



CHARLES H. WALSH SR. ACADEMY & CAREER TECH HIGH SCHOOL



Walsh Academy

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walshacademy.org



Greetings,

Mark your calendars! Spring parent-teacher conferences will be held in person at our new location on March 8th. The classroom team will reach out to schedule individual meetings. These conferences are your chance to discuss your child's progress with the classroom team and specialists, covering academic performance, social development, emotional well-being, and even future career aspirations. This valuable opportunity fosters collaboration and communication between the school and your family, ensuring a well-rounded approach to supporting your child's success.

To complement our spring parent-teacher conferences on March 8th, we're hosting an Open House for families, friends, and school district representatives.

This is your chance to:

- Explore our new school: Get a firsthand look at our diverse learning spaces, including trade and academic classrooms, social worker offices, and even our stage-equipped gym!
- Meet the team: Connect with the entire faculty; they're all eager to answer your questions and share their knowledge.

We're excited to showcase our vibrant learning environment and foster open communication with our community.

The fourth quarter is starting this week, and we're thrilled about the expanded learning opportunities! We'll be introducing a Small Engines class and partnering with the Niles Public Works Department to care for the community garden across the street from the school. We'll have our own donated garden box to tend and help others with theirs. Plus, our transition classroom recently began working with the Niles Department of Family Services, taking on various tasks four days a week. It's going to be an exciting and enriching quarter!

I am looking forward to seeing you on March 8th, meanwhile, if you have any questions, please feel free to reach out.

Take care and be safe,

Ann M. Craig
Principal / Director of Educational Services



Upcoming Events

3/8 Inservice Day &
Parent/Teacher Conferences
3/22 No CTE
3/25-3/29 SPRING BREAK

Health Beat:

Self Injury Awareness

By: Kristina Seidelman Nickels – Social Worker

The month of March is officially recognized as self-injury awareness month. Self-injury or self-harm is defined as a response to severe emotional distress where intentional, non-suicidal injuries serve as a way for a person to mirror psychological pain with physical pain. For some individuals, physical injury can have a temporary calming effect and in others self-injury may be a way for an individual to “feel something” to combat emotional numbness. During the month of March, helping to increase awareness about self-injury can be a chance to set aside stigma, gain a better understanding of self-injurious behavior, and increase open discussions about mental health and recovery.

It is estimated that among teenagers, 15% will experience some form of self-injury. The most common forms of self-harm include: skin cutting (70-90%), head banging or hitting (21-44%), and flesh burning (15-35%). Awareness and reporting of self-injurious behaviors are affected by how easily an individual can hide or explain away their injuries. Some signs and patterns of self-injury are: consistent injuries such as scabs, bruises, burns or cuts on an individual's body, overdressing in warmer weather (i.e. wearing coats, long sleeves, or pants), repeatedly making excuses for why or how an individual got injured, and avoidance, isolation, or withdrawal from activities or relationships they previously enjoyed.

If you believe an individual may be engaging in self-injurious behaviors, it is important to remain supportive and non-judgmental. It is recommended to seek professional help to better understand and manage underlying mental health conditions that contribute to self-injury. Additionally, practicing self-care (i.e. exercise, meditation, a healthy diet), identifying triggers to the behaviors such as stressful events or conflicts, creating a positive support system, and practicing mindfulness can help prevent and reduce patterns of self-injurious behaviors.



Talking Tech: Computer Literacy

By: Stavros Kouriabalis – CTE Teacher

As we wind down to the end of Quarter 3, the students in our Computer Literacy class are turning in their final projects. The students in this elective class were learning the basics on how to design T-shirts using our cut studio software, our vinyl cutters and our new heat presses. The designs that they made are incredible, and really showcase their creativity and imagination. We were amazed at how quickly they were able to learn how to use the software and the application process of transferring their creation onto a shirt. We are happy to see our Computer Literacy course unlock some interest in our students and we hope they gain a lot of knowledge out of it.



Classroom Corner

By: Mark Trerotola – Teacher

Now that spring is in the air, people are itching to get outside. What better way to get out than to take a field trip? Mr. T's class spent some time underwater. No, not swimming; they went to the Shedd Aquarium that supported their unit on ecology and water pollution. While there, students got to see the different water environments that can be affected by pollution and negligence.

The nice thing about the field trip was that Mr. T's class got to share it with Ms. Parker and one of her students. They were interested to join because Ms. Parker's class was studying the life cycles of animals in their biology class. Ms. Parker's class was also fortunate enough to participate in a trip to Feed My Starving Children (FMSC). FMSC works with food distribution partners that stay with communities for the long haul, empowering them to move from relief to development. The students are encouraging an ongoing effort of giving back and being an upstander in the community.

