

Warren Connection: October Odyssey

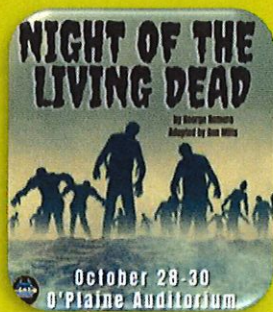
October 27, 2021



Red Ribbon Week
October 25-30
Almond and
O'Plaine
Campuses



Trick or
Treat
October 27
4:30 p.m. to
7:00 p.m.
Almond
Campus



Night of the Living Dead
October 28, 29, and 30
7:00 p.m.
O'Plaine Campus Auditorium



Mark your calendars: Our Jostens school representative, Mr. Brain Walter, will be at the Almond Campus **during all lunch periods on November 1, 2021, to hand out cap and gown ordering materials** to all seniors. Orders for a cap and gown will be turned in November 22-23 at the Almond Campus during lunch hours. Graduation day for the Class of 2022 is May 22, 2022.



Communication survey
will be open between
November 1 and November 14.
We will send an email when the
survey is open.

STAY CONNECTED TO WTHS



Warren's website,
at www.d121.org, is
a key link to staying
connected with our
current programs
and projects.



<https://www.facebook.com/WTHSDistrict121>

#WeAreWarren

PowerSchool



Please make sure your
contact information on file
is up to date. This will
ensure you receive all
communications in a timely
manner.

PowerSchool can also be used to access student
schedules, grades, attendance, and other useful
student information.



Principals' Twitter

[Almond Campus Principal Twitter Account](#)

[O'Plaine Principal Twitter](#)



Principals' YouTube

[Almond Campus Principal YouTube Account](#)

[O'Plaine Principal YouTube](#)

Board of Education News

Get the Facts about the
Referendum Question at
www.d121.org/referendum

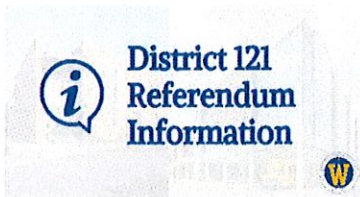
Communications Survey



As part of the Warren Township High School's continuous improvement efforts, we are seeking better ways to inform and engage our district community. We invite you to participate in an anonymous survey.

The survey is designed to measure the effectiveness of the school district's communications and to show where we can improve. It focuses on the district's communication efforts, and the survey will be open between November 1 and November 14. When the survey is open, we will send a notification email and place it on the website.

District 121 Referendum Information



WTHS is working to provide our school community with information related to the June 28, 2022, referendum question. Some of these efforts include in-person information sessions at school-wide school and community events.

Would you like the District to provide an informational forum for a school or community group to learn about the facts related to our revenue challenges and referendum question? Please reach out to Dr. John Ahlgrim at 847-548-7144 or email jahlgrim@wth.net.

Check out the District's referendum information webpage at <https://www.d121.org/referendum>

We continue to post information about the 60-cent operating rate increase question on the June 28, 2022 ballot. The webpage now includes an informational brochure, a slide presentation and a video from our open house nights.

On August 17, the Board of Education approved a 60-cent operating rate increase question that will appear on the ballot June 28, 2022. A 60-cent increase would provide approximately \$13.25 million in additional revenue annually, with an estimated annual tax impact of \$200 (\$16.67 per month) per \$100,000 of a home's fair market value. Increased funding would allow the district to preserve the 8-period school day, improve academic supports and mental health services, restore and protect activities and clubs, and restore and protect athletics. The rate increase would also allow us to lower student fees to rates comparable with other Lake County high schools.



WTHS Board of Education

Paul Schulz, President
John R. Anderson, Vice-President
Bency Beals, Secretary
Katherine Blair, Member
Tony DeMonte, Member
Thomas Drake, Member
Natalia Alvarez Martinez, Member

Recap of October 26, 2021 Board of Education Meeting

The Board thanked the building principals for their hard work and dedication to WTHS. Illinois Principals Day is October 29, 2021.

