov. Tom Wolf's Teacher in the Workplace grants. Funded through state Department of Labor and Industry, the grants allow teachers, counselors and school administrators to interact directly with employers to learn about industry trends, needs and opportunities.

With the help of the Williamsport/ Lycoming Chamber of Commerce and the Central Pennsylvania Workforce Development Corporation, a cohort of 20 teachers from across all grade levels are gaining first-hand experience and knowledge to enhance classroom instruction, student learning, and career readiness.

So far, teacher pairs toured facilities and met with employees, learned about the benefits companies provide to the community and the skill sets they require (with or without post-secondary training) to successfully employ workers. Teachers

also met to create new, relevant career, education and work lessons at each grade level span to support Future Ready outcomes for all students.

"The initiative began this summer with an engaging breakfast summit for all participants and will continue with a reflection and vision meeting in the spring," said Dr. Bernadette Boerckel, the district's secondary education supervisor.

Boerckel said the goal of the program is to strengthen the relationship between educators and employers for the benefit of all students, whether they begin work in high school, enter the workforce upon graduation, enter the military, or pursue two- or four-year degrees.

"This grant also seeks to help keep our educators informed of the job opportunities that exist locally, which open doors that otherwise may remain shut," Boerckel said. "This grant is about a community learning and growing together toward a prosperous Williamsport."



"This grant is about a community learning and growing together toward a prosperous Williamsport."

EMERGENCY PLANNING TEAM KEEPS STUDENT SAFETY FIRST

Emergency planning is an ongoing focus that's continually reviewed and updated by school administration and local and county emergency personnel.

The district's leadership team meets monthly to focus on all areas of school safety: from transportation to building safety and intruder preparedness to weather emergencies.

These monthly Incident Command meetings, as they're called, include representation not only from the district but also from local and county emergency services to help ensure WASD is always prepared for any situation.

At the building level, all schools hold monthly fire drills and, once a year, each participates in a full evacuation drill. Weather drills also are held once a year to prepare for severe weather events.

In 2015, the district adopted the ALICE philosophy as part of its active shooter training. The ALICE concepts — alert, lockdown, inform, counter and evacuate — ensure that staff and all K-12 students know how to respond to such an event. The ALICE model is reviewed yearly with all staff and students.

WASD has added an additional School Resource Officer from the Williamsport Bureau of Police this year. Officer Benjamin



Hitesman joins Officer Jordan Stoltzfus in the role. Hitesman will serve in a part-time capacity working at the elementary level, while Stoltzfus will continue to work as full-time SRO, based primarily at the high and middle schools.

Having full-time SROs means the district has a police officer available at all times for any needed assistance during the day.

The district continues to monitor current research and best practices to ensure all schools and students are as safe as possible.

#MILLIONAIRESREAD



Leavin' It to the 'Prose'

This summer, we asked our Millionaire community to share with us their reading adventures by using the social media hashtag #MillionairesRead as part of the district's summer reading program of the same name.









IT DOESN'T HAVE TO END HERE! Want more? Our online presence continues to grow! Keep up-to-date with announcements, photos, news and events happening around the district on a daily basis by following us on social media. Join the conversation and become a part of the WASD online community that has grown to more than 5,500 people!



FROM THE VAULT V



With "Friday night lights" and Homecoming celebrations abound-, it's safe to say that fall — and all things pumpkin spice — is officially here. It won't be long until we herald in the celebrations of yet another holiday season, like the one shown here from 1953.

Headlining this newspaper clipping of students from the nowdefunct Franklin School is: "Schools Commemorating Thanksgiving With Plays."

The photo's caption reads: "Schools throughout the community

currently are re-enacting traditional Thanksgiving stories and scenes. A typical grade school program is shown, one presented at Franklin School. The young 'Pilgrims' and their friends in the program are (left to right): Kneeling — Robert Cressman, Roberta Jovaras, Theresa Esposito and Sharon Eckman. Standing — Charles Levering, Jack Rothrock, John Harris, Charles Kolb, William Eisner, Stephen Hackney, Robert DeMange, Grace Longo, Margaret Arp, Diane Stine, Mareli Lamade, Virigina Rae Pautz and Joyce Tofani.





Thank

for Accepting the Challenge!

YOU

Thank you to our alumni, parents, friends and community who made WASDEF's 2017-2018 Annual Fund Challenge a success in raising \$117,954!

An extra special thank you to our initial endowment founders, Anita Gibbons, Dr. David Raemore '69, and Dr. Frederic Sanford '58, whose gifts inspired the launch of the Foundation's challenge campaign.







creating *powerful* classrooms and inspiring futures

Williamsport Area School District Education Foundation

2780 West Fourth Street, Williamsport, PA 17701

Phone: (570) 327-5500, ext. 40602

Visit us on the web at www.wasdeducationfoundation.org Like us on







approval.

REVISED 2018-2019 Williamsport Area School District Calendar REVISED



	AUGUST '18	SEPTEMBER '18	
20-21 New Teacher Induction 29 K-12 Professional Development Day 30 K-12 Professional Development Day 31 Building Meeting Day 8 County Wide Inservice	AUGUST '18 M T W Th F	SEPTEMBER '18 M T W Th F 3 4 5 6 7	3 Labor Day 4 Full Day for Students 1st Grade – 12th Grade (Kdg follow schedule that was mailed home for the first week) 17 K-12 Professional Development Day 2 End of First Marking Period 19 K-12 Professional Development Day 20-21 K-12 Parent/Teacher Conferences (Report Cards Issued Grades K-8) 22-26 Thanksgiving
24-31 Winter Break	DECEMBER '18 M T W Th F 3 4 5 6 7 10 11 12 13 14 17 18 19 20 21 24 25 26 27 28 31	JANUARY '19 M T W Th F 1 2 3 4 Z 8 9 10 11 14 15 16 17 18 21 22 23 24 25 28 29 30 31 TD = 22 SD = 21	Winter Break 7-18 Keystone Exams K-12 Professional Development Day End of First Semster
15 K-12 Professional Development Day18 Presidents Day	FEBRUARY '19 M T W Th F 1 1 4 5 6 7 8 11 12 13 14 15 18 19 20 21 22 25 26 27 28 TD = 19 SD = 18	MARCH '19 M T W Th F 4 5 6 7 8 11 12 13 14 15 18 19 20 21 22 25 26 27 28 29 TD = 22 SD = 20	8 K-12 Professional Development Day 22 End of Third Marking Period 25-29 K-12 Parent/Teacher Conferences (as requested)
15-26 Grades 3-8 English/Language Arts PSSA Testing 19-22 Spring Break 29- May 3 Grades 3-8 Math & Science PSSA Testing along with Make-Up Testing 5 Half Day for Students K-12 Last School Day 6 Teacher Record Day and High School Commencement 7 K-12 Professional Development Day School Days and Holidays Board Adopted: February 6, 2018	APRIL '19 M T W Th F 1 2 3 4 5 8 9 10 11 12 15 16 17 18 19 22 23 24 25 26 29 30 TD = 20 SD = 20 JUNE '19 M T W Th F 3 4 5 6 7 10 11 12 13 14 17 18 19 20 21	MAY '19 M T W Th F	Apr 29-3 Grades 3-8 Math & Science PSSA Testing along with Make-Up Testing 13-24 Keystone Exams 27-28 Memorial Day Break Local School Holidays -November 22 -December 25 -December 26 -January 1 -April 19
Revised: March 6, 2018 August 21, 2018 Calendar is subject to change with board	1D = 5 SD = 3		No School students = Assessment dates and important marking period dates