Ms. Claire's class went to the Museum of Science and Industry. They spent time in the storm exhibit, rode on the Zephyr train, and went into a mirror maze that showed how numbers appear in nature, supporting their algebra curriculum. They are now planning a trip to the Shedd Aquarium to see the plankton photosynthesis exhibit.

Field trips provide real-life applications to the topics being taught in class and bring the content to life. They are motivating and experiential, helping the content to really be absorbed. We can't wait to see what adventures await our students and staff through the rest of the year!



Getting to Know Us!

This month we are featuring Walsh Academy senior, Corey Meeks, and PE/Health teacher extraordinaire, Coach Dan. Corey just recently completed his high school graduation requirements and moved into the transition class where he will be able to go to off campus job sites and continue to get real world work experiences. He is also a valued member of the CTE Extension program where he helps with tasks around the building and produces student news. Coach Dan runs all of our PE classes throughout the day and will be transitioning to health classes for the students who still need to meet that graduation requirement in May Term. He coaches all of our CAAEL teams and supports the students who attend other CAAEL sponsored events. Walsh Academy is very proud to spotlight these two individuals!



CAAEL

By: Dan Baffin – PE Teacher/Coach

Our Walsh Academy students had the opportunity to participate in the 2024 CAAEL BEE (CAAEL's spelling bee competition). Our team of 6 students participated against 5 other schools in a team competition, as well as an individual competition. For the team competition students worked together to come up with the correct spelling and then the team captain would relay what they decided to the moderator. The team accomplished what they set out to do by taking first place in the team competition! But we weren't done, next came the individual competition, in which two of our students competed, spelling words like bilious, chandeliers, boisterously, and pharmaceutical. It was a long back and forth battle but one of our students took second place! We are all so proud of our students for their accomplishments and thank you to CAAEL for hosting such a great event. Great job everyone!



What is your favorite color?

CM – Red; really red and black.

DB – Blue has always been my favorite color.

What is/was your favorite subject in school?

CM – English, I like listening to books.

DB – Math. I always found it fun and challenging. Calculus was a different story...

Have you ever had a nickname?

CM – CAM, my initials.

DB – Closest thing to a nickname was everyone would always just refer to me by my last name, Baffin. My wife will claim she didn't know my first name until months after dating.

What is your favorite holiday?

CM – All Hallows Eve, the night of Halloween. It means the passing of spirits.

DB – This is a tough one. It's an extremely close call between the 4th of July and Christmas. But I'll have to go with Christmas since seeing the joy and excitement on my children's faces far surpasses anything else.

What is something you've done that you are proud of?

CM – That I am going to graduate.

DB – For school related I'll have to say the amount of Sportsmanship nominations for CAAEL that we get each year. Seems every year we get at least one or two. It's a true testament to the students' understanding that there's more to sports than just winning. As far as personally, I'd have to say being a proud father to three of the sweetest kids on earth.

What is your favorite movie, show, and/or book?

CM – My favorite movies are the last 2 SCREAMs. They were a great ending to the series. I like the book Hatchet because it is a story of survival.

DB – This is so tough because I love TV and Cinema. My favorite movies are by directors Quentin Tarantino and Steven Spielberg. I'll pick a recent show that I like; it's called The Last of Us and it is on HBO. It's an interpretation of a very popular video game that I can't wait to see finished.

If you were a superhero, what powers would you have?

CM – Super strength

DB – Probably the ability to fly. I've always wanted to learn how to and not having to go through an airport would be a major plus. Now, why wouldn't you want to just teleport I always get asked. Well, teleporting would just be boring. Boom! You've arrived. You wouldn't get all the fun of seeing those awesome views from the sky.

What is the best part about being a student/staff at Walsh Academy?

CM – I feel relaxed here at Walsh Academy. I remember middle school and it was kind of eventful every day. Then, I had to figure out how to avoid those situations and that was overwhelming.

DB – The caring family atmosphere and truly making a difference for our students. Seeing them succeed and reach their goals is easily the best part of working here.



CTE Update

By: Maysaloon Alkhafaji – Paraprofessional/Job Coach



We have started producing weekly school news segments at Walsh Academy, using the podcast studio during CTE Extension, and covering great news at school is absolutely newsworthy! The news is shown every Monday morning and includes any special events occurring in the school such as CAAEL events, the Ribbon Cutting Ceremony, Student of the Month announcements, the Spelling Bee, and much more! Students also cover national news like the Super Bowl, elections, and weather forecasts.

In this site, students begin to learn the skills of photography, filming, sound mixing, and video editing. The students who have participated all enjoy at least one aspect of this project, even if they don't like being on camera. Some students have taken to suggesting content for the segments and conducting interviews with staff. We look forward to seeing what the students do with their Student News as they learn the equipment and let their creativity fly!



WALSH ACADEMY

Open House & Parent / Teacher

Conferences

March 8, 2024

1:00 pm – 6:00 pm

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We are looking forward to giving you a tour of our new school.