Presentations, reports and discussion regarding the following items:

- Illinois Association of School Boards 2021 Resolution Committee Report
- Partnership Report: Mayor Thomas Hood, Village of Gurnee
- Finance Committee, October 5, 2021
- Curriculum Committee, October 6, 2021
- Treasurer's Reports, September 2021
- Department Report: Post-Secondary Counseling Report
- Referendum Update
- Return to School Update
- Communications Survey

The Board approved the following items:

- Approval of personnel recommendations for 12 candidates or employees
- Payment of bills dated October 12, 2021 in the amount of \$443,992.59 and bills dated October 26, 2021 in the amount of \$4,403,965.48
- Regular meeting minutes and executive session minutes of September 28, 2021
- Acknowledgement and Acceptance of Gifts to the District
- Approval of the Serious Safety Hazards for the 2021-2022 School Year
- Approval of First Amendment to the Custodial Services Agreement with Citywide Building Maintenance, Inc.
- Approval of the Resolution Estimating Aggregate Levy for the Year 2021
- Approval of the 2022-2023 Curriculum Guide Changes and New Course Proposals
- Approval of FY22 Tentative Staffing Plan as of October 12, 2021
- Approval of Roster of Hearing Officers
- Announcement and Report of Field Trips for the 2021-2022 School Year

Superintendent's Corner

by Dr. John P. Ahlgrim, Superintendent of Schools



Get the Facts about the
Referendum Question at
www.d121.org/referendum

A critical aspect of the district's referendum information efforts is to provide clarity and details regarding the impact to students with or without additional funding for the next two years.

There are several programs affected by the referendum question, including the length of our school day (8-period day), academic and mental health assistance, activity programs, and athletic programs. **The information on this page focuses on improving mental health services.**



Community Forum Opportunities

Would you like the District to provide an informational forum for a school or community group to learn about the facts related to the District's revenue challenges and referendum question? Please reach out to Dr. John Ahlgrim at 847-548-7144 or email jahlgrim@wths.net.

Get the Facts About the Referendum Question: Investing in our Students

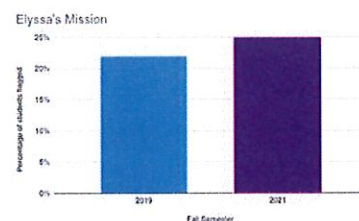
Improving Mental Health Services

One of the benefits of increased local funding from a successful June 2022 referendum would be increased mental health services. The COVID-19 pandemic has magnified the previously alarming trends in mental health among youth. WTHS, like all schools, has been working to effectively deal with mental health crises for our students. In fact, we will not be able to effectively address our mission of *maximizing the growth and achievement of every student*, without first also addressing mental health needs. Unmet needs may result in social, emotional, or behavioral challenges. Without effective support services, these students may experience reactive and exclusionary discipline practices (e.g., suspensions or expulsions) that further intensify mental health concerns, interrupt access to and participation in learning, limit opportunities, and negatively affect outcomes.

With additional local funding provided, WTHS will be able to increase mental health services for our youth and help them in their success at WTHS and in life. Increasing mental health services includes leveraging prevention and intervention practices to address the mental health needs of students. It means trying to maximize services at school through the availability of social workers, school counselors, school nurses, and school psychologists. This is not done solely as a response to COVID-19, but as an ongoing priority to fully address children and students' overall wellbeing and their full access to education and opportunities.

Elyssa's Mission

The O'Plaine and Almond social workers recently conducted Elyssa's Mission for our 9th graders at the O'Plaine campus. Elyssa's Mission identifies potential risk factors for suicide in our students. We have conducted this screening each semester at the O'Plaine campus for many years. In October, following a presentation in the auditorium, students were screened over a two-day period during their health classes. Approximately 25% of those students were identified as being at high risk for suicidal ideation. Our social workers have individual meetings with each student who is identified as being high risk.



News from Instructional Services

by Christopher J. Geocar, Assistant Superintendent of Instructional Services

Illinois State Seal of Biliteracy



Testing for the Seal of Biliteracy is a great opportunity for students to showcase their language skills. Registration for students who are interested in qualifying for the Illinois State Seal of Biliteracy will begin in November. All information regarding this program, including qualifying criteria established by the Illinois State Board of Education, will be communicated to students by World

Language Department teachers. We are expanding the offering to juniors in Honors Spanish IV, AP Spanish Language, and AP Spanish Literature.

