

# SCHOOL BELL

Community Publication for the Watervliet Public School District

Issue 2 Spring 2021

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*School Bell Editor—Nancy Scowcroft*



## Panther Kids Doing Good

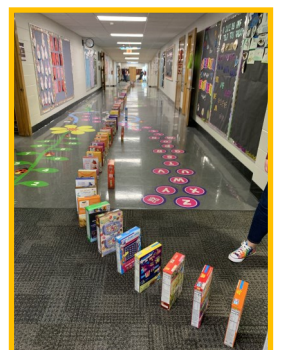
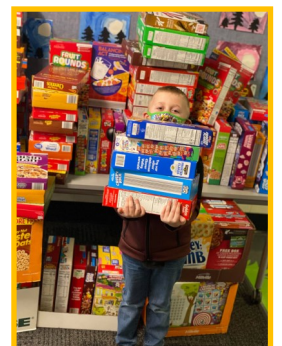


Sixth grade students Hanna Lomoro, Brianna Shriver and Hailey Adams organized a student hat and pajama pants day to raise money for the Benton Harbor Soup Kitchen. They raised and delivered \$169 to help others with food insecurity.

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In February, with the help of our community South School students collected over 660 cereal boxes for a domino style lesson about chain reaction, cause & effect, etc. The cereal boxes were then donated to a local food pantry to help feed hungry folks in our community.

A video of the activity posted on our district Facebook page went viral and garnered over six million engagements worldwide! The story was picked up by both area and national news outlets, and the Kellogg cereal company matched the donation with an additional 660 boxes of cereal!





# Watervliet Public Schools

Office of the Superintendent  
Ric Seager, Superintendent of schools



Panther Families:

Circumstances in the 2020-21 school year have stretched our school, our community, our state, and our nation as never before. An incredible amount of patience, grace, and community pride has been marshaled to keep our schools together and strong. And while this crisis of COVID-19 is not yet fully in our rear-view mirror, we can see our way through this to a brighter future.

It certainly has been tough!

When the COVID-19 crisis first hit us, in March of 2020, our school community came together to keep our kids safe AND to keep the learning moving forward. We certainly had fits and starts; some grand success and some failures. But our spirit and character stayed strong. Our staff, students, parents, and the community stepped up to the challenges and kept us together.

And, we have proven to be even tougher!

While our plans and practices have kept our students relatively safe, new variants of COVID-19 are now upon us here in Michigan. These strains appear to be more infectious and affect students to a greater extent than previously seen. So now is no time for complacency!! While vaccines give us hope for a more normal future, we will still be implementing our RTL plan at least through the remainder of the school year. We will continue to need your help and support with these measures in order to keep our students safe and to continue in-person learning.

But our Panther Family has not stood still during this crisis. As we became more adept with our protocols, we have come back to the visioning and strategic planning that we began more than a year ago. In other words, we are looking forward to what Watervliet Schools will be after the pandemic.

Over the next weeks and months, you will be hearing about our District Strategic Plan and our focus on building a stronger and more adaptable Watervliet Public Schools that provides more opportunities for students who are ready, targeted support for students who need it, and a stronger commitment to community engagement. We hope you will join us in our efforts to make an already outstanding school district even stronger.

I personally thank you for all your support and cooperation during these unprecedented times. *Working Together to Keep Us Together* is more than a tagline. It's who we are!

Sincerely,  
Ric Seager



Photo: Mr. Seager reads a favorite children's book to WPS elementary students during March—Reading Month.



## Welcome Brandon Waggoner: New WPS Curriculum Director



In December Watervliet Public Schools welcomed Mr. Brandon Waggoner as the new District Curriculum Director. Brandon comes to us most recently from Berrien Springs Public Schools where he served for 20 years in the roles of teacher, Technology Director, Principal, and Assistant Superintendent.

Brandon has a great deal of experience heading up online learning, which is serving our district well given the challenges of the 2020-2021 school year. He is also becoming familiar with in-person happenings throughout our district, visiting classrooms to see teachers engaged in working directly with students. He is working with teachers to form plans regarding how to address the needs of students and teachers, all the while focusing on essential standards.

Brandon and his wife, Crystal, have two daughters (16 & 19) and one son (14). They currently live in Buchanan.



## Amy Oetjens Takes On New Role as Technology Coach



After three and a half years in the role of Watervliet Middle School Science teacher, Amy Oetjens has accepted the new position of Instructional Technology Coach for the District. Amy is already sharing lots of great technology based ideas with our teachers and administrators. We are thrilled to have Amy's skills in this area at work for our whole district.

## Paul Stinemetz Joins WPS as District Media Specialist

A graduate of Purdue University and with a Masters degree in Library science from Indiana University, Paul Stinemetz comes to WPS with 16 years of experience as a middle school media specialist and 8 years as a corporation media specialist in Indiana. Most recently he has been working as a Library Technology Specialist in Byron Center, Michigan.



Paul's wife also works in education, having been a Title I teacher and more recently a Director of Children's Ministry. His son, Silas, is a recent college graduate and a gifted artist.

"I am very excited to work in a great school system like Watervliet," says Paul. "The community spirit for the school reminds me of my first job. I'm excited to begin what I hope will be the final stop in my library technology career."

# South School Scoop

In a year that is very different from any year we have ever experienced, the staff at South Elementary is working hard to live our *joyful learning* mission daily and provide as many “extra joyful” activities as possible!

We were so fortunate to have Santa and Mrs. Claus visit before the holiday break! They sent candy canes to the students ahead of time and then socially distanced by visiting students from their classroom windows. It was pure magic! Our students were so excited that Santa and his wife would take time to visit them at such a busy time of the year for them!



