

Warren Connection: Starting Second Semester

January 27, 2021



Dear Warren Community,

Thank you for reading our January 2021 edition of the Warren Connection. Our January newsletter features some of the most recent highlights of achievements and activities of our students, parents and community members, as well as updated WTHS district news.

Page 2

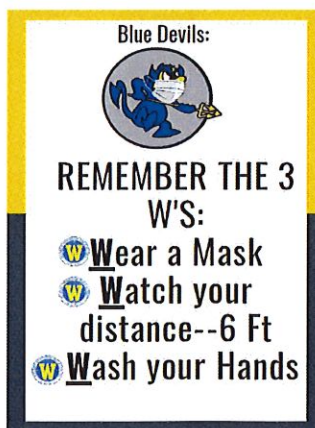
Board of Education Reduces Size of Referendum for the April 2021 Ballot: Learn more about the financial challenges facing the district and working with the district-wide community.

Page 3

Semester 2 Return to School Status and Plans: Providing that conditions allow us to implement these plans safely, learn more about our schedule to increase the number of students on campus during the second semester.

Page 6

Grab-and-Go Meals, Updated Starting January 19



Inside this Newsletter

Board of Education News	Page 2
Superintendent's Corner	Page 3
Instructional Services	Page 4
Student Services	Page 5
Business Services and Operations	Page 6
Principal's Corner – Almond Campus	Page 7
Principal's Corner – O'Plaine Campus	Page 8
Athletics and Activities	Page 9

3W's

As we prepare for students to return to the building, we ask for all Blue Devils to follow the 3W's to help keep us all safe. By collectively following these guidelines, we have a better chance of getting back and staying in school!

STAY CONNECTED TO WTHS



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



Find us on
Facebook

<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

Board of Education Reduces Size of Referendum for April 2021 Ballot

After months of planning and community input, the Warren Township High School District 121 Board of Education unanimously approved a resolution to place a 35-cent limiting rate referendum on the April 6, 2021 ballot. The Board would like to thank the Community Task Force, as well as the thousands of residents who participated in the districtwide surveys and informational webinars.

"From the very start of our planning efforts, the District has been committed to carefully listening to our taxpayers and then taking action based on their thoughts and recommendations," said Superintendent Dr. John Ahlgrim. "We have also spent the past five years carefully looking for opportunities to cut operating costs, while at the same time protecting the quality of the educational offering. We remain committed to the success of our nearly 4,000 students."

Funding Proposal Reduced by More Than 40%

Based on the findings of multiple districtwide surveys, the recommendations of a Community Task Force and input gathered via informational webinars, the Board of Education decided to pursue a more modest request, reducing the size of the proposal from 60 cents to 35 cents. This represents an estimated tax impact of approximately \$10 per month per \$100,000 of a home's fair market value.

Protecting Existing Academics—including the 8-Period Day—is a Top Priority

If approved by voters this spring, funds generated by the District's limiting rate referendum will be used to address, to the fullest extent possible, the following:

- Maintaining an 8-period day, which is necessary to continue offering many Advanced Placement (AP) opportunities, enable full participation in career and technical education classes at the Technology Campus and preserve current curricular and co-curricular programs
- Improving academic support and mental health services
- Continuing to offer band, drama, choir and other student activities and clubs
- Continuing to offer athletic programming across all grade levels
- Maintaining an adequate fund balance to help protect the district's credit rating and reduce the need for short-term borrowing

WTHS Currently Ranks at the Bottom When it Comes to Per-Pupil Funding

Compared to other Lake County high school districts, WTHS currently ranks last in per-pupil funding—and has for many years. In fact, Grayslake 127 has approximately 1,000 fewer students, but receives about the same amount of funding as WTHS.

Teaching and Staff Positions Have Already Been Cut

During the past five years, WTHS has eliminated 51 teaching and staff positions. While some of these cuts were due to declining enrollment, and some staff will continue to be laid off to account for student enrollment, without approval of the 35-cent proposal, it is estimated that up to 46 additional positions will need to be eliminated over the next three years.

