



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



Happy Holidays!

As the chill of December settles in and the festive lights begin to twinkle, my heart always turns to the beautiful, simple melodies of the season. Of all the carols, one resonates with me most deeply and offers a profound connection to the heart of Walsh Academy: "The Little Drummer Boy."

The story of the little drummer boy is not about grand gestures or expensive gifts. It's about a child, humble and poor, who had nothing to offer the newborn king but his talent, his passion, and his very best effort. He played the only gift he possessed—a simple, rhythmic offering on his drum—and in doing so, offered something truly unique and meaningful.

This simple tale, I believe, captures the essence of our students and the spirit that drives Walsh Academy.

Our students, like the little drummer boy, are our greatest and most treasured gift. Each student who walks through our doors arrives with their own unique rhythm, their own inherent talent, and their own individual voice. They may not always have the grandest or loudest offering, but when they bring their authentic selves and their personal best to their studies, their vocation, and their community, the result is truly magnificent.

The little drummer boy's gift was accepted because it was offered with pure, heartfelt intent. This brings me to all of you, our dedicated parents, incredible staff, and generous supporters who believe in the vision of Walsh Academy.

You are the audience, the enablers, and the continuous source of encouragement. You understand that the true gift is not the drum itself, but the passionate act of playing it. You invest your time, your trust, and your resources into our vision: to cultivate an environment where every student feels empowered to give their *best* gift to the world, just as they are.

This December, as we reflect on the joy of giving, let us recommit to nurturing the "little drummer boy" spirit in every Walsh Academy student. Let us encourage them to play their rhythm loudly, confidently, and with great heart.

Wishing you all a safe holiday season filled with peace, joy, and the beautiful music of life's simplest gifts.

Be safe and well,

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



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Issue Date

December, 2025

Upcoming Events

12/17 – Q2 Grades Due
12/19 – No CTE Extension;
all students dismiss at 2:15
12/22-1/2 – Winter Break
1/5 – Classes Resume

Health Beat

Healthy Holidays to You and Yours

Hi families,

As we head into the break, I just want to wish you warmth, rest, and a little extra peace this season. I know the holidays can be busy and sometimes stressful, so here are a few simple reminders:

- Encourage handwashing and rest if your child isn't feeling well.
- Encourage your child to bundle up when going outside.
- Try to keep a little routine with sleep and meals; small things make a big difference.

Most of all, I hope you get moments of comfort and joy with your kids.

Happy Holidays!

Your School Nurse,

Tracy Mullen, RN



Coping with the Winter Holidays

By: Kristina Nickels – Social Worker

The winter months and holiday season can be a stressful time of year for many people and for a variety of reasons. Some common stressors are coping with seasonal depression, shopping/planning for holiday celebrations, family tensions, or the loss of a loved one, all while still managing one's regular day-to-day responsibilities.

Experts offer some tips for coping with the stressors that come up over the winter holiday season. The first being to manage your physical wellness and prioritize self-care. One should try to maintain regular routines such as a sleep schedule, proper nutrition, exercise, and relaxation activities. Additionally, it is beneficial to spend some time outdoors, eat more plant-based foods, or consult with your doctor about taking a vitamin D supplement. A vitamin D deficiency has been linked to depression symptoms, particularly during the winter months with shortened daylight hours.

Another strategy offered is to set realistic expectations and boundaries. Setting boundaries by saying “no” to some invitations and setting financial budgets for gifts can prevent stretching yourself too-thin emotionally and financially. Also, when gathering with friends and family, it can be important to respect differences and acknowledge that not every moment can be joyful in order to help manage potential tensions and keep realistic expectations.

Many people may have mixed feelings about the holidays, ranging from joy and excitement to experiencing more intense emotions such as grief when being reminded by the loss or separation from a loved one. It is important to keep in mind that everyone grieves differently or on their own timetable and whatever feelings being experienced are valid. The anticipation of sadness around the holidays can be anxiety provoking but experts indicate that it can be beneficial to try and reframe the holidays as an opportunity for healing. The holidays can be looked at as a time to honor traditions in order to preserve memories or a time to find new ways to celebrate and adjust your holiday traditions. When dealing with the multiple layers of stressors over the winter months, it is important to remember to prioritize connections with supportive people in your life and ask for help when needed.



Getting to Know Us!

By: Joel Gonzalez – Administrative Assistant

For December's Spotlight, we're shining a light on two amazing members of our school community: Cristian, a determined senior, and Ms. Arlet, one of our newest social workers.



Cristian is on a mission to make his senior year count. Passionate about geography and known for his quiet humor, he's come a long way and is making every moment matter.

Arlet, our newest social worker, has already made a big impact. Her positive energy and dedication has helped her connect with students and they've loved getting to know her.



CTE Update!

By: Barbara Samaniego – Paraprofessional/Job Coach

As we come to the end of 2025, CTE students are getting into the holiday spirit! In Cooking Class, they made Oreo Cookie Turkeys using chocolate covered malted milk balls, candy corn, and cinnamon candy. [photo above] They also created Thanksgiving cards for St. Benedict's. The residents were happy and grateful to receive them.

In Podcasting/Student News, we say goodbye to Carter and hello to Alanna. Carter was featured, for the last time, with the following quote for the week, "Your life is a story of transition. You are always leaving a chapter behind while moving on to the next." Carter is leaving CTE for an after-school job at Sweetgreens. Congratulations on your next chapter Carter! We know you will do great and we'll miss you!