We were also very fortunate to have Zero the Hero visit us on 100 Day! We were afraid he would not be able to come during the pandemic but he surprised us and “flew” through our classrooms.

As most of you have seen, our “Heartprints” cereal drive in February was a huge success! Our Little Panther families donated over 650 boxes of cereal to local food banks and our cereal box dominoes fell perfectly! It was very exciting to see!

In March we had so much fun celebrating reading! We had lots of fun theme days and some great guest readers! The grade levels competed for the “March Reading Month Challenge” trophy to see who could have the most books read to their students in March. Winning classrooms (pictured below) are:

- Young 5s: Mrs. Wendt’s class (121 read alouds)
- Kindergarten: Mrs. Schmidt’s class (208 read alouds)
- 1st Grade: Mrs. Tag’s class (125 read alouds)
- 2nd Grade: Mrs. Panozzo’s class (77 read alouds)







Before spring break, each classroom had some fun with the principal (it really is the best part of my job!). These events are usually held in the gym with the entire grade level but with social distancing, each class had their own time in their classroom (or the gym) with myself and Mrs. Brown. As you can see from the picture on the left, parachute games with Young 5s students is pure joy!

Most importantly, our little panthers have been so busy growing their brains in their classroom. It is really so amazing to see how much progress they have made this school year.

We are very thankful to our families for supporting us in all of the COVID-19 mitigation strategies. This has truly helped us maintain our “in-person” learning status for the majority of this school year.

We are so honored to be able to provide joyful learning to these little ones!

Carole Fetke, Watervliet South School Principal

## South School Shout Outs



Thank you for bringing joy to the South School Little Panthers . . .

ALL of the staff at South! You have done an amazing job making sure our kiddos don't miss out on any of the joy during a challenging school year!

Lori Ruff, Midwest Energy & Communications, for donating water bottles for our students!

John Busch (father of Katie Muth) for making blending boards for all of our Kindergarten and 1st grade teachers!

Staci Brown for all her help with “Fun with Fetke” time in classrooms!

“Zero the Hero” for visiting our classrooms on the 100th day of school!

Karla Smothers for arranging the Santa and Mrs. Claus visit!

Amanda Morlock-Fisher for providing lesson plans and gift bags from area farmers for Ag Day!

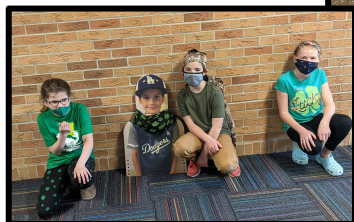
Superintendent Seager, Mrs. Morlock-Fisher (Virtually!), Matt Malone from 97.5 Country (Virtually!), Katie Muth, Ashley Layne, Emily Burke, Emily Wagner, Sierra Gainer, Jennifer Lanham, Crystal Pratt, Angela Schmidt, and Robin Smith for being a guest reader in our classrooms during reading month!

## News from North

Bill Tiefenbach - Principal / [wtiefenbach@watervlietps.org](mailto:wtiefenbach@watervlietps.org)  
(269) 463-0820 / Facebook @WatervlietNorthElementary / [www.watervlietps.org/north/](http://www.watervlietps.org/north/)



It has been a busy Winter for North School! We pride ourselves on providing our kids with as many rich experiences as possible during these times. This Winter our students have been able to participate in Ukulele Choir with Mr. Mattson, Girls on the Run, roller skating with Coach Ben in PE, virtual group readings with State representatives, 5th grade band in smaller groups, project LEAN, spirit days and working with the Berrien County Historical Museum for some unique experiences.



### Girls on the Run for 2021

We have two teams of "Girls on the Run" at North! One group attends sessions after school on Monday, the other on Tuesday, and both groups spaced out together on Wednesday. We are at the top as far as participation in our County! Such a compliment for our site liaison, Mrs. Sells, and our coaches! Our girls are unstoppable! We have really enjoyed seeing pictures on our facebook page (Watervliet North Girls on the Run) of our ladies outside staying active!

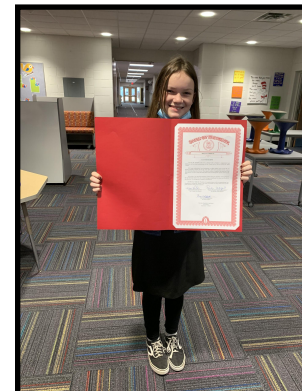
### LaSata Announces Winners Of COVID Hero Essay Contest

State Senator Kim LaSata announced the winners of her MI COVID-19 HERO essay contest. She held the contest asking students in southwest Michigan to submit stories about heroes in their lives who are making a difference in the battle against COVID-19. "It helps them to maybe work through their feelings about what they're seeing in the world," LaSata said.

Congratulations to 5th grade student **Lacy Mandarino** as the winner of the COVID Hero Essay Contest for her essay celebrating the heroes in their lives.

"Frontline workers are putting their lives on the line every day for us," Mandarino wrote. "The next time you see a frontline worker, tell them thank you for assisting in helping against the pandemic." Kim LaSata stated, "She had a concern for every frontline worker, and her hope was just that they're all protected."

The contest was open to all schoolchildren in the 21st Senate District to honor the sacrifices and heroism of Southwest Michigan's health care and service workers during the battle against the coronavirus.