"The WTHS Board of Education strongly believes that meeting taxpayers in the middle is a fair and reasonable proposition. The 35-cent limiting rate increase will help allow our students to remain competitive by continuing to offer current academic, activity and athletic opportunities. We strongly believe this is the right question for our community and students."

— Paul Schulz, Board President



WTHS Board of Education

Paul Schulz, President
John R. Anderson, Vice-President
Bency Beals, Secretary
Katherine Blair, Member
Tony DeMonte, Member
Thomas Drake, Member
Jonita C. Wilson, Member

Recap of January 12, 2021 Board of Education Meeting

The Board approved the following items:

- Consideration of the Resolution providing for and requiring the submission of the Proposition to Increase the Limiting Rate of Township High School District Number 121, Lake County, Illinois, to the voters of said School District at the Consolidated Election on the 6th day of April, 2021.
- A tentative Second Semester Return to School plan, which includes a January 19 ABCD Hybrid schedule implementation, a February 16 AB Hybrid schedule implementation and an April 5 AB Blended (full day) schedule implementation, provided conditions allow to implement these safely.

Recap of January 19, 2021 Board of Education Meeting

The Board recognized 11 students who were 2020 Illinois High School Association fall sport qualifiers. Students recognized were: Girls Swimming and Diving: Grace Bevers and Annie Stingle; Boys Cross Country team with a 7th place sectional finish and team members Luke Wiley (Sectional Champion), Carlos Villa, David Lara, Max Zeisler, Nathan Garcia, Cole Kaether, Ryan Moats, Griffin Pasha, and Osvaldo Bandera.

Presentations and reports were provided for the following items:

- Announcement of Board Meeting Schedule for 2020-2021
- Parent-Teacher Advisory Committee, January 12, 2021
- Finance Committee, January 19, 2021
- Superintendent's Report including monthly reports for December 2020
- Treasurer's Reports for November and December 2020
- Update on the Proposition to Increase the Limiting Rate at the April 6, 2021 Consolidated Election
- Return to School Information and Related Items

The Board approved the following items:

- Personnel recommendations for 10 employees and prospective candidates
- Payment of bills in the amount of \$5,680,177.43
- Regular and Executive Session minutes of December 15, 2020
- Special Meeting Minutes of January 12, 2021
- Second Reading and Approval of District Board Policies
- Approval of Begin the Budget for the 2021-2022 School Year
- Approval of the 2021-2022 Public School Calendar
- Approval of the 2021-2022 School Board Meeting Schedule
- Information about Board Scholarships for FY21

Superintendent's Corner

by Dr. John P. Ahlgrim, Superintendent of Schools



Lake County Health Department Information

Check the LCHD for more information:
<https://www.lakecountyil.gov/4377/Coronavirus-Disease-2019-COVID-19>

WHEN CAN YOU GET A COVID-19 VACCINE?

Phase 1a
 Healthcare personnel
 Long-term care residents
WE ARE HERE

Phase 1b
 Adults ages 65+
 Frontline essential workers

Phase 1c*
 People ages 16-64 with high-risk medical conditions
 Other essential workers

General Public

The COVID-19 vaccine is being distributed in phases.
 All Lake County residents will have access to the vaccine.
 *More details coming for who is included in Phase 1c. Last updated 1/14/2021.

Lake County
 Health Department and Community Health Center

Register on the Lake County AllVax Portal: AllVax.lakecohealth.org

The 2021-2022 school calendar is on the District website at www.d12.org

Warren Township High School District 121
2021-2022 School Calendar

Calendar showing dates, holidays, and school events for the 2021-2022 school year.

Return to School Status – Semester 2 Plan

In January, the Lake County Health Department (LCHD) modified its dashboard recommendation language to be less prescriptive related to schools. The COVID-19 numbers are still very important, as they reflect overall community spread that significantly affects school.

We are still at a high risk level of community spread. However, LCHD no longer recommends providing for automatic remote learning. Instead, LCHD uses the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) risk mitigation measures to create safe learning environments as more schools move to some level of in-person instruction.

