



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



Greetings!

Happy New Year! As we settle into 2026, I want to reflect on what this fresh start means for our school community and how we can all thrive in the months ahead. The third quarter is off to a successful start, and I am incredibly proud of our students' dedication. At our second quarter awards ceremony on January 14th, we recognized 18 Honor Roll students and 2 Students of the Month. These achievements reflect the persistence and resilience that define the Walsh Academy spirit.

The winter months can be challenging for our mental health. Shorter days and cold weather often affect our mood and energy. Please know that you are not alone; our counseling team is here to support you, and reaching out is a sign of strength. Caring for yourself might mean establishing a routine, practicing mindfulness, or simply resting. Beyond mental health, the basics matter too: getting enough sleep, washing hands, and dressing for the Chicago weather help protect our entire community.

This year, I am asking our community to embrace three core resolutions. First, **Be Present** by putting away distractions to create meaningful relationships. Second, **Stay Engaged** by participating actively and pushing through challenges; your education is something you actively create. Finally, **Live Our Philosophy** by meeting others where they are. Let's support one another, celebrate growth over perfection, and recognize that everyone's journey is unique.

Upcoming Events

- **January 15th – Career Fair:** Join us to explore career pathways and job opportunities with our community partners.
- **January 19th – Parent-Teacher Conferences:** We encourage all families to attend to discuss student progress, meet our classroom teams, and tour the building.

The beauty of a new year is the chance to reset. At Walsh Academy, we don't expect perfection; we expect effort, honesty, and a willingness to move forward. I am excited to see what 2026 holds for us. Let's make this a year of growth and connection for our minds, our hearts, and our community.

Be safe,

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



Walsh Academy

(847) 390-3020
6935 W. Touhy Ave.
Niles, IL 60714
walshacademy.org



Issue Date

January, 2026

Upcoming Events

1/5 – Classes Resume
1/15 – Career Fair
1/16 – In-service Day and
Parent/Teacher Conferences
1/19 – MLK Day; No School
1/31 – Progress Reports
shared

Health Beat

Surviving the Winter

Happy New Year! As we settle into January, we know there are colder temperatures and winter weather ahead of us and this brings a few extra health and safety concerns for our students. A little preparation can go a long way in keeping everyone safe, healthy, and ready to learn.

COLD WEATHER SAFETY

Please encourage your child to dress properly for the weather.

Snow, ice, and cold winds can make surfaces slippery. Walk carefully and try to avoid running on icy areas. Wear shoes with good traction if possible.



STAYING HEALTHY

Keep your child home if they have a fever, are vomiting or feel too unwell to participate in school. Encourage frequent hand washing. Remember to cover your coughs and sneezes with a tissue or your elbow.

Wishing you and your family a safe, warm, and healthy start to the new year!
Your School Nurse,

Tracy Mullen, RN

The Benefits of New Year's Resolutions

By: Kristina Nickels – Social Worker

It is the beginning of a new year, 2026! Many individuals may take the start of a new year as a time to reflect and create resolutions to take into the new year. Experts say that making resolutions can offer significant mental health benefits by providing purpose, boosting self-esteem through achieving goals, reducing stress due to creating life changes, reflecting on choices, and increasing motivation. In order to be successful in following through with potential resolutions, it is important to focus on setting realistic, small, and flexible goals.

What are the benefits of making resolutions? Creating goals can provide meaning as well as planning steps to look forward to behaviors that can combat feelings of hopelessness. Achieving small milestones triggers dopamine, the “feel good” chemical in our brains, and builds feelings of self-esteem and worth. Resolutions related to healthy habits such as improving diet or exercise can help to reduce overall feelings of stress. The process of creating and implementing resolutions encourages self-reflection and learning through past challenges in order to identify areas for positive change. The new year is a good time to reset, creating a “fresh start” effect that gives a boost to break old patterns and focus on future goals.

In order to be successful in implementing new resolutions it is important to have a realistic plan. A popular goal setting tool is called SMART goals, an acronym that helps guide goal setting and the steps needed to achieve them:

Specific: What do you hope to accomplish? Identify who, what, where, why, when, and how

Measurable: The goal is something that can be monitored for progress

Attainable: The goal cannot be too challenging or unrealistic

Relevant: The goal is appropriate and beneficial for the individual and their needs

Time-bound: A goal should have clear, realistic time limits

This framework can be a helpful tool to guide goal setting and monitoring. Once you do set goals for the new year, it is important to allow for flexibility and recognize that changes don't happen overnight. So, consider making some changes in the new year! When done realistically and correctly, setting goals can give us a sense of meaning and purpose and achieving goals can boost self-esteem, confidence, and personal growth.



Getting to Know Us!

By: Joel Gonzalez – Administrative Assistant

We're kicking off 2026 by shining the spotlight on two of the most familiar faces at Walsh Academy.