## News from North (pg. 2)

Bill Tiefenbach - Principal / [wtiefenbach@watervlietps.org](mailto:wtiefenbach@watervlietps.org)

(269) 463-0820 / Facebook @WatervlietNorthElementary / [www.watervlietps.org/north/](http://www.watervlietps.org/north/)



### 5th Graders Meet a Detroit Lions Football Player

The 5th graders at North School had "Breakfast and a Book" with #96, Jashon Cornell, of the Detroit Lions last week. He came live to their classrooms via Zoom from Detroit Public Schools courtesy of Milk Means More, a program that promotes healthy eating and getting a good education. Jashon talked to the students about the importance of eating a healthy breakfast every day. In honor of Black History Month, Mr. Cornell read a book to the students called *The Oldest Students: How Mary Walker Learned to Read*. This book was based on the true story of an African American woman who grew up as a slave on a plantation, became a sharecropper after the Civil War, and finally learned to read after she was 100 years old. Our 5th graders loved the book and meeting Jashon Cornell. They were all grateful to Mrs. Bongiorno for setting the whole thing up.



- Last Day of School is Wednesday, June 9th
- We are still planning on having a Field Day near the end of the school year (details to follow)
- Please remember to send your child with a mask everyday



### 5th Graders Learn Quill Writing with the Berrien Historical Museum

The 5th grade Social Studies classes have been learning about the first colonization of America. This discussion has led to questions about the French Explorers and Michigan. The 5th grade brought a traveling trunk from the North Berrien Historical Museum to our classrooms to help bring our textbooks to life! The Voyageurs and the French Fur Trade teaches students the significance of the French Fur Trade and the importance to Michigan history. The traveling trunk included real animal furs, accessories used by Voyageurs, games and activities. One of our favorite activities was learning how to write with a quill.



# Middle School Matters

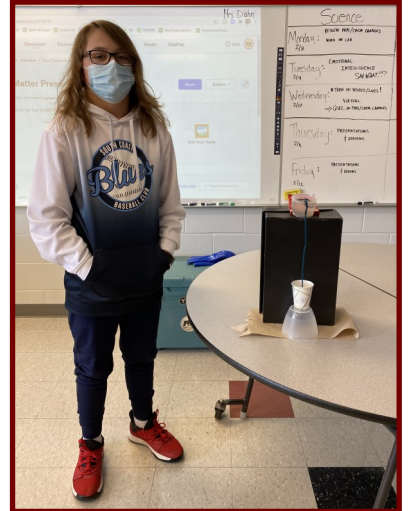
Usually, this is the time of the year Watervliet Middle School posts the end of year calendar with the list of field trips and end of year events. Unfortunately, with the Covid year, we cannot participate in these events.

On a positive note, you as parents and community members should be proud of all WMS students. They have shown courage in the face of adversity. They could have given up on their schoolwork, classmates, and teachers. Instead, students are showing up each day and working hard. Wearing masks, sanitizing hands, social distancing; none of this has held our students back.

Congratulations to the Watervliet Middle School students for growing and learning during a historically difficult year. The stories they will be able to tell their children and grandchildren.

Some good things that did happen were the band and choirs were able to participate in their festivals. Our band performed virtually and the choir had a judge come to the building to judge them. A little different but effective.

Athletic teams had shortened seasons but were able to compete against other schools. It was interesting to watch sports while they wore their masks. Our teams were very successful and the participation numbers were better than most schools.



Summer school will be offered to students this year. With the additional time off last spring, some students need additional help. All students are welcome. Information will be sent to parents sometime in May.

This is the last year that I will be around the Watervliet Middle School students and community. After twenty-one years as Watervliet Middle School Principal, I have decided to retire at the end of the school year. I cannot tell you how blessed I feel to have been able to work with such wonderful students, parents, staff, and community members.

I have made many lifelong friends and cherished memories while at WMS. I will never forget the many incredible, positive students that have come through our building. Thanks to everyone for the incredible journey I have had as part of the Watervliet Community.

Dave Armstrong, Principal





# The WORD from W-A-Y

## FEBRUARY STUDENTS OF THE MONTH



**Dylan Joyner:** Dylan enjoys being a moderator as well as playing video games. His advice for current and future WAY students is to spend at least 3-4 hours every day on school work or turn in 1 module a day. "Remember, it doesn't have to be perfect." After high school Dylan plans on getting a job and saving his money. Dylan's mom is Tammy Joyner.

**Christianna Flagel:** Christianna is considering becoming a nurse or possibly a beautician after graduating high school. She enjoys spending time with her best friend. Christianna offers this advice...*"I know it may seem hard and stressful to get the school work done but I'm gonna tell you it helps to get online whenever you can, even if you don't feel like it. If you can't sleep get on and work on some school. It'll help a lot in the long run and once you see yourself progressing you'll get more motivated to do the work."* Christianna's mom

is Crystal Brown.

## UPCOMING CALENDAR OF EVENTS

May 12<sup>th</sup> – Seniors/Graduates meet with Amy Seager

June 1<sup>st</sup> – Open Enrollment Begins

June 16<sup>th</sup> – W-A-Y Graduation Ceremony

Summer Hours (June 14<sup>th</sup> – August 27<sup>th</sup>): 8:30 AM – 12:30 PM, Monday through Thursday



## COMMUNICATION IS KEY

Please remember to notify the WAY staff if you are not able to attend the lab. Recently, we have had several "NO SHOWS" for assigned lab time slots. Please remember we only have 12 available seats for each session. If you sign up for a time it is important to attend. If you cannot, please contact the WAY staff so we can open that seat up for another student.

# High School Highlights

There's a new face at Watervliet High School Second Semester— Freshman English and Yearbook teacher



Olivia Behm. Olivia comes to us from Ohio and is a graduate of Bowling Green University. While teaching in Ohio, she was a quite successful speech and debate coach — all of her debate students made it to the state tournament this year!

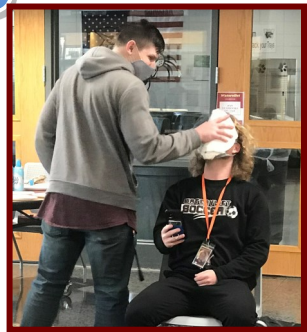
When not busy teaching, Olivia enjoys reading, writing, and listening to or playing music, and also enjoys playing low-stakes video poker. She says she is looking forward to teaching her students here at WHS about her true love: the language arts.