Contact Matthew Jones, Assistant Principal at the Almond Campus, if you are fluent in a language other than Spanish, French, or German

Advanced Placement Exams



AP exam registration is currently open. The cost of each AP exam is \$100, and payments are due soon. After October 31, all exams will incur a \$40 late fee per exam. Avoid the late fees and pay now! Here is the link to pay: www.TotalRegistration.net/AP/142175. Please contact Matthew Jones, Assistant Principal at the Almond Campus, if you have any questions regarding AP Exam registration.

Testing Updates



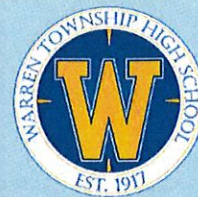
The PSAT/NMSQT for juniors took place at the Almond Campus on Wednesday, October 13. Approximately 380 students participated in the exam this year. This test is a great way to prepare for the SAT and get actionable data on your performance. It is also a National Merit Qualifying Test that allows students in their junior year to access many scholarships and recognition activities. We are proud of all our students who put forth their best effort on this exam this year!

Professional Development



We are continuing our professional development program, which is focusing on The Warren Way. Our staff have participated in professional learning activities on supporting students with diverse backgrounds (Respectful), supporting social emotional health of our students (Resilient), and improving our formative assessment practices (Engaged).

At our October 18 Institute Day, WTHS staff was trained on engaging the whole child by integrating students' strengths and weaknesses, as well as their personal experiences in the classroom. The training on October 18 was the first of a three-part training on building trauma-sensitive learning environments.



The Warren Way We are Engaged!

Our students are engaged in their learning, regularly participating in collaborative experiences in the classroom. These activities help students not only improve mastery of academic skills, but also improve their written and oral communication skills!



News From Student Services

by Dr. Patrick W. Keeley, Associate Superintendent of Student Services



Post-Secondary Program Important Dates

November 4

**College Planning for Junior Families
Presentation 3:00 p.m. in Room 211 or
7:00 p.m. in O'Plaine Auditorium**

November 13

Virtual Practice ACT with
Compass Educational Group

Registration information will be emailed all junior
students via email and junior families soon.

November 11 and November 18

Financial Aid Workshops for Senior Families to
help complete the FAFSA or IL Alternative
Application

Sign-up link:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/30e084aadac22a7ff2-20211>

**IF YOU SEE
SOMETHING,
SAY SOMETHING.**

Our first priority is providing a safe environment for our students and staff. We will continue to challenge our administration and staff to uphold safety measures and adopt best practices regarding safety. Providing a safe environment is a community effort, so please make sure you reinforce with your students: SEE SOMETHING - SAY SOMETHING. We have conducted our first of two safety lockdown drills in partnership with the Gurnee Police Department. We will have a second drill in January.

Happy Fall! Now that we are halfway through the semester, we hope your student is settled into their schedule and has a routine for their work and activities at WTHS. We know this year is a 'reset' year for students as they get back to being at school every day. If your child is struggling to find their routine, please make sure they reach out to their counselor. Finally, please start to plan with your child regarding course selection for next year. The course selection process will start next month. It is important to be thoughtful and carefully select your courses to meet your postsecondary plans.

Signs of Suicide Prevention Program (SOS)

At Warren Township High School, we believe it is important to focus on the whole student, paying close attention to the emotions that are often associated with teen years. These years are marked by a rollercoaster of emotions. It is easy to misread depression as normal adolescent turmoil; however, depression appears to be occurring at a much earlier age, and the past decade has seen teen suicide rates double.

On October 5 and 7, we presented the *Signs of Suicide (SOS) Prevention Program* to all our freshman health classes. This is the only school-based suicide prevention program selected by The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration for its National Registry of Evidence-Based Programs and Practices that addresses suicide risk and depression, while reducing suicide attempts. The SOS program is presented to us through Elyssa's Mission, a nonprofit organization dedicated to suicide prevention. To get more information on suicide prevention, visit www.elyssasmission.org.