Kaleel is a junior at Walsh Academy. He is known for his friendly, charismatic personality and his love for connecting with both staff and students. His success at Walsh has been recognized as he was named Student of the Month for December. Outside, Kaleel enjoys playing basketball, watching movies and tv shows. He also loves spending time with Ozzy, the beloved therapy dog.



Nurse Tracy has been part of Jen School/Walsh Academy for over 15 years. Her dedication to caring for our students is unmatched. She loves getting to know each student personally and is always ready to lend a helping hand.

CTE Update!

By: Barbara Samaniego – Paraprofessional/Job Coach

CTE is back from winter break and ready for the new year!

CTE students and job coaches are getting ready for the upcoming job fair. Career choices include Digital Technology, Arts Entertainment and Design, Public Service and Safety, Construction, Agriculture, Energy and Natural Resources, Hospitality, Events and Tourism, Cosmetology and Marketing and Sales. Ms. Martha has done an excellent job designing and assembling a job board across the hall from the teacher's workroom while CTE student, Evan helped with labeling the categories. Students can visit the board for information on various career opportunities. The information is concise and well organized. Once a student has found an area of interest, there are envelopes containing brochures that they can take with them for later reference.



Last week in Cooking Class, students had fun making their own personal size pizzas. They used canned biscuit dough, and after mixing spices into tomato sauce, they added their choice of toppings including fresh basil leaves, shredded mozzarella cheese and pepperoni. While the pizzas baked in the oven, the students watched instructional videos of chefs making homemade pizza puffs and a full size pizza.

We look forward to seeing what the CTE students will accomplish in 2026!

| | |
|--|--|
| What is your favorite color? | |
| K - Black | T - Navy Blue and Kelly Green |
| What is/was your favorite subject in school? | |
| K - All of them because I love to learn. | T - Biology |
| Have you ever had a nickname? | |
| K - KJ | T - No |
| What is your favorite holiday? | |
| K - Christmas | T - Christmas – I love Christmas lights and music |
| What is something you've done that you are proud of? | |
| K - Winning a basketball Championship | T - I put myself through nursing school and I raised two amazing humans! |
| What is your favorite movie, show, and/or book? | |
| K - The Walking Dead | T - The Wizard of Oz |
| If you were a superhero, what powers would you have? | |
| K - Super Speed | T - I'd like to be able to be invisible. |
| If you could travel anywhere in the world, where would you go and why? | |
| K - Thailand | T - Back to Scotland. I love all the old castle remnants and architecture. |
| What's your go-to comfort food? | |
| K - Gyro | T - Pizza |
| Tell us something interesting about you. | |
| K - I'm good at R6X | T - I originally started college as an architecture major. |
| What is the best part about being a student/staff at Walsh Academy? | |
| K - Best Teachers! | T - I love getting to know all the students. |

Classroom Corner

By: Natalie Greenfield - Teacher

Welcome back, Walsh Wizards! I hope everyone had a chance to rest up for the new year and new quarter! Quarter 3 began 4 days before winter break which allowed a lot of teachers to introduce the different classes and topics that students would be covering when they returned. Let's look at what our teachers have planned for our students this quarter.

- Ms. R has really stepped up into her classroom taking over as a teacher! In poetry students are creating their own tongue twisters and eventually creating their own slam poetry!
- Ms. Natalie's room is learning about the different cultures and countries on all the different continents in world history.
- Peeking at Jupiter is Mr. Trerotola's class in general science. Did you know that Jupiter is the closest to earth right now making it easier to see!
- Consumer Education is being taught in Mr. Justins class. They are focusing on budgeting, where your money is supposed to go and how to save your money!
- Students are encouraged to compare their lives to those of others in literary texts in Mr. Steve's class. This allows them to see different points of view in stories.
- Ms. L's class is working on how to properly find jobs, and what skills you need in pre-vocational.
- Ms. Karlesky's class is learning about what it means to be a good citizen. They are focused on things such as laws and regulations within our country.
- Native American history has been wrapped up in Mr. Steven's class. They closed out the unit by watching "Rez Ball", a movie about teamwork and resilience.

We are now into the coldest month of the year, but it is getting brighter everyday as we move further from the winter solstice. Stay warm and curious, and enjoy the start of the new year!



What's New at Walsh? Sports at Walsh

By: Mark Trerotola - Teacher

Winter is still holding on, even if the recent weather reports make us question what season we're in! With the new semester comes fresh opportunities, including a new sport for Walsh Academy to enjoy alongside other CAEL (Chicago Area Alternative Education League) teams. After wrapping up an exciting volleyball season, we're gearing up for basketball next.

CAEL schools don't just compete in athletics—they also take part in academic challenges. On January 15, our students showcased their skills in the annual spelling bee. Let's hope some of the Chicago Bears' recent luck rubs off on our Walsh athletes as we head into this next season!



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)

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT DREW VOZZA

PHONE: (847) 832-1949 | EMAIL: DVOZZA@CHICAGOWOLVES.COM



Maryville

Caring for Children. Strengthening Families.



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

