



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



### Greetings and Happy Spring!

Welcome to April! As we see the first signs of spring beginning to bloom, I am filled with an overwhelming sense of gratitude for our incredible community.

First and foremost, I want to extend my deepest appreciation for your understanding, support, and patience as we navigated the challenges brought on by the recent storm damage. Transitions and unexpected disruptions are never easy, but your flexibility allowed us to prioritize safety while maintaining our commitment to our students' education.

I am very happy to report that Walsh Academy is fully back in session. Our hallways are once again filled with energy, and it is a joy to see our students so actively engaged in their daily routines. Whether they are participating in the vibrant creativity of school clubs or looking forward to the warmer weather, our students are demonstrating remarkable resilience.

#### Focusing on Academic Success

As we move deeper into the spring semester, our primary focus is on finishing the year strong. This is a critical time for academic achievement:

- **ACT Testing:** We are currently in the midst of required ACT testing. Being prepared and focused is essential for our students to perform their best. Please ensure your student is resting well and arriving ready to tackle these important assessments.
- **Attendance Matters:** A friendly reminder that consistent attendance is vital to keeping students on track for earning credit. Every day in the classroom counts toward their progress and graduation requirements.
- **Progress Reports:** 4th Quarter Progress Reports were mailed out earlier this month. This is an excellent opportunity to review your student's growth and address any goals for the remainder of the year.

Thank you for being such vital partners in our mission. The strength of Walsh Academy lies in our collective ability to weather any storm and emerge stronger on the other side. Let's make this April a month of continued growth and success!

Thank you & be safe,

Dr. Ann M. Craig, Ed.D.  
Principal / Director of Educational Services



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### Issue Date

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### Upcoming Events

5/4 - Q4 ends

5/5-6/4 - May Term

5/25 - Memorial Day / No School

# Health Beat

## Allergy Alert!

Spring is a beautiful time of year, but for many students it also brings seasonal allergies. Pollen from trees, grasses, and flowers can trigger symptoms that may affect your child's comfort and ability to focus on school.

Common allergy symptoms include:

- Sneezing and runny or stuffy nose
- Itchy or watery eyes
- Coughing or throat irritation
- Fatigue or trouble concentrating

Helpful tips for managing allergies:

- Check daily pollen counts and limit outdoor time when levels are high
- Have your child shower or wash hands/face after being outside
- Change clothes after outdoor activities
- Give allergy medications as directed by your healthcare provider (NOTE: If any medication needs to be given at school, proper documentation must be completed by parent and prescribing physician and must be on file in the nurse's office. It is best to take medications at home whenever possible.)

Managing allergies early can help students feel better, stay focused, and enjoy the spring season.

Your School Nurse,  
Tracy Mullen, RN

## Stress Awareness Month

By: Kristina Nickels – Social Worker

April has been recognized as stress awareness month since 1992. Being aware of the impact of stress on your well-being and learning to cope with stress can go a long way in living a healthy and positive life. Stress is defined as a physical and emotional response to new or challenging situations, such as those related to work, school, health, and relationships. Feeling stress is a normal, healthy response to these challenging situations and leads to the development of problem-solving skills or feelings of accomplishment.

Negative effects of stress can cause feelings of fear or anxiety, changes in appetite or energy levels, trouble concentrating or making decisions, nightmares or sleep disruptions, somatic issues such as headaches or stomach aches, and an increased use of alcohol or other substances. Stress can become more detrimental to your health when a person experiences feelings of stress over a prolonged period of time, known as chronic stress. Chronic stress not only affects a person's mental health but has been linked to physical health conditions such as headaches, stomach disorders, ongoing anxiety or depression, higher risk of strokes, and heart disease.

Experts believe that taking small steps in your daily life can have a big impact in helping a person manage stress. Some ways to manage stress in healthy ways include:

**Taking care of your mind**—take breaks from news and social media, make time to unwind by using breathing techniques or meditation, keep a journal, spend time outdoors, practice gratitude, and connect with others

**Taking care of your body**—get enough sleep, engage in regular physical activity, eat a healthy diet, and limit/discontinue use of alcohol or other substances.

Additionally, it is important to recognize when you need more help and seek the therapeutic support of a social worker or counselor if the symptoms of stress worsen or remain chronic.



# Getting to Know Us!

By: Joel Gonzalez – Administrative Assistant

For the month of April, we are highlighting both a familiar face and a new one. From a student who has grown alongside our school for more than four years to a newly hired social worker already making a positive difference.

Jacob, a student in our transition program, has been with us for more than four years and is always eager to help others and show his support. He has a great sense of humor and brings positivity to those around him. Jacob also works hard and takes pride in his responsibilities at his job site at Niles Family Services.



Mr. Robbie joined our team last month and has quickly become a wonderful addition to our school. He has been a huge help and brings positivity and support to all of our students. Mr. Robbie will be working alongside Mr. Joe and Ms. Irene in our new Transition Classroom.

## CTE Update!

### New Paths to Success

By: Heather Lischett – Assistant Principal for Student Services

Walsh Academy is proud to announce the addition of a new CTE (Career Technical Education) Teacher who will be able to offer courses in two new pathways for our students! Mr. Andriy McFarlin joined the Walsh Team this month and will be teaching courses in **Silk Screening**, assisting Mr. Stavros in the tech department, as well as **Barbering**. These two pathways will open new job opportunities for Walsh Academy students and create new learning experiences for students who are trying to figure out what is next for them.