Seniors who had completed their FAFSA financial aid applications were given the opportunity to “Pie” a staff member of their choice.

Devin Goss took advantage of the opportunity to push a pie into the face of Mr. Houlehen, while both

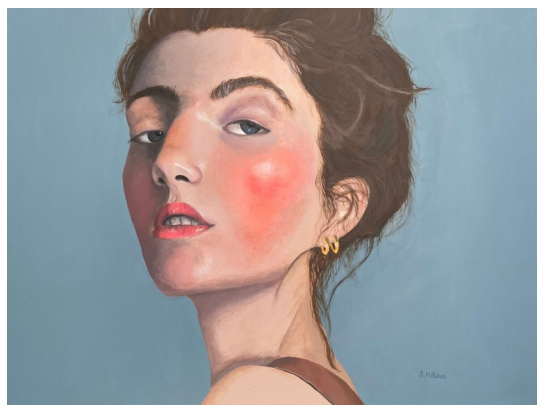
Danyel and Dakota Munson chose Mrs. Powers to pie.

Great job, Senior Class, in getting those FAFSAs done!



Art teacher Marcella Hunt and her students continue to impress! Each year Marcella submits works by her students to the Box Factory for the Arts Community Student Art Exhibition. This spring, 21 WHS students had their works featured at the Box Factory! Tia Caldwell received a 3rd place award for her ceramic piece entitled “*Plant House*”, and Gwen Durham’s mixed media collage titled “*I Just Wasn’t Made for These Times*” was honored with a Berrien RESA art scholarship.

In addition the prestigious Kalamazoo Institute of Arts High School Area Show accepted works from four talented WHS artists to compete for prizes and college scholarships. Those works are featured here:



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT:

**Alyssa Melcher**  
*Longing Eyes*

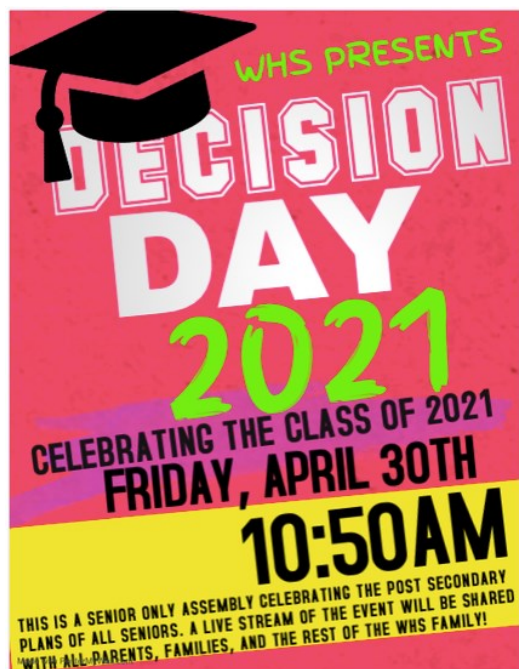
**Ruth Aguilera**  
*The Weekend*

**Marisa Rowe**  
*Expectations*

**German Casiano**  
*America*



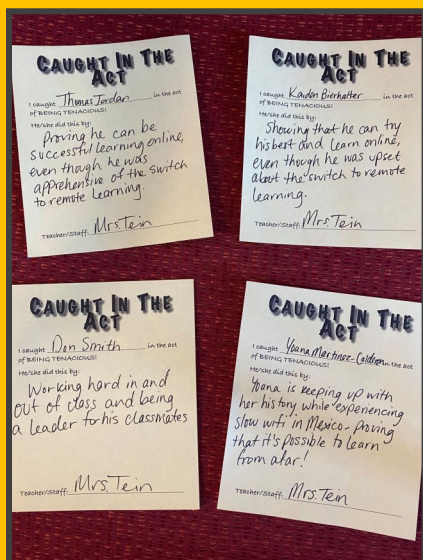




Decision Day is inspired by the NCAA's National Signing Day to reinforce that excellence in the classroom should be given as much pomp and circumstance as excellence as an athlete. NCAA's National Signing Day is when high school seniors sign a letter of intent to play sports at a specific college. Traditionally players participate in press conferences to announce their intentions. Our goal is to mimic this excitement for ALL students with any post secondary plan, whether it be college, the military, or heading straight to work!

On April 30th, during third hour, each senior's plans (from those choosing to participate) will be announced and celebrated at a senior only assembly. The event will be live streamed to the rest of the student body, and to parents and families. Regardless if the senior's future plans include post secondary training, the military, or the work force, ALL seniors are encouraged to participate in the event.

Members of the Class of 2021 have worked long and hard to prepare for their future and life after high school! We look forward to celebrating this special event with each one of them!



*In 2021 the high school has been focusing on a different theme each month. Themes are centered on qualities or ideals necessary for success in school and in life. Teachers are encouraged to recognize students "Caught in the Act" of exemplifying the month's theme in their actions. Recognized students are entered into a drawing for prizes at the end of the month. Focus themes include:*

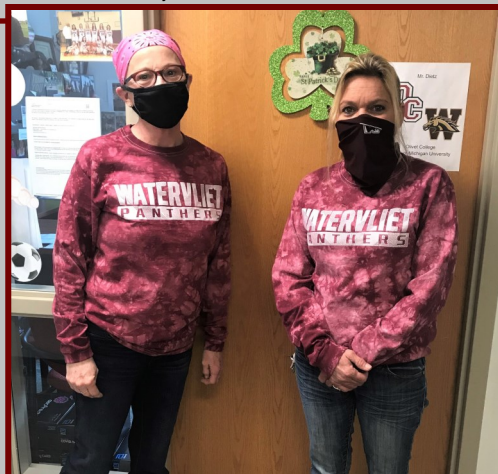
- Resiliency (January)
- Tenacity (February)
- Mental Health & Self Care (March)
- Diversity and Acceptance (April)
- Reflection & Successes (May)

## Zumba en la clase de español!

Señora Heil's Spanish classes have found many opportunities to get up and move to the sounds of the culture of the Spanish speaking world. Our food service director Terry Adams has even joined in on many occasions! This pandemic has had us all cooped up for too long and we are happy to be back together and celebrate in-person learning!



