

Commentary

A Newsletter for the Residents of the Westlake City School District

11th Excellent state report card

For the 11th consecutive year, the Westlake City School District has achieved the highest rating from the Ohio Department of Education.

Westlake achieved an "Excellent with Distinction" on the "2009 State and Local Report Card.

The Ohio report cards use multiple measures in rating each district. Based on the Westlake Schools' performance in the 2008-09 school year, this year's report card shows the district meeting 30 out of 30 performance indicators, attained its highest Performance Index Score to date of 106.3, in addition to meeting federal Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) and Value Added targets.

That Excellence was recognized at the Sept. 28 Board of Education

meeting when state Rep.

Nan Baker presented a proclamation to the Board recognizing the district's 11th consecutive Excellent report card from the ODE. The proclamation

was signed by Baker and Ohio House of Representatives speaker Armond Budish. The proclamation recognizes the hard work of our teaching staff, the fact that each school building earned an Excellent rating and the highest Performance Index Score to date.



Board members (l to r) Timothy Sullivan, Joseph Marinucci, President Andrea Rocco, Vice President Carol Winter and Thomas Mays with the banner presented to the school district by the Ohio Department of Education.

20/20 group finalizing facilities plan

The work of drafting a master facilities plan for the Westlake City School District entered its 22nd month on Oct. 7 when an expanded 20/20 Vision Committee met to begin the process of finalizing a plan.

For almost two years the Westlake Schools have been compiling data, seeking feedback and preparing a master facilities plan to address aging and outdated school buildings. The biggest challenges include overcrowding in the buildings and serious maintenance and structural challenges.

Last fall the 20/20 Vision Committee met to analyze data, prioritize plans and debate strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. The group strongly agreed there was a problem that needed to be addressed responsibly and soon. The group proposed two options to the Westlake

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20/20 Committee meeting dates

- **Nov. 4** @ Westlake High School, optional tour at 6:15 p.m., regular meeting at 7 p.m.
- **Nov. 18** @ Parkside Intermediate School, optional tour at 6:15 p.m., regular meeting at 7 p.m.
- **Dec. 2** @ Bassett Elementary School, optional tour at 6:15 p.m., regular meeting at 7 p.m.

Stay informed on the facilities process by visiting www.wlake.org/facilities.

Westlake part of 'green' pilot

The Westlake City School District is one of three Northeast Ohio school districts that has volunteered for the Green Schools Pilot program through the Green Schools Action Council.

The Council is a program supported by the Northeast Ohio chapter of the U.S. Green Building Coalition. As a pilot district, Westlake will gain a better understanding of the cost savings associated with green build-

ing strategies, have access to information resources and consultations and networking opportunities with other pilot districts to share best practices and find solutions to common challenges.

The program specifically will look at incorporating LEED principles into new school buildings, making existing school buildings more green, identifying maintenance practices to maximize green building benefits

and using sustainability strategies to impact school curriculum.

Westlake was approached about the project through Citizens Advisory Committee member Laura Steinbrink, who was on a subcommittee that looked at green options, WHS graduate Emily Baunach of Brown-Flynn architects in Highland Heights and Westlake resident Lisa Peterson of Burt, Hill architects in Cleveland.

It's flu season: Wash your hands

With flu season upon us, it is important to remind everyone about the Center for Disease Control's guidance promoting good hygiene and taking precautions against illness.

The flu, as well as the H1N1 virus, has surfaced in our community and school system. Aside from our normal cleaning schedule, we are taking extra reasonable precautions, including disinfecting doorknobs, computer keyboards/mice and desks each night.

We are following guidelines posted by the Cuyahoga County Board of Health and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, which have advised that closing school is not the best option. Please note that we have a link on our web site – www.wlake.org – with information and resources concerning the H1N1 flu virus.

Preventative measures as supported by the Board of Health and CDC remain in place and include promoting good hygiene. Parents with children exhibiting flu-like symptoms are encouraged to keep your child home for at least 24 hours after the temperature returns to normal. As our action plan dictates, we will continue to communicate with local public health officials on this issue. Please refer to our web site for new information or additional recommendations from local health officials.

Facilities

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Board of Education – a five-building grade-level configuration and a six-building configuration that maintained neighborhood schools.