This was also Alanna's first podcast, and she presented the Sports segment. She said, "It was a good experience to get my confidence up speaking in front of an audience." Alanna enjoyed her involvement from choosing the background to editing the final video. She found editing challenging at first but then she enjoyed watching everything come together in final production.

To finish the newscast, Brandon introduced a special segment recognizing our Walsh Academy partners. He thanked Minelli's Meat and Deli, Niles Family Center, and Niles Recreation Center for providing our students with valuable job experience. Brandon is a dedicated, hardworking employee at Minelli's during his pre-vocational class. Before signing off, he gave them an excellent review and encouraged people to try their food.

Happy Holidays everyone! Have a wonderful winter break and stay safe! See you in 2026!

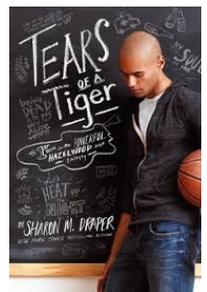
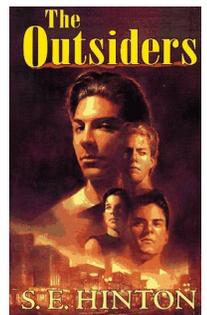
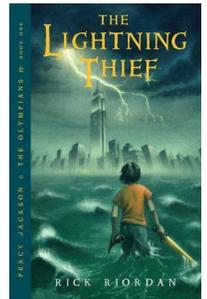
What is your favorite color?	
C - Blue	A - Green
What is/was your favorite subject in school?	
C - Science	A - Art and Science class
Have you ever had a nickname?	
C - CC	A - Babygirl
What is your favorite holiday?	
C - Christmas	A - Thanksgiving
What is something you've done that you are proud of?	
C - Having a girlfriend and receiving B honor roll	A - Being the first in my family to obtain a master's degree
What is your favorite movie, show, and/or book?	
C - Vampire Diaries	A - UP, Grey's Anatomy, and Number the Stars
If you were a superhero, what powers would you have?	
C - I would be like FROZONE and be able to freeze things	A - Teleportation, I want to get to places faster!
If you could travel anywhere in the world, where would you go and why?	
C - Rome, Italy to see the Vatican	A - Tenerife, Island in Spain. I want to see the volcano there.
What's your go-to comfort food?	
C - Tacos de Asada and Horchata	A - Buffalo Wings
Tell us something interesting about you.	
C - I like to practice Taekwondo - currently a red belt	A - My name is both my parents' names put together.
What is the best part about being a student/staff at Walsh Academy?	
C - Lunch time!	A - The best part about working at Walsh Academy has been being part of a great team where we all bring different strengths, a real-life crew working together for our students!

Classroom Corner

By: Natalie Greenfield - Teacher

We are nearing the new year, along with the end of quarter two at Walsh Academy. Students are bundled up for the winter weather and working hard to finish the quarter better than they started! Let's look at what teachers are doing to close out this quarter and prepare for the new year!

- Ms. L's class is playing host to one of our sophomore/junior classes for mythology. They are reading *Percy Jackson: The Lightning Thief* and watching the show to compare the two.
- Pre-vocational is being taught in Ms. Natalie's class. She has multiple students who leave campus to go to job sites. Other students are working towards creating resumes and cover letters for future jobs.
- Ms. Karlesky's class has finished up their Constitution unit! Students did a great job and are prepared for the Constitution test, which is a graduation requirement.
- Mr. Trerotola's class is working on converting fractions into decimals, and the other way around.
- *The Outsiders* is being read in Mr. Justin's class. This is a story that discusses loss, anger, and triumph above all. Students are expressing their interest as the story goes on.
- Mr. Steven's class is reading *The Tears of the Tiger*. They are focusing on a lot of social emotional learning (SEL) throughout this book.
- Mr. Steve's class is focusing on congruent triangles in geometry. Students understand what they mean and how they are identical.



This calendar year and school year have been great, and we are excited to join our students as we enter into the new year. Come back next month to see what great things our teachers have planned for quarter 3!

What's New at Walsh?

'Twas the Week Before Break...

By: Mark Trerotola - Teacher

'Twas the week before break, and
all through the halls,
Staff and students were hustling,
giving their all.

The semester was ending, the
grades nearly done,
With hopes of two weeks filled
with laughter and fun.

Some students were switching,
their schedules anew,
While graduates dreamed of the
caps they'd soon do.
Classrooms were sparkling with
holiday cheer,
Doors decked with garlands as
snowflakes drew near.

Some donned bright colors, so
festive and bold,
While others wore layers to battle
the cold.

But all shared the spirit, in
sweaters so bright,
For Ugly Sweater Day—what a
glorious sight!

On December the nineteenth, the
halls will parade,
With glamour and glitter in the
choices displayed.
So let's toast to the season, to joy
and delight,
Happy holidays to all, and to all a
good night!



Join the Chicago Wolves in supporting Walsh Academy
Skate for a bright future!



CHICAGO WOLVES VS. COLORADO EAGLES



FEB 14, 2026 | 7 P.M.

ALLSTATE ARENA

6920 MANNHEIM RD, ROSEMONT, IL 60018



**TICKETS:
\$30.27 - \$55.63**



[HTTPS://WWW.GOFEVO.COM/EVENT/MARYVILLEWALSHACAD](https://www.gofevo.com/event/maryvillewalshacad)

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