## Peggy and Michelle, members of our custodial staff, show off their Panther Pride





The Watervliet Public Schools Foundation for Excellence is an independent non-profit organization working to raise, steward, and distribute resources to enrich the education of students in the Watervliet Public Schools.

This Foundations's initial campaign was undertaken to provide funding for the purchase of on-line hot spots for students in outlying areas of the District. On March 8, 2021, the Foundation presented a check to the Watervliet Board of Education in the amount of \$21,230.05. This amount completely covered the purchase of the devices, along with the monthly fees for twelve months. The WPS Foundation for Excellence had set a goal of raising \$20,000 and, thanks to generous donations from the community they were able to reach and even exceed their goal.

Information about the Foundation may be found online at [www.wps-foundation.org](http://www.wps-foundation.org) or on its Facebook page. A place to express your interest in becoming involved with the Watervliet Public Schools Foundation for Excellence may be found on the Foundation web page. Community input is welcomed!

The Watervliet Public Schools Foundation for Excellence Board extends a heart-felt thank you for everyone that has been a part of this journey thus far. Greater things are yet to come.

*Submitted by Foundation Member Greg Krell*



*Left: Watervliet Public Schools Foundation for Excellence Treasurer, Barb Schofield, is handing Watervliet School Board President, Bill Spaulding a check \$21,230.05. This amount covered all costs involved with the Foundation's first campaign project for providing hot-spot devices for students.*

*Right: Watervliet Foundation Drawing by Student Artist Alyssa Schlender*



## School Building Phone Numbers

269-463-0300 Central Office  
269-463-0730 High School  
269-463-0780 Middle School  
269-463-0820 North  
269-463-0860 South  
269-463-0898 W-A-Y  
269-463-0733 Athletics



**Terry Adams, Nutrition Services Director**

## School Building Fax Numbers

269-463-7104 Central Office  
269-463-6809 High School  
269-463-4221 Middle School  
269-463-7616 North  
269-463-7614 South



# Special Education

## Watervliet Public Schools Partners with Berrien County Hearing Impaired Program

The Berrien County Hearing Impaired Program performs hearing evaluations for children birth through grade 12 in which licensed audiologists can identify or rule out hearing loss.

### If hearing loss is identified, audiologists can:

- ◆ Discuss what sound amplification options a family may have for their child
- ◆ Help with the selection, fitting, and service of hearing aids, as well as troubleshooting cochlear implants
- ◆ Help with the fitting of assistive listening devices in the form of personal FM devices and classroom FM devices
- ◆ Provide professional in-services for teachers and school staff on the signs/causes/treatments of hearing loss; how to troubleshoot hearing aids, cochlear implants, and or FM system issues a student may have in the classroom; and education on hearing conversation

### Students can be referred for a hearing evaluation by:

- ◇ Doctors
- ◇ Teachers
- ◇ Service Providers
- ◇ Parents

You may call their office directly at **269-471-8858** to discuss or schedule a hearing evaluation for a child you have concerns about. The evaluations and services are free of charge for families in Berrien County.



If there is a Watervliet family in need of these services, please contact Molly Van De Wege at **269-463-0754** or [mvandewege@watervlietps.org](mailto:mvandewege@watervlietps.org).

Due to the needs of our WPS students, we reached out to Dr. Kasewurm at Professional Hearing Services and her team donated clear masks for all of our school staff to use when working with students who rely on lip reading and while working on specific speech sounds during speech therapy. We are so thankful for their donation! Here is their contact number and address:

- 269-463-5501                      511 Renaissance Dr., Suite 100, St Joseph, MI 49085

## Plaudits

**\*\* THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU to Nicole Lanning & Garrison Seager for all their efforts to keep our athletes tested and ready to play each day!!! (Ken Dietz)**

**\*\* A BIG THANK YOU to Nancy Scowcroft for keeping our athletic schedules up-to-date on our website and in our office throughout this CRAZY school year!!! (Ken Dietz)**

**\*\*Shout out to all of our kids, parents, grand-parents, and Panthers for their resilience, tenacity, and grit over the past winter sport season. You are ALL AWESOME and APPRECIATED!! (Ken Dietz)**

**\*\* Thank you to Gabe Richards' grandfather for donating the wood and to Gabe for helping his grandfather build a robot and supplies storage cabinet for the Middle School Robotics Team. (Amy Oetjens)**

**\*\* Watervliet Middle School would like to thank Brandy Worley and The Willows Assisted Living for the large donation of masks. (Dave Armstrong)**

# Panther Athletics



As with most things this school year, the Covid-19 Pandemic has had huge impact on school athletics. From late season starts to interrupted or shortened seasons, spectator restrictions to new virtual ticketing requirements, mask and PPE requirements to Covid-19 testing mandates — we've seen it all and then some. Kudos to our athletes, coaches, parents, and community as they have patiently (and sometimes not so patiently) navigated the rough waters of 2020-2021 athletics.

