



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



Walsh Academy

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Greetings!

November is a time for reflection, gratitude, and celebration, marking significant milestones for our school. Three years ago this month, we celebrated the groundbreaking for our new facility. Two years ago, we experienced the excitement of moving into our new school home, transforming blueprints into bright learning spaces. Last November, we marked the one-year anniversary of those new beginnings, cementing our spirit of innovation and community. These anniversaries stand as powerful testaments to the dedication of our students, staff, families, and partners.

Building on this strong foundation, we are thrilled to announce the return of a cherished tradition: our annual Thanksgiving Luncheon. This event embodies our November reflections, offering a heartfelt way to express gratitude and thanks to all who have furthered our students' educational opportunities. The luncheon is a collective effort, with each classroom providing a side dish to complement the delicious main courses prepared by our kitchen staff—a true celebration of communal spirit and shared effort.

Beyond the shared joy, the act of expressing gratitude has significant benefits. Scientific studies in positive psychology show that actively practicing thankfulness strengthens neural pathways, increasing happiness and emotional resilience. This practice is linked to lower stress, improved health, and stronger social bonds. By bringing back this tradition, we are not only nurturing our community but also helping everyone harness the profound, positive power of gratitude. We eagerly anticipate sharing this special meal with you all.

With much gratitude, Happy Thanksgiving,

Be safe and well,

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



Issue Date

November, 2025

Upcoming Events

11/13 - Q2 Progress Due
11/20 - Walsh Thanksgiving
Lunch
11/26-11/28 -
Thanksgiving Break

Health Beat

November is Diabetes Awareness Month

November is **National Diabetes Awareness Month** – a time to learn more about diabetes and how we can support healthy habits in our school community.

Did you know?

- More than **1 in 10 Americans** have diabetes, and many don't know it.
- **Type 1 diabetes** is an autoimmune condition that usually develops in childhood or adolescence.
- **Type 2 diabetes** is becoming more common in young people and is often linked to lifestyle factors such as diet and activity.

How families can help:

- Encourage regular physical activity—aim for at least **60 minutes of movement daily**.
- Offer balanced meals with fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lean proteins.
- Limit sugary drinks and snacks, especially during holiday celebrations.
- Be aware of symptoms such as increased thirst, frequent urination, and fatigue—early detection matters.

For families managing diabetes:

Plan ahead for holiday gatherings—bring healthy options, monitor blood sugar regularly, and remember that moderation is key.

Wishing everyone a safe, happy, and healthy November.

Warmly,
Tracy Mullen BSN,RN

Coping with the Change of Seasons

By: Kristina Nickels – Social Worker

Daylight Savings Time (DST) has recently ended, marking the start of shortened daylight hours. DST was started in 1916 in Germany during World War I to minimize the use of artificial lighting in an effort to conserve fuel for the war effort. In Illinois, DST is the period of time when clocks are set one hour ahead of standard time, beginning on the second Sunday in March, and ending on the first Sunday in November, at which point they are set back one hour. The change is enacted federally, although some states in the U.S. have opted out.

The change in time can be disruptive to our daily functioning. Many people experience sleep loss and a lowering of the quality of their sleep. The shift in daylight hours can create a disruption to an individual's circadian rhythm, or the pattern one's body follows on a daily basis that tells the body when to sleep, when to wake up, and can affect hormones, digestion, and body temperature. Teenagers and "late starters" can be susceptible to these effects because their circadian rhythms are already misaligned with morning light. Researchers have found that in the days after DST time changes there are reportedly more car accidents, higher rates of heart attacks, cognitive functions such as reaction time or attention span are negatively impacted, and symptoms of existing conditions like anxiety, depression, or seasonal affect disorder can be intensified.



Experts offer some advice for coping with the time change to minimize disruptions:

- Try to stick with a daily routine
- Go outside during daylight hours to boost wakefulness
- Get some form of daily exercise
- Avoid substances like caffeine, nicotine, and alcohol in the evenings
- Limit screen time before bed
- Keep a comfortable sleeping environment
- Schedule naps and exercise earlier in the afternoon to avoid interfering with sleep
- Practice stretching, relaxation techniques, or breathing exercises prior to going to bed

Getting to Know Us!

By: Joel Gonzalez – Administrative Assistant

This month, we're highlighting one of our