These mitigation factors include, but are not limited to, small numbers of students on campus to provide for social distancing, appropriate wearing of approved masks while on campus, hand washing and sanitizing, enhanced capacity limits in school spaces and our buses, symptom-free self-certification, temperature checks, and more extensive cleaning of our buildings and buses.

WTHS began implementation of our hybrid learning plan and schedule for students beginning January 19, 2021.

For students attending on campus during their assigned sessions of our hybrid schedule, we all need to work together to follow our health and safety protocols and maintain safe learning environments. Our ability to maintain and potentially expand the amount of students in person and/or the amount of time students will be on campus are dependent on our ability to safely transition back in to in-person learning in safe numbers and condition in our hybrid model.

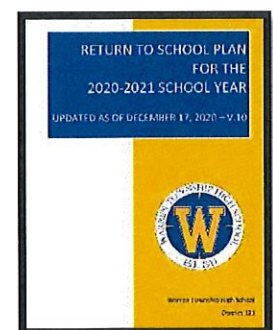
Detailed information about our hybrid learning model and health requirements can be found in the Return to School Plan on our district's website at www.d121.org/returntoschool.

Also, we may need to move back to a fully remote model if there are significant increases in the Lake County COVID-19 numbers and/or more directly within our school. You may access the LCHD school dashboard website at:

<http://covid19response-lakecountyil.hub.arcgis.com/pages/schools-dashboard>

We also have a number of students who will be completing their coursework in a fully remote status as most transition to our hybrid model.

We truly appreciate the ongoing flexibility and support our community has shared over the course of this school year. We will need to continue to be prepared for transitions and modifications in our plans for the remainder of the year.



News from Instructional Services

by Christopher J. Geocaris, Assistant Superintendent of Instructional Services

Welcome back, everyone! We are excited to have begun welcoming students back on campus starting January 19. While our updated hybrid schedule is different from our fully remote schedule this fall, we feel the new schedule will continue to support all our students in their learning and maximize the impact of in-person instruction for students attending classes on campus each day. Our updated hybrid schedule and student group rotation are available on our school website, at <https://www.d121.org/returntoschool>.

We are proud of how our students finished the first semester and are looking forward to helping all our Blue Devils find success during the second semester.

Virtual Resource Rooms



To continue to support our students, we have added virtual resource rooms available throughout the school day and an evening study table.

School Day Resource Rooms Information

During hybrid or remote instruction we will have virtual resource rooms open during "in-person" time all periods of all Blue and Gold Days for O'Plaine and period 3-6 of all Blue and Gold Days for Almond. Details can be found on our website at: <https://www.d121.org/Page/273>

Evening Study Table Information

We are also continuing to offer virtual study tables for students in the evenings. Details on this resource room can be found on our website at: <https://www.d121.org/Page/754>



Access the 2021-2022 Curriculum Guide:
<https://il02214492.schoolwires.net/Page/429>



Student Instructional Support

<https://www.d121.org/domain/135>

Click the link address above for information about:

- Technology Help
- Health Office and COVID-19 information
- Materials for class
- Educational resources for parents and students
- Netiquette Basics for Online Learning



News From Student Services

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



Parent Informational Meetings

Exploring Your Options (Freshmen)

Thursday, February 18

<https://zoom.us/j/91725129429>

Meeting ID: 917 2512 9429

Senior Family Financial Aid Workshops

Families can view the schedule and sign up for a 20-minute slot here:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/30e084aadc22a7ff2-2021>

- Wed. January 27 via Zoom 6-8pm
- Thurs. February 25 via Zoom 6-8pm

Live Webinar: All About Scholarships Workshop (Freshmen and Sophomores)

February 17 during all lunch periods

Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB)

Warren Township High School is hosting the ASVAB Career Exploration Assessment on Saturday, January 30 at 9:00 a.m. at the Almond Campus.

