



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

Greetings and Happy Holidays!

The halls are decked, the air is crisp, and the holiday spirit is alive at Walsh Academy! As we approach the end of the year, I am filled with gratitude as I reflect on all the wonderful things that have happened at our school.

Academic Achievements:

This year has seen our students shine in various academic areas. We had the honor of seeing students participate in the CAAEL Academic Bowl, showcasing their knowledge and dedication to learning. We are also incredibly proud to announce a record number of students earning honor roll status, demonstrating their commitment to academic excellence. Additionally, we have a group of dedicated students diligently working to reintegrate into their home schools taking courses both at Walsh Academy and their respective schools.



Community Service:

The spirit of service and community engagement continues to flourish at Walsh Academy. This past year, we witnessed a remarkable display of teamwork and compassion as students and staff joined forces to build and install wheelchair ramps for disabled members of the Des Plaines community. Their unwavering dedication and perseverance, despite challenging weather conditions, resulted in the successful installation of numerous ramps, making a tangible difference in the lives of others.

Additionally, our students enrolled in Career & Technical Education (CTE) Extension Program once again participated in the annual "Toys for Tots" toy drive. They joined our dedicated staff in shopping for gifts and proudly donated them to the Niles Police Station, ensuring a brighter holiday for needy children.

These acts of kindness and service exemplify the core values and the founding principle of "Jen," which Walsh Academy is grounded in. They demonstrate our commitment to fostering compassion, responsibility, and a deep sense of community in our students. We are incredibly proud of their dedication and the positive impact they have made on the lives of others.

Walsh Academy – A vision realized!

It's with immense pride and gratitude that I announce the completion of our biggest accomplishment this year – the completed renovation and relocation to our new school! It's been a long journey; after years of planning, countless revisions, and overcoming numerous challenges, we finally have a space reflecting our educational vision.

Our new facility opens a door to a world of possibilities previously unimaginable. Cutting-edge technology and classrooms equipped with the latest advancements provide the foundation for a dynamic learning experience. Dedicated vocational spaces offer hands-on opportunities, while spacious rooms accommodate diverse learning styles. This vibrant environment fosters creativity, collaboration, and individual growth, empowering students to thrive and achieve their full potential.

More importantly, this new space provides a safe and nurturing haven where students can be themselves, explore their passions, and discover their true potential. We believe every student deserves a chance to shine, and our new campus embodies this belief in every aspect of its design and functionality.

As the year draws to a close, I want to express my sincere gratitude for your unwavering support and dedication to our school community. Together, we have navigated challenges, celebrated successes, and fostered a vibrant learning environment. The holiday season is a time for reflection and appreciation, and I am deeply grateful for each and every one of you who contributes to making our school a place where students can thrive. Wishing you and your loved ones a joyful holiday season filled with peace, happiness, and cherished memories. May the New Year bring renewed energy, exciting opportunities, and continued success in all that we do.

From all of us to all of you, we wish you the happiest of the holiday seasons filled with much love and laughter.

Be safe,

Ann M. Craig
Principal / Director of Educational Services



Walsh Academy

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Upcoming Events

12/5 Welcome to Walsh
Assembly

12/15 Last Day of Q2

12/18 Ribbon Cutting
Ceremony / Q3 Starts

12/21 All students dismiss
at 2:15 – WINTER BREAK
BEGINS (students return 1/8)

Health Beat:

Seasonal Affect Disorder (SAD)

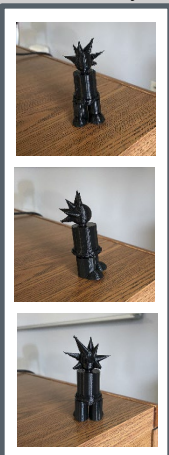
By: Kristina Seidelman Nickels – Social Worker