An expanded 20/20 Vision Committee will continue studying and refining possible solutions. MKC Associates, an architectural firm hired by the Board to review the district's master plan options, is working with the committee and administration to recommend a single solution that best meets the needs of the students and our Westlake community.

The expanded group represents the City of Westlake, local business, civic organizations, faculty, students and the community. At the Oct. 7 meeting the group heard presentations on building assessments and master plan options. Going forward the group will discuss the scope of each plan, costs, budget, educational considerations, operational issues, site considerations, co-curricular considerations and funding options.

2 perfect ACTs at WHS

Westlake High School seniors Eleanor Batty and Julie Wang achieved a perfect score of 36 on the ACT college entrance and placement exam on the April testing. Nationwide, only 268 perfect scores were recorded – fewer than 1/10th of 1% of test takers.

Wang also is a National Merit semifinalist – one of about 16,000 nationwide. Wang has

the opportunity to compete for about \$35 million in National Merit scholarships that will be awarded next spring. National Merit Finalists will be announced in February.

Eleanor Batty (left) and Julie Wang (right) were presented certificates of achievement by Board President Andrea Rocco (center)



WCSD adopts balanced math

In 2008, the National Mathematics Advisory Panel presented “Foundations for Success: The Final Report of the National Mathematics Advisory Panel,” which called for a balanced approach to mathematics.

The Westlake City School District collaborated with K-12 math teachers to select a math program that struck that balance by reinforcing fluency and computational skills, as well as conceptual ideas and problem solving activities.

The goal, according to Academic Resources Director Pam Griebel, is a coherent progression of mathematics.

The team looked at state indicators and built a framework for balancing all of the essential mathematical components to align instruction and create assessments to help students become proficient with state and district math standards.

The result is a K-12 math program that includes new textbooks, online resources, site licenses for new software and manipulatives added to teachers’ toolboxes. The new program will make learning more engaging, rigorous and meaningful for students.

WHS junior earns nod from University of Notre Dame

WHS junior Kalpana Beach has verbally accepted a full athletic scholarship from the University of Notre Dame in South Bend, Ind., for basketball and track and field.

Kalpana is a 6-foot-1-inch basketball guard named First Team SWC for the past two years. She averaged 15 points, 8 rebounds and 2.5 steals as a sophomore.

In track & field she was named SWC champion in the high jump the past two years. She placed 7th in the state as a freshman, and as a sophomore she placed 2nd in the state and 4th in the nation. She holds a school record of 5 feet 10 inches in the high jump.

Follow us on Twitter

The Westlake City School District is now posting news and updates on Twitter.

What is Twitter? It is one of the fastest growing social media marketing tools in the world. It is a free social networking service that enables its users (in this case the Westlake School District) to send updates known as tweets.

Tweets are text-based posts of up to 140 characters in length which are displayed on the user’s profile page and delivered to other users who have subscribed to them (known as followers).

So, if you want to follow us, check out <http://twitter.com/WestlakeSchools>.

Upcoming events at the PAC

Here is a sampling of upcoming events at the Westlake Schools Performing Arts Center. Please note dates and times are subject to change.

November

Nov. 2 -- WHS Show Choir Invitational, 7pm.
Tickets \$6 at the door.

Nov. 13-15 -- WHS Center Stage Players performance of "Murder's in the Heir."

December

Dec. 1 -- Parkside 6th grade band concert
Dec. 2 -- LBMS 8th grade band concert
Dec. 8 -- Parkside 6th grade choir concert

Dec. 9 -- LBMS 7th grade band & choir concert
Dec. 10 -- WHS instrumental concert
Dec. 14 -- WHS choir concert
Dec. 15 -- Parkside 5th grade choir concert
Dec. 19 -- Cleveland Youth Ballet performance of "The Nutcracker"



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Westlake City Schools
27200 Hilliard Blvd.
Westlake, OH 44145

Large-type edition of the
Commentary (text only) is
available. Call (440) 250-1258

Westlake City Schools Commentary is published six times per year by the Westlake City Schools.

The Board of Education:
Andrea Rocco, President
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Timothy Sullivan

Dr. Daniel J. Keenan Jr., Superintendent
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