Our goals in participating in this program are straightforward:

- To help our students understand that depression is a treatable illness, and help them assess whether or not they may have symptoms consistent with depression
- To impress upon teens that they can help themselves or a friend by taking the simple step of talking to a responsible adult about their concerns
- To explain that suicide is a preventable tragedy that often occurs as a result of untreated depression

The depression screening tool we are using addresses thoughts and feelings that a parent may be unaware that their child is having. This tool does not provide a diagnosis of depression, but it does give an indication of whether a young person should be referred for evaluation by a mental health professional.

In addition, if your student completes the questionnaire and there is concern, please know that social workers, counselors, and psychologist are available to meet with students and then follow up with a phone call to you regarding a next step, if necessary.

COVID-19 Health Office Reminders

Please make sure your child is aware of any symptoms prior to coming to school in the morning. If your child has any of the following symptoms...

Fever or chills, new cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, new onset and persistent headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, nausea/vomiting or diarrhea

...please make sure you are taking them for a COVID-19 test and communicating with the health office at Almond or O'Plaine. We are working extremely hard to keep our schools safe and open. We appreciate the partnership with our parents to make this happen. If your child is unvaccinated, please talk to your primary physician and consider getting the vaccination. It is free, effective and safe and will keep your child and the community safe!

News from Business Services and Operations

by Dr. Michael A. Engel, Assistant Superintendent of Business Services and Operations/CSBO

National School Bus Safety Week – October 18-22, 2021

Each day, our school bus drivers and bus aides provide safe transportation from school bus stops to our campuses. Some of our drivers also take our students to their athletic and activity competitions. In addition to inspecting and checking their buses daily, annual bus safety drills are conducted.

"Our team of drivers and aides care about our students," said Jeanne Turf, Director of Transportation. "No matter how busy the traffic can be or how unpleasant the weather is, they are always concerned about getting our students to school as safely and timely as is possible. We appreciate all that they do to help our students each and every day."



Come Join Our Team!



School Bus Drivers and Aides Wanted

- Starting pay \$20.00/hr. We will pay you for your training.
- Complete benefit package
- Referral and signing bonus
- Apply in person or online @ www.d121.org and select the Human Resources tab
- Questions? Call Jeanne Turf, Director of Transportation at 847-599-4787 or email jturf@wths.net

Warren Township High School District 121

Warren Township High School District 121 is a comprehensive four-year high school with an enrollment of nearly 3,900 students. The school district covers over 50 square miles and includes all or part of Beach Park, Gages Lake, Grandwood Park, Grayslake, Gurnee, Millburn, Old Mill Creek, Park City, Third Lake, Wadsworth, Waukegan and Wildwood.



About the Transportation Department

- The District covers nearly 54 square miles.
- There are 74 vehicles in the fleet – 42 full-size regular education buses, 28 mid-size special education buses, and 4 activity buses.
- Nearly 4,000 students are scheduled each year in Versa Trans, our transportation data system.
- There are approximately 1,700 Almond students and 1,750 O'Plaine who ride the bus each day, traveling approximately 487,000 miles per school year.
- There are approximately 175 special education students transported each day, traveling approximately 545,000 miles each school year.
- The District averages about 115,000 gallons of fuel each school year.
- The District has 57 driver positions and 6 aide positions.
- Gurnee School District 56 and WTHS District 121 share a transportation facility, which was built in 2015.



News from the Almond Principal

by Rob Parrott, Almond Campus Principal



Each staff member has the opportunity to nominate a student for the Warren Way Leadership Award. These students should demonstrate leadership in our tenets of Respect, Resilience, and/or being Engaged.

- **RESPECT** – We value diversity and learn to understand other cultures and experiences. We show empathy and kindness to others. We communicate and collaborate in an effective and positive way, and we establish healthy relationships.
- **RESILIENT** – We work hard and give our best effort. We reflect, learn, and adapt based on our experiences and challenges. We make courageous and responsible decisions, and we lead healthy and balanced lifestyles.
- **ENGAGED** – We own our learning and are accountable for our actions. We explore our interests, set meaningful goals, and prepare to excel after high school. We participate in our school, local and global community. We think critically and develop creative problem-solving skills.