Despite all of these challenges, Michigan athletes were able to complete both fall and winter seasons this year, and spring sports are now underway. For the fall and winter seasons, a number of Panther athletes were recognized by the SAC and the MHSAA for their contributions to the their programs and for individual performances . At this writing not all winter award winners have been selected and, of course, spring sports honorees are yet to be decided, but our congratulations to those so far selected for honors.

- ♦ **Volleyball:** SAC First Team—Samantha Dietz, Grace Chisek SAC Honorable Mention — Abbigayle Roberts  
All Region — Samantha Dietz, Grace Chisek All State Honorable Mention — Samantha Dietz  
Team Honor — Academic All State
- ♦ **Football:** SAC First Team — Don Smith, Isaiah Yazel SAC Honorable Mention — Evan Hutchins, Conner Underwood, Royce Daugherty All Region — Don Smith, Conner Underwood, Evan Hutchins  
Academic All State—Don Smith, Isaiah Yazel
- ♦ **Boys Soccer:** SAC First Team — Brady Bornas, Brennan Bornas, Nathan Isbrecht SAC Honorable Mention — Andrew Chisek, Erick Perez-Cruz  
All District — Nathan Isbrecht, Brady Bornas, Brennan Bornas, Andrew Chisek, Erick Perez-Cruz
- ♦ **Boys Cross Country:** SAC First Team — Ezra Troyer, German Casiano State Qualifier — Ezra Troyer
- ♦ **Girls Cross Country:** SAC Honorable Mention — Morgan Lowell
- ♦ **Girls Basketball:** SAC First Team — Grace Chisek, Samantha Dietz, Madison Flowers  
SAC Honorable Mention — Madison Saunders  
Team Honor — Academic All State  
Associated Press Second Team All-State — Samantha Dietz
- ♦ **Boys Basketball:** SAC First Team — Andrew Chisek, Brennan Bornas SAC Honorable Mention — Evan Hutchins, Tyson Williams
- ♦ **Wrestling:** SAC First Team — Riley Hess, Don Smith, Isaiah Regional Qualifiers: Eli Marshall, Dominick Morrison, Riley Hess State Qualifier: Eli Marshall



# Watervliet Panther Athletics Hall of Fame

The Watervliet Panther Athletics Hall of Fame Class of 2021 has been selected and includes one coach, four athletes and one team. Members to be inducted are:

**Coach William Forrester    Rebecca Hutchins Yazel (1993)    Lisa Ashton (1998)**  
**Jamie Hartman Quigno (2006)    Andrea Hiler Horton (2010)    1970-71 Girls Athletics**

An induction ceremony which had been planned for February was postponed due to covid-19 restrictions. The event will now take place at our first varsity football game of the season on Friday, August 27 vs. South Haven at Panther Stadium. We are proud to be able to recognize these deserving honorees.

Nominations are now being taken for the 2022 Hall of Fame. If you know of a deserving WHS athlete alumnus (must have been out of school a minimum of 10 years), coach, team, or community member please consider nominating them to the Hall of Fame. We are aware that there are a lot of potentially great candidates for the Hall who simply have not been nominated!

To make a nomination, log onto the district website at [www.watervlietps.org](http://www.watervlietps.org). Hover your cursor over "Athletics" and then click on "Watervliet Hall of Fame Nominations." Please supply as much information as you can about your nominee so that they may receive full consideration.

**TRUST THE**  
  
**PROCESS**  
**2020-2021**

## More Plaudits

\*\* Thank you to Rosemary Prillwitz and the kitchen staff for keeping the W-A-Y program stocked with food! And to Todd Bailey who always helps bring the food out to us and supplies us with maintenance supplies when needed. *(Heather Winter)*

\*\* Kudos to Olivia Mitchell (6th grade) who has gone above and beyond to show kindness to those around her in science class. She not only gets good grades, but she builds her friends up by encouraging and supporting them. For example, she partnered with one friend who had a fear of speaking in front of people to help give her the confidence to complete a lab and present it to the class in person. *(Maria Dahn, 6th grade science teacher)*

Athletes follow Covid-19 PPE protocol, wearing masks for most sports on the court or field as required.



\*\* Thank you to AEP for the Heart of Cook grant to help Watervliet Middle School purchase a social and emotional curriculum called **Second Step**. *(Angelene Conkin)*

\*\* Thank you to all the bus drivers and cooks for everything you have been going through since March of 2020, even putting yourselves at risk to feed our students. *(Wendy Stainbrook)*

\*\* The Special Education Department worked tirelessly to find ways to connect with their virtual students and allow them to keep up. Also, Amy Oetjens is doing a fantastic job in her new role as Technology Director. *(Kerry Wilson)*

\*\* Thank you to Mr. Seager, Mr. Tiefenbach, Mrs. Powers, and Mr. Armstrong for speaking to MS 8th graders about interview skills. *(Angelene Conkin)*



## *Meeting challenges with a little help*

So many educational challenges are being met this year by our talented staff that they make it look easy. It's not! It requires a lot of effort and hard work by an exceptional team. And we have also had some extra support staff come onboard this year to help make it all happen.

Hannah Armstrong, Emma Chester, Kristy Moxley, and Alyssa Konkel are serving as Elementary Virtual Specialists to assist our South and North School Option B learners. They work with teachers and students to make sure that virtual learners are working at the same pace as those students learning onsite.

These mentors have regular learning sessions with groups of virtual students. In these sessions, virtual students work on reading, language arts, math, science, fine motor skills - and have a little fun as well. A bond is developed, and students often show up to the virtual classes with jokes and stories to tell their mentors. Mentors also work one on one with kids who need extra support, or in small groups with families. Sometimes they work long hours in the evening planning for virtual learning. Hannah, Emma, Kristy and Alyssa all say they love working with the students despite the challenges that virtual learning brings for the learners, families, and educators.