#### Hands-On Learning with Modern Tools

The introduction of silk screening offers a unique blend of graphic design and manual production. Students will have the chance to see their digital designs come to life on apparel and posters, learning the ins and outs of a thriving industry. Meanwhile, the Barbering pathway provides a foundation in a high-demand trade, focusing on both the technical precision of the craft and the entrepreneurial spirit needed to succeed in a professional shop setting.

#### Building a Bridge to the Future

These additions are part of Walsh Academy's ongoing commitment to "learning by doing." By expanding our CTE department, we are ensuring that every student has access to a diverse set of tools to build their future. Whether a student is interested in the artistic side of production or the client-focused world of personal care, these courses provide the credentials and confidence to hit the ground running after graduation.

Please join us in giving a warm Walsh welcome to Mr. Andriy! We can't wait to see the incredible work our students produce in these new programs.

<b>What is your favorite color?</b>	
<b>J – Black and White</b>	<b>R – Black, because it is the most versatile. Also, if you mix all the colors together, they will make black (eventually).</b>
<b>What is/was your favorite subject in school?</b>	
<b>J – Math and P.E.</b>	<b>R – My favorite subjects were always History, English, and of course, PE.</b>
<b>Have you ever had a nickname?</b>	
<b>J – MJ</b>	<b>R – My friends call me RD.</b>
<b>What is your favorite holiday?</b>	
<b>J – Christmas and Thanksgiving</b>	<b>R – My favorite holiday is Thanksgiving.</b>
<b>What is something you've done that you are proud of?</b>	
<b>J – Graduating from Walsh Academy</b>	<b>R – I was the first male in my family to finish college and went on to get a master's degree.</b>
<b>What is your favorite movie, show, and/or book?</b>	
<b>J – My favorite movies are anything with Jean-Claude Van Damme and my favorite TV shows are Full House and the George Lopez Show. My favorite book is <i>Twilight</i>.</b>	<b>R – Movies: The Rush Hour series / Show: The Fresh Prince of Bel Air / No book, but Author: Walter Dean Myers</b>
<b>If you were a superhero, what powers would you have?</b>	
<b>J – To be able to fly and be the fastest man in the world.</b>	<b>R – Whatever ability Mystique has, from X-Men.</b>
<b>If you could travel anywhere in the world, where would you go and why?</b>	
<b>J – I would travel to Dubai because I want to see the Burj Khalifa tower.</b>	<b>R – Puerto Rico. I'd like to experience the culture and of course, the food.</b>
<b>What's your go-to comfort food?</b>	
<b>J – Middle Eastern and Mexican food</b>	<b>R – Hot Cheetos</b>
<b>Tell us something interesting about you.</b>	
<b>J – I am the best at playing video games. I enjoy playing COD and Madden.</b>	<b>R – I'm just a chill guy. I love making memories with my baby girl, and I do so through photography/videography. I also enjoy creating art in various forms (drawing, painting, etc.).</b>
<b>What is the best part about being a student/staff at Walsh Academy?</b>	
<b>J – The best part of Walsh is the faculty especially Mr. George and Mr. T.</b>	<b>R – Getting to work with so many creative students.</b>

# Classroom Corner

By: Natalie Greenfield - Teacher

Welcome to April! Students have been switching between t-shirts and jackets early this month with the rapid change in weather. Did you know “No News Day” was April 18, 1930? The BBC announced that there was “no news” and just played music all day! Well, Walsh Academy HAS news, so let’s spring ahead to look at what teachers are doing in their classrooms this month.

- Ms. L’s class is reading “The Martian” in English. Throughout the book they are doing a survival activity where students look up different terrains and how they would survive in them.
- Ms. Natalie’s class is focusing on weight and density in physical science. The students enjoy the hands-on activities they complete.
- World Cultures is being taught in Mr. Steve H’s class. Students are exploring different cultures by planning a vacation to a location of their choice.
- Mr. Justin’s class is reading “Absolutely True Diary of a Part Time Indian” in English. They are talking about Indian Reservations and the lives of those who live on them.
- Daily journaling is done in Mr. Todd’s class. They focus on different topics each day that engage the students’ interests.
- Mr. Trerotola’s class is learning about natural resources and different cycles in nature.
- In Ms. Karlesky’s class, Mr. Kaleem is coming in to teach math to the students. It’s great to have different staff jumping into classrooms.
- Mr. Steven A’s class is talking about the skeletal system in anatomy. They talk about how important different bones are and how they are connected!

Students prepare every day for life through these amazing teachers and lessons. Let us hope that April Showers bring May Flowers in new garden boxes for students to learn in this May Term and Summer!

[Pictured Right: Old Jen School Greenhouse that we hope to replicate on the Walsh Academy Niles campus.]



## What’s New at Walsh? ACT Testing

By: Mark Trerotola – Teacher

For many Illinois high school juniors, state-mandated ACT testing is occurring during the **April 7–10 and April 13–17** test windows. Several schools are administering the ACT to juniors on **Wednesday, April 8, 2026**, along with Pre-ACT exams for sophomores and freshmen that week. Walsh Academy is aligned with the Illinois testing dates and is an approved testing facility.

The ACT is a comprehensive, multiple-choice standardized test assessing college readiness, consisting of four main sections—English, Mathematics, Reading, and Science—plus an optional Writing test. Our testing students are excused from academic classes for the day in hopes that they can show their best achievements made from their academic experiences.