I am proud to recognize the following students as our monthly The Warren Way Leadership Award at the Almond Campus: Albert Jaquez-Ramirez, Vaibhav Joshi, Isiah Salgado, Paris Williams, Atifa Syeda, Kendal Crawford, Amanda Thomas, Amanda Schultz, Julio Garcia-Zavala, Fatima Gonzales-Vargas, Megan Parrott, Bennett McCarthy, Isabella Zeit, and Gabrielle Brewer.



The Class of 2023 had nearly 400 students participate in the PSAT/NMSQT National Merit qualifying exam on October 13, 2021. It was great to see so many of our students take advantage of the exam being offered at our school this year.



It helps prepare students for the SAT exam that all juniors will take on April 13, 2022, and qualifies high-performing students for the National Merit Scholarship competition.

We also had a great homecoming week thanks to the leadership of our student council members and advisors. We had some new events take place, like an outdoor all-school assembly and movie night, as well as spirit week, Friday night football game, parade, and dance. It took a lot of coordination and effort to host the events in a safe and fun way. It was great to see our students take part in the activities that were provided!



News from the O'Plaine Principal

by Michele Bertola, O'Plaine Campus Principal

Fall is in Full Swing

We are over halfway through the fall semester and our students are working hard to develop healthy academic and wellness habits. Students are expected to "own their learning" as they stay engaged in their studies and balance their workload. We have monthly Wellness Wednesdays that focus on a variety of wellness strategies and messaging.

More information is available on our [Student Services website](#).



Homecoming Fun

We had a great week of school spirit over homecoming week! Students participated in our spirit dress days, pep assembly, outdoor movie, dance, parade, extracurricular competitions, and sporting events. We are proud of our athletic teams, clubs, and activities that work hard to positively represent our school.



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News about Athletics

by Becky Belmont, Director of Athletics



Winter sports are just around the corner! Please visit our website and register now. All athletes must register and have a current physical on file in the nurse's office to try out for any sport. <https://warrentownship-ar.schooltoday.com/>

Start Dates:

- Boys Basketball: November 8
- Girls Basketball: November 1
- Boys Bowling: October 25
- Girls Bowling: November 15
- Girls Gymnastics: November 8
- Boys Swimming & Diving: November 22
- Wrestling: November 8

Fan Online and Digital Tickets

Warren Township High School has moved to an all-online and digital ticketing platform for our events in which we charge entry fees. We will no longer be accepting cash at the gates. Please get your tickets prior to coming to each event.

How do I get tickets?

1. Visit the GoFan website at:
<https://gofan.co/app/school/IL15712>
2. Go to www.gofan.co, search "Warren Township", and select event.
3. Scan-To-Buy
 - Open Phone Camera
 - Hover Over QR Code
 - Access GoFan Website



Congratulations to the Boys' Cross Country team on their 2nd place finish in the NSC Championship, and to senior Luke Wiley and David Lara for coming in 1st place and 2nd place respectively. The boys are coached by Brett Heimstead, Jason Jecmen, and Joe Stubenvoll.



Congratulations to the Girls' Cross Country team on their 3rd place finish in the NSC Championship and to Mia Pasha, Emma Leung, and Victoria Higgins for earning All-Conference honors for their 2nd, 8th, and 11th places finishes, respectively. The girls are coached by Jacob Buddell, Louie Klein, and Don Proft.



Congratulations to Girls' Swimming and Diving on their Senior Night win against Waukegan! Best of luck to Grace Bevers, Faith Harris, Aly Wallander, Hailey Benoit, Chloe Yoder, Faith Cabalfin, Anastasija Grozdanovska, Kate Nisnisan, and Shannong Faulhaber. Good luck to all the girls as they head into the NSC Championships at Stevenson on October 30.



Congratulations to the Girls' Tennis team on a very successful season. They finished 3rd in the NSC, 4th in the Sectional, and had the most wins in program history (20)! They only lost two dual meets all season. Congratulations to the entire team and coaches Vince Desecki, Michael Edler, Shannon Edler, and Mikayla Schultz.