For more details:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1aC_zsgd626Eqa-nb2OoIQzhmJxO-nMfwtoGhmHt0_OU/edit

Welcome back to second semester! I hope everyone had a safe and relaxing break. Our Student Services teams are here to provide for the social and emotional growth of our students. If your student is feeling overwhelmed or uncomfortable, please reach out to someone on the team. Contact information for the Student Services team can be found on the District's website, at <https://www.d121.org/domain/36>.

Return to School Safety procedures



Please review our guidelines for students as they return to campus. Following the guidelines will keep us in school! If your child or anyone in your household is experiencing symptoms of an illness, please do not send your child to school. Please follow the guidelines for communicating illnesses and specifically reporting if anyone has or has been exposed to COVID-19:

Health Office Guidelines for Parent/Guardians.

BinaxNOW Rapid Testing

The District has initial approval to provide COVID-19 rapid testing onsite. We are working with the Lake County Health Department and following its guidelines on administering this rapid testing, which will be done by our nurses at both campuses. This testing is not a screener for all staff and students. It is used for someone who is displaying symptoms. This mitigation effort will help us stay open! ***You will receive an email notification to provide consent for this testing for your child if they present a symptom while on campus.***

You are not obligated to sign the consent form, but please know this is an important mitigation that will keep our school safe.



Please follow the directions in the email to process the consent form in our PowerSchool student data system.

Career and College Counselors

WTHS is fortunate to have a career and college counselor at both campuses! These counselors work diligently to provide programming to help our students reflect and plan on post-secondary opportunities. In addition to student programming, they also host several parent informational meetings throughout the year. Please consider attending! Follow us on Instagram [@wthsccl](https://www.instagram.com/wthsccl) or accept their Canvas course invitation!

Post-Secondary Counselors

Carrie McGahan
Almond Campus
847.548.6709

cmcgahan@wthsccl.net

Trini Hartley
O'Plaine Campus
847.599.4532
thartley@wthsccl.net

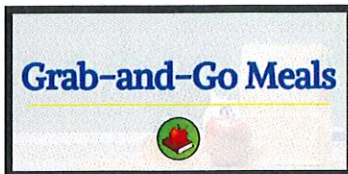
News from Business Services and Operations

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

Grab-and-Go Meals, Updated Starting January 19, 2021

WTHS will continue to distribute grab-and-go meals. All students ages 18 and under are eligible to receive free breakfast and lunch, regardless of their current Free and Reduced status.

As we move to a hybrid schedule beginning January 19, seven-day breakfast and lunch meal kit distribution will continue on Tuesdays and Thursdays, with the following changes:



- Students who are attending school in person will have the option to pick up their meal kits as they leave the building on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 1:45 p.m. to 2:45 p.m. at the Almond Campus and from 2:45 p.m. to 3:45 p.m. at the O'Plaine campus.
- Daytime meal pickup hours will continue on Tuesdays and Thursdays at both the Almond and O'Plaine campuses, from 10:15 a.m. to 12:15 p.m.
- Evening pickup hours will continue on Tuesdays and Thursdays at the O'Plaine campus ONLY, from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.
- There will no longer be distribution at the Green Valley Apartments, Continental Village Apartments, or the Park City Teen Center.

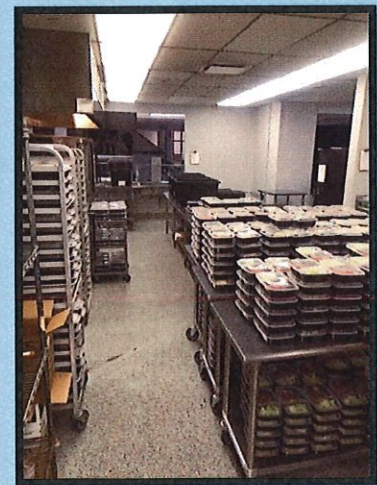
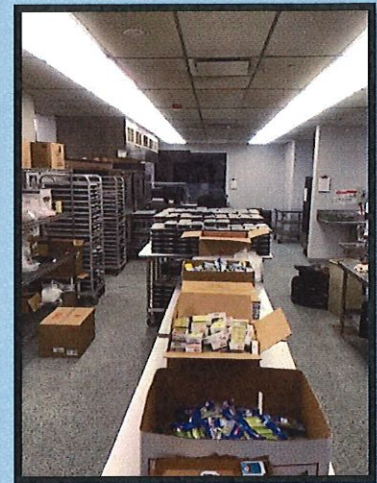
2021-22 Budget Preparation Begins

At the January 19, 2021 meeting, the Board provided its approval to begin the budget preparation process for the 2021-22 school year.