WPS Option C students are those who have elected to take all online classes from an outside provider, allowing them to work at their own pace. Ben Loshbough is our North and South Elementary Schools Virtual/Option C Specialist. Kristopher Hickman fills this roll in the Middle and High Schools. They enroll students in their online courses and communicate daily with the virtual instruction provider to keep abreast of our students' online progress. While these students are not taught by WPS teachers, Ben and Kris serve as mentors, holding them accountable to their coursework and the use of technology, as well as advocating for students concerning their work. They also communicate with parents to discuss issues that arise.

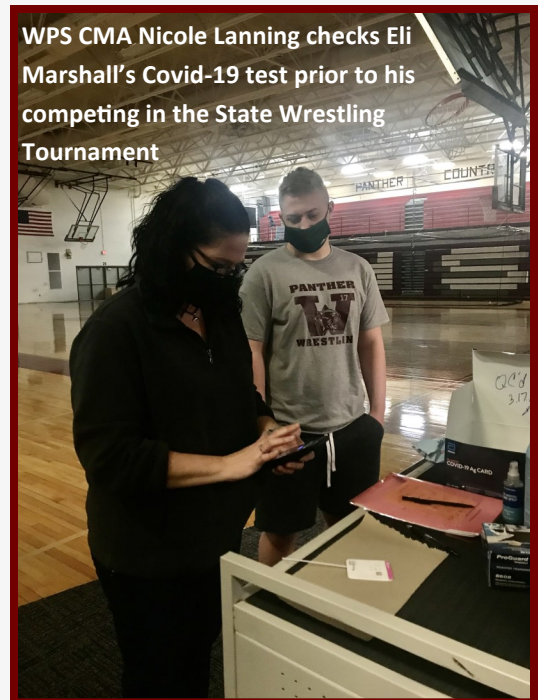
Additionally, Kris oversees six sections of high school online courses for students who are in the building during the day. These students may be pursuing credit recovery or taking electronic elective alternatives for classes not offered in our regular course selections.

We are also truly grateful to be able to have six Premier Substitute Teachers who are working throughout our district this year. Currently, Alec Green, Stephanie Hauch, Jesse Crosby, Nancy Smith, Ray Kimball, and Troy Turbertt are our Premier Substitutes. Earlier this school year, Leonard Meschino, Maria Dahn, and Kristy Moxley had worked in this role.

Each morning, these substitute teachers receive their job assignment for the day. They have been extremely flexible and willing to help wherever there is a need – even if, at times, it means working in Food Services or filling in for a building secretary for a day rather than teaching!

Lastly, but certainly not least, Nicole Lanning (CMA) and Garrison Seager (CNA) have come onboard to help assure that our student body and staff are healthy and remain so during this pandemic. They assist sick children and communicate with parents, take temperatures, have facilitated staff vaccinations, do the required Covid-19 testing for our athletes, work with the health department to facilitate contact tracing when necessary -- and much more.

Our thanks to the outstanding individuals filling these roles. Your efforts, along with those of our entire staff and the support of our WPS families, help to assure that WPS students continue to learn, grow, and excel, even as our district and our nation face the challenges of educating students during a pandemic.





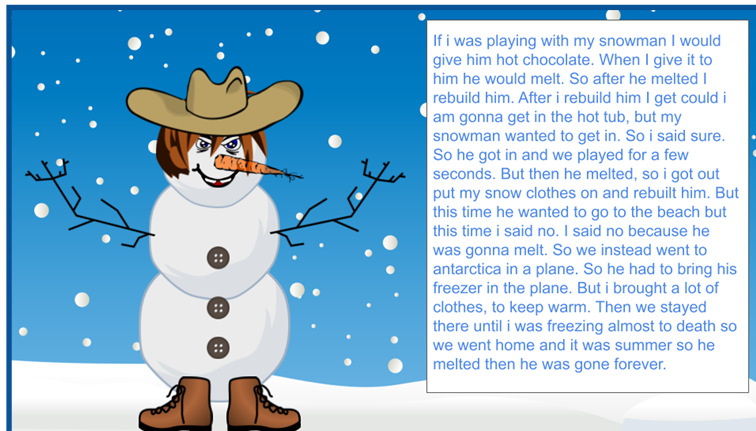
# Instructional Technology Talk

North School 5th Grade Classes Created Snowmen and wrote a paragraph telling about their snowman. The students were very willing to learn and loved the activity.

They came up with some really creative snowmen pictures and stories. The students learned how to copy and paste an image, resize images, search for images to insert, create a text box, and how to bring images forward or backward.

Other happenings in the district: I have created Google Classroom and Google Calendar Instructional presentations for the high school students.

So far it has been a very busy, but great start to my new position as Instructional Technology Coach. I look forward to exploring other project opportunities with the teachers and administrators in the district at all levels.



**Congratulations to Dave Armstrong** who will be retiring from his position as Middle School Principal at the end of this school year. After stints teaching in Indiana and in South Haven and serving as an assistant principal at Gull Lake, Dave joined the WPS staff in 1999 and has now led his team of WMS educators for almost 21 years!

Thank you for so generously sharing your talents (and your homemade soups) with us. You have made a huge impact, Dave, and you are admired, loved, and respected by staff, students, and our community. You will be sorely missed.

**Michigan Department of Education  
Summer Food Service Program**



**WATERVLIET PUBLIC SCHOOLS SUMMER FOOD SERVICE PROGRAM ANNOUNCEMENT**

**Free meals will be available to children 18 years of age and under or persons up to age 26 enrolled in an educational program for the mentally or physically disabled that is recognized by a State or local public educational agency.**

All meals will be served without regard to race, color, national origin, age, sex, or disability, and there will be no discrimination in the course of the meal service. Please see location site and times for meals.