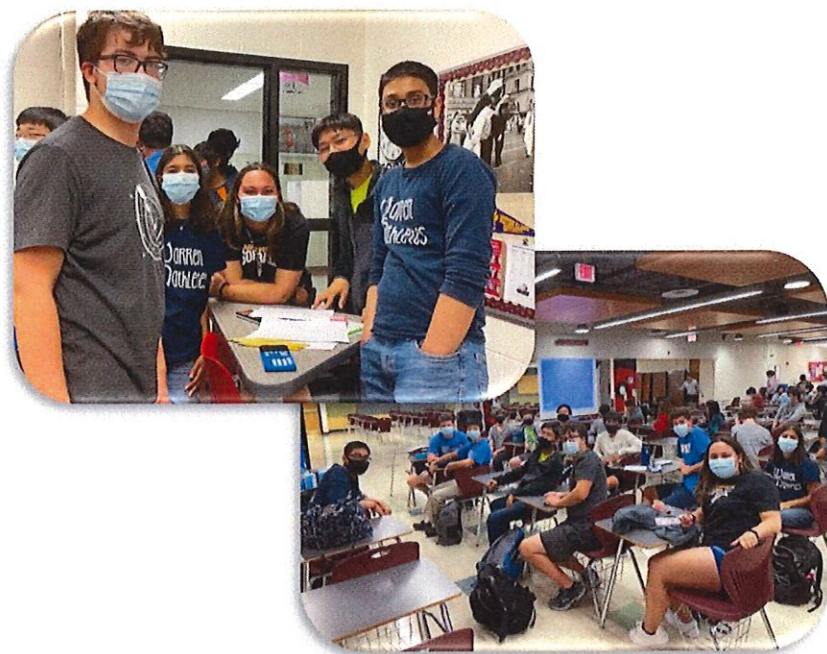


Congratulations to the Boys' Soccer team for winning the NSC Championship! They finished conference play with a 5-0-2 record. The boys are coached by Jason Ahonen and Ryan McCabe.

News about Activities

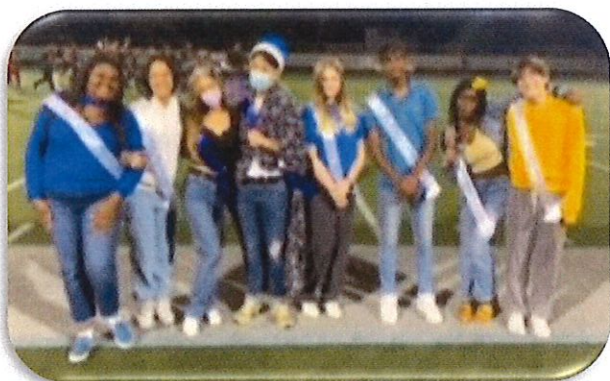
by Aimee Lonigro, Assistant Director of Athletics and Director of Activities

Congratulations to the Math Team on their 3rd place Varsity finish and 2nd place JV finish at Grant High School! The Mathletes are coached by Kelly Stites and Steve Vranek.



Homecoming 2021 - Welcome to the Jungle

On October 2, Student Council put on an indoor/outdoor Homecoming Dance to remember! Over 1,600 students came to the O'Plaine Campus to dance, visit food trucks, watch fireworks, and take fun pictures in the photo booth.



Congratulations to the Homecoming Court and Royalty
Freshmen: Chynia Curry and Gavin Rand
Sophomores: Ayanna Stephens and Edmar Delacruz
Juniors: Scarlett Whittle and Ali Siddiqui
Seniors: Trishelle Manila and Miguel Salonga



Our Fourth Annual WTHS Trick or Treat event will be held on October 27 from 4:30 to 7:30 p.m. at the Almond Campus. Bring your kids, bring a canned good to donate and enjoy watching them trick or treat with our finest Warren students, teachers, coaches, and sponsors!



Come out and watch the Fall Main Stage Play, *Night of the Living Dead*, on October 28, 29, and 30 at 7:00 p.m. in the O'Plaine Auditorium. Tickets are available at GoFan.co or use the QR Code below to purchase!