The first step is to schedule initial meetings with lead teachers, assistant principals, and principals to determine the needs of each department, which will help guide the process for creating next year's budget. Meetings will be scheduled during February and March.

After these meetings take place, all the information will be compiled to create a preliminary budget for review during the summer months, with final approval taking place in September 2021.



Principal's Corner at the Almond Campus

by Rob Parrott



Student Announcements

I encourage students to get involved in athletics and activities this semester. Students can see what is going on each day by looking on the student announcement tab on the district website main page.

Students should also watch the weekly announcements, shared each Wednesday in Canvas. These are also located on my [YouTube Channel](#).



Please utilize PowerSchool and Canvas to see your student's progress. Reach out to teachers if you have questions or concerns about student work.

We hope everyone had a great winter break and first few weeks back as we have resumed our school calendar. Happy New Year to all our families and students. We are excited about the start of a new calendar year and the thought that we are moving closer to some degree of "normalcy" as the end of the pandemic gets closer.

We are off to a strong start to the second semester and have transitioned to our hybrid schedule. We are very excited to welcome staff and students back to the Almond campus. We are bringing students back to in-person learning by last name and have enjoyed welcoming them each day. Again, students and families can access important return-to-school information on the d121.org website.



We have two valuable academic resources available to ALL STUDENTS:

Resource Rooms: English, Math, and Science help is available every blue/gold day during each period of the day! Teachers are available in these virtual spaces to offer help for students. [CLICK HERE](#) to access links.

Study Table: Homework help in English, Math, Science, and Social Studies is available on Tuesday and Thursday nights, between 6:30-8:30 p.m. [CLICK HERE](#) to access links.

Our hybrid schedule has time for students between 9:20-9:45 a.m. to get extra help from teachers or reach out to Student Services. If students would like to talk to a dean, counselor, social worker, or psychologist, they can complete a [request form](#) to do so. Please reach out if you have questions or need support.



I appreciate the collective responsibility of all students and staff related to the safety protocols we have established in the building. Completing the self-certification, doing temperature checks, wearing masks, watching our distance and washing our hands are expectations that will allow us to keep one another safe.

We will continue to work hard and work together to have a great second semester.

Thank you and, as always, Go Blue Devils!

Principal's Corner at the O'Plaine Campus

by Michele Bertola

Happy New Year!

We are off to a strong start to the second semester and have transitioned to our hybrid schedule. We are very excited to welcome staff and students back to the O'Plaine campus. We are bringing students back to in-person learning by last name alpha-slice, and have enjoyed welcoming them each day. Students and families can access important return-to-school information by visiting the [d121.org website](https://d121.org)



We have two valuable academic resources available to ALL STUDENTS:

Resource Rooms: English, Math, and Science help is available every Blue/Gold Day during each period of the day! Teachers are available in these virtual spaces to offer help for students. [CLICK HERE](#) to access links.

Study Table: Homework help in English, Math, Science, and Social Studies is available on Tuesday and Thursday nights between 6:30-8:30 p.m. [CLICK HERE](#) to access links.

Our hybrid schedule has time for students between 10:20-10:55 a.m. to get extra help from teachers or reach out to Student Services. If students would like to talk to a dean, counselor, social worker, or psychologist, they can complete a [request form](#) to do so. Please reach out if you have questions or need support.



I appreciate the collective responsibility of all students and staff when it comes to the safety protocols in our building. Completing the self-certification, doing temperature checks, wearing masks, watching our distance and washing our hands will help us keep one another safe.

We will continue to work hard and work together to have a great second semester. Thank you for your ongoing support!