Watervliet HS & MS	Watervliet North School	Watervliet South School
450 E Red Arrow Hwy	287 Baldwin Ave.	433 Lucinda Lane
Watervliet, MI 49098	Watervliet, MI 49098	Watervliet, MI 49098

Starting June 14<sup>th</sup> through August 20<sup>th</sup>  
Breakfast and Lunch served Monday – Thursday

**Thursday's meals will include additional meals for Friday, Saturday, and Sunday.**

Breakfast & Lunch will be available from 7:30 am until 12:30 pm Monday – Thursday.

**Please note:** Due to unforeseen circumstances, meal menus, times, and locations may change, we will do our best to communicate with folks in the event these circumstances occur.

Any questions or concerns please email Terry Adams at [tadams@watervlietps.org](mailto:tadams@watervlietps.org)

\*\*\*\*\*

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If you wish to file a Civil Rights program complaint of discrimination, complete the [USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html), found online at [http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint\\_filing\\_cust.html](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html), or at any USDA office, or call (866) 632-9992 to request the form. You may also write a letter containing all of the information requested in the form. Send your completed complaint form or letter to us by mail at U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, by fax (202) 690-7442 or email at [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).

Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339 or (800) 845-6136 (Spanish). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.



# Make Time For Breakfast At School!



Breakfast really IS the most important meal of the day!

Studies show that children who eat a nutritious breakfast behave better, pay attention, and retain what they learn so they perform better on standardized tests. Children who eat a healthy breakfast also tend to eat healthier throughout the day.

Most households morning are in a rush to get everyone to school and work on time and children are not always hungry first thing in the morning.

We are here to help. SCHOOL BREAKFAST is served every day at all of Watervliet Schools!

Just like our school lunch: breakfasts meet new USDA strict guidelines for calories, saturated fat, and sodium.

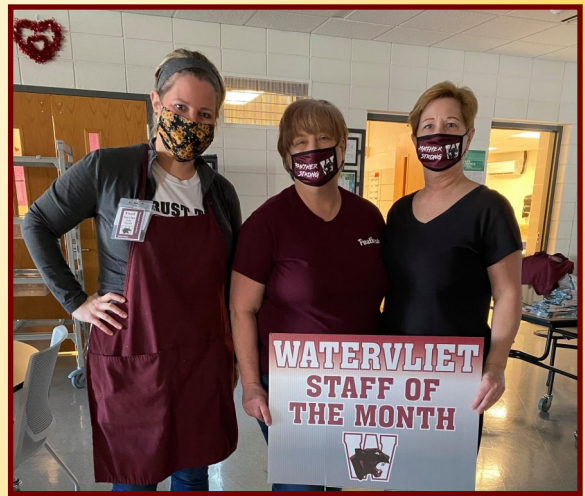
We offer complete meals that include fat free or low fat milk, whole grains, protein and 100% fruit juice or fresh fruits — and ZERO grams of Trans Fat per serving! Our Breakfast Cereals, Biscuits, Pastries, Muffins, Bagels, Pancakes and French Toast are whole grain and reduced sugar.

If you are like so many other families who don't seem to have enough time for a nutritious and delicious breakfast at home - please have your children join us for a free school breakfast. That's right, breakfast is free to all our students.

Breakfast may be available for pick-up starting at 7:30 am. Questions or you would like more information about our breakfast program, please email Terry Adams Director of Food and Nutrition Services at [tadams@watervlietps.org](mailto:tadams@watervlietps.org)



"Nurturing Children from the inside out"



Congratulations to High School Nutrition Services Staff Wonder Women **Julie Martin, Rosemary Prillwitz, and Cathy Culver** who were voted by the entire HS student body and staff as the January Resiliency Staff Member(s) of the Month! Through a pandemic, multiple shut downs, bus food delivery and more, these dedicated ladies have worked to ensure that kids meal needs are being met.

Thank you for all you do — and thank you to the Nutrition Services staff in every building. We know you are all rock stars!

COMIDA Y AMIGOS.  
¡QUÉ **DIVERTIDO!**



ENVIE EL TEXTO 'COMIDA' AL 877-877

PARA ENCONTRAR COMIDAS DE VERANO GRATIS EN SU COMUNIDAD





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## **WATERVLIET ALL-CLASS REUNION TO RESUME IN AUGUST 2021 FOLLOWING 2020 COVID-19 BREAK**

*Reunion now into its second century*



The Watervliet All Class Reunion (formerly known as the Watervliet 40 Year Club), will be held Saturday, August 21, 2021 in the Watervliet Middle School gymnasium. Social hour begins at 11:00 a.m., with lunch beginning at noon.

Anyone that graduated from or attended the Watervliet Public School System is invited to attend. Founded in 1920, the requirement then and for decades was that a person must be out of the Watervliet Schools for 40 years before they were eligible to attend, but this was changed a few years ago.

In recent years, the range of attendees graduation years has been from the late 1930s through the 2010s. Former "Maroons" and "Panthers" share time together reminiscing about their time spent in the Watervliet Schools. Tours of the middle and high school, along with the grounds will be given, showing off the many changes which have taken place with the construction project of 2016- 2017.

The cost to attend is \$15 per person, payable in advance. The deadline for paying and securing a reservation for this year's All Class Reunion is Friday, August 6, 2021.

Additional details and access to the registration form may be found on Facebook, on the "Watervliet All Class Reunion" page. Questions or comments may be directed to Marsha Stennecke Cole at 269-463-3712 or Donna Gillard Curtis at 269-463-6680.

*- Information submitted Greg Krell - Reunion Committee Member and 1977 WHS graduate*