Self-care during the winter months can be difficult because of cooler temperatures and the decrease in daylight hours. When individuals are not exposed to sunlight their levels of vitamin D are decreased, affecting their overall mental well-being. It is recommended by mental health professionals to manage energy on three levels: physical, mental, and social. Some common tips include establishing and maintaining routines, making a point to get out of the house to get exposure to sunlight and fresh air, sticking to healthy eating patterns including omega-3s and vitamins, getting enough sleep, and reaching out to your social support networks regularly. Some changes in your mood are to be expected with the extreme cold and snow but some individuals may experience more significant symptoms that could be Seasonal Affect Disorder (SAD). SAD is a type of depression that often occurs during the fall and winter. Some symptoms of SAD include feeling a lack of energy or motivation daily, losing interest in previously enjoyed activities, excessive sleeping, and difficulty concentrating. It is important to be aware of any of these changes that become more severe and seek out additional support as needed.

Talking Tech

By: Stavros Kouriabalos – CTE Teacher

Hello everyone, hope you are having a wonderful start to your month of December. As I'm sure you have heard by now, we are FINALLY in our new building in Niles. And while we are finetuning all of the tech issues that come with moving and a larger building, the students and staff have all adjusted to the new technology that the new building has brought. The interactive ViewSonic TVs that were featured in an earlier issue are one thing that everyone has loved. These make class a lot more fun and engaging. The 3D printers and Vinyl cutters are familiar to the students and are being utilized to create new, cool designs [see right photos from Computer Literacy CTE class]. The podcast studio is almost ready for recording and the silk screen equipment will be delivered before we go on winter break. All this tech in this new building will bring staff and students together as they teach each other new things. We are thankful for all the support everyone has given us; until next time.



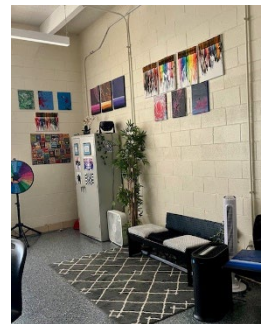
Quick Tips to Combat SAD



Classroom Corner

By: Mark Trerotola - Teacher

We are now settled into our new digs on Touhy Ave in Niles. Students and staff alike have figured out their classroom and office locations in relationship to other departments in the building. It has definitely been a learning curve, but we all managed; we are experts in adapting. That being said, each classroom has designed their environments to reflect their own personal styles. Some have included tables with wheeled chairs to accommodate certain needs, while others have a combination of desks and tables. Some classrooms didn't hesitate to put up holiday decorations to create a homey feeling



for the students when they arrived. Our newest technology in the classroom, ViewSonic touch-screen TV, has been an amazing addition to each classroom. Many of the teachers have already incorporated them into a lot of their lessons utilizing the numerous features that it has to offer. With our final weeks upon us to end the first semester before our winter break, we are excited to share our space with the public and boast about our new home.

Getting to Know Us!

This month we are featuring Walsh Academy freshman, Maxen, and Assistant Principal, Ms. Heather. Max has been with us since spring of 2023 and is in Mr. Justin's class for 9th/10th graders. Max has earned nothing but A's since he started with us at Walsh Academy. And Ms. Heather has been at Jen School/Walsh Academy since 2013 and she is the Assistant Principal for Vocational Educational Services. She has been in education for 15 years.



CAAEL

By: Dan Baffin – PE Teacher/Coach

As we are winding down to the end of 2023, we are also closing out our volleyball and fall bowling seasons. Our volleyball team was very talented this year but struggled with consistency when it came to eligibility. We finished the year 2-3 and wish all the schools that made the playoffs the best of luck! We will also be going on our final bowling league trip the week of 12/4 and currently stand with an average of 73.5.



When we return from winter break most of our students are eagerly awaiting the start of the CAAEL basketball season at the end of January. In the meantime, students are honing their Badminton skills in PE class in singles and doubles gameplay.