Student Announcements

I encourage students to get involved in athletics and activities this semester. Students can see what is going on each day by looking on the student announcement tab on the district website main page.

Students should also watch the weekly announcements, shared each Wednesday in Canvas. These are also located on my [YouTube Channel](#).



Please utilize PowerSchool and Canvas to see your student's progress. Reach out to teachers if you have questions or concerns about student work.

News about Athletics and Activities

by Becky Belmont, Director of Athletics and Aimee Lonigro, Assistant Director of Athletics and Activities Coordinator



Winter Sports Resume on January 20

Please look for more information from our athletic department and coaches for updates on specific sport plans.

Boys and Girls Bowling
Girls Badminton
Cheerleading
Devillettes
Girls Gymnastics
Boys Swimming and Diving

Fall Sports Recognition

The Board recognized 11 students who were 2020 Illinois High School Association fall sport qualifiers. Students recognized were: Girls Swimming and Diving (Grace Bevers and Annie Stingle); Boys Cross Country team with a 7th place sectional finish and team members Luke Wiley (Sectional Champion), Carlos Villa, David Lara, Max Zeisler, Nathan Garcia, Cole Kaether, Ryan Moats, Griffin Pasha, and Osvaldo Bandera.

Warren Township High School District 121 is a member of the following athletic organizations:

Illinois High School Association (IHSA), which competes in phases of competition tournaments: sectionals, regionals and state.

North Suburban Conference (NSC), competes against eight nearby high schools throughout the season and ends with a conference tournament.

2021 Illinois Future Business Leaders of America Northern Area Conference

Warren FBLA competed at the Northern Area Conference Saturday, January 16. For the first time, this conference, usually held at an area high school, was completely virtual. Students presented via Zoom/Google Meets or took tests online. Fifty-nine students so far have qualified for the State Leadership Conference in April. Two WTHS students were elected to the Northern Area Officer Team: Yash Sharma, Parliamentarian, and Dhruval Bhatt, Vice President. Thank you to our advisers, Jessica Beck, Steve Vranek, Kelly Stites, and Courtney Mills.

The FBLA members who competed were the following:

Kaitlyn Kiesler, Cameron Cohen, Fatima Naveed, Pavithra Yarlagadda, Nihar Kiran-Kumar, Matthew Konke, Jacob Kora, Manasi Patel, Madu Chander, Annalise Schmidt, Geetika Nagiseti, Avery Piktel, Alexie Laya, Colin Lee, Natalya Harris, Minahil Nadeem, Mohammad Samhan, Benjamin Isaac, Jahnvi Kolli, Priyal Patel, Nooreen Ahmed, Diya Tibrewala, Ishaan Shah, Lucia Rodriguez, Brian Rapanan, Yash Sharma, Brayden Sweeney, Grace Bevers, Bharat Pullela, Ayesha Mohammad, Arjun Shah, Andreas Ackron, Blaise Varughese, Ifra Waris, Steven Isaac, Dhruval Bhatt, Anantya Kasturi, Grace Liu, Alexis Ehlebracht, Kendal Parr, Adarsh Dayalan, Yuvraj Chauhan, Steven Isaac, Diya Tibrewala, Olivia Wong, Kennedy Cano, Shalini Kolli, Maxine Elloian, Julia Farber, Karthik Pullela, Fahim Rafi, Lisa Kuriakose, Stephanie Mago, Niharika Sapra, Anushka Agashe, Sanjiv Kondin, Pavithra Yarlagadda, Anushka Agashe, Kayla Weekes, Ayesha Sultan, and Minahil Raheel.

thank you!

Thank you, Almond Students of Service, for volunteering at the Salvation Army and Feed My Starving Children organizations.

Kaitlyn Kiesler, Cameron Cohen, Andrea Penesis, Ava Palo, Jillian Fortin, Marianne Abante, Karen Kim, Kaitlyn Salgado, Raina Rice, Alexa Kifer, Timothy Belen, Rachel Scanlan, Natalie Vondracek, Aiden DeMonte, Leslie Lopez, Bryson King, and Parker Olive.