What is your favorite color?	
MW- Green	HL- Pumpkin Orange
What is/was your favorite subject in school?	
MW- Math	HL- As a student I really enjoyed math; as a teacher I enjoyed teaching English
Have you ever had a nickname?	
MW- Max (instead of Maxen)	HL- H-Bomb was a soccer nickname and H-Squared because my initials used to be HH
What is your favorite holiday?	
MW- Christmas!	HL- Halloween
What is something you've done that you are proud of?	
MW- Earning A Honor Roll last semester	HL- Helping Ms. Craig get this new school built so we could expand the vocational program
What is your favorite movie, show, and/or book?	
MW- Harry Potter, mainly the books	HL- I'm with Max on this one, Harry Potter, all the way!
If you were a superhero, what powers would you have?	
MW- Invisibility	HL- Teleportation! I love to travel and teleportation would make it so much easier (and less expensive!)
What is the best part about being a student/staff at Walsh Academy?	
MW- CTE (after school work program)	HL- Working with our amazing students and staff. There is a reason I've been here over 10 years!

We're in Niles!

By: Donna Hoffman – School Psychologist

We officially moved from the Des Plaines Maryville campus to our renovated school in Niles on November 20th. Staff worked on the 20th and 21st to unpack and decorate the classrooms/ common spaces to welcome students back on November 27th. The students and staff were each welcomed with a new Walsh rugby shirt [pictured right; modeled by both staff and students] generously gifted by Mrs. Janie Walsh. The shirts are a big hit; every day you can find someone sporting one. The first week back we were treated to special lunches including pizza, subs, and burgers from local establishments while our own kitchen and cafeteria got set up.



We held our first Walsh school assembly this week and unveiled the new school mascot voted on by both students and staff. The *Walsh Wizard* even made a personal appearance! Ms. Craig spoke to the students about finding their inner wisdom and unlocking their powers. This mirrors our previous school philosophy; the Confucian philosophy of Jen is translated as benevolence and represents the importance of genuine care and concern for others just as the wizard uses knowledge for the benefit of others. In choosing the wizard, we are committing to fostering both academic excellence and moral development. "The wizard, as a symbol of wisdom and knowledge, can be seen as embodying the values of Jen in the context of a school mascot." We hope students create magical moments as they discover and use their many talents to grow personally and to reach out beyond themselves in offering service to others.



The mayor of Niles, Mr. George Alpogianis [pictured above], attended and spoke at the assembly to welcome us to the village and encourage us to make this new house a home. He spoke to the students about new beginnings and the importance of thinking before acting in order to make healthy, safe decisions. Mayor George also stressed that success is measured by how you help others. Principal Ann Craig and one of our dedicated board members Mike Munro, shared how the vision of the new school (first discussed over 4 years ago) came to fruition. Both highlighted that the motivation of all adults involved was to provide new opportunities for our students. Mr. Munro emphasized that the students are at the forefront of all decisions and the most important piece of this new building. We are lucky to have the support of our board and the village as well as Maryville staff as we start this next chapter of our school.

The assembly ended with the administration team acknowledging some students in our CTE program who went above and beyond assisting during the move to Niles. The student of the month from October, Tony, will be celebrating his special, off-campus lunch this week. The student of the month award for November went to Evan; he received a new fleece jacket and earned a lunch out with staff. Evan is pictured right with [from left to right] Assistant Principal, Heather Lischett; Principal, Ann Craig; Board Member, Mike Munro; Walsh Wizard; and Student of the Month, Evan. Congrats Evan!



And to all our students: Go Wizards; make magic!

CTE Update

By: Maysaloon Alkhafaji –
Paraprofessional/Job Coach

During the month of November our students in the CTE Extension Program have worked diligently under the supervision of job coaches to move all materials to Niles as well as cleaning the Des Plaines Jen School building for its new tenants. The move was exciting for the students, as they raced to carry the belongings to load them into the school's van, getting ready to transport from Des Plaines to Niles. They had pride in knowing the building before everyone else moved in.



As we said goodbye to the job sites in Des Plaines, the last cooking classes in our Des Plaines kitchen

were Pumpkin Spice milkshakes and turkey cookies with candy corn, a little something sweet for fall. The last day was a bit emotional to leave a place where we spent the most beautiful days and memories for the past 16 years, but we are looking forward to growth and new memories in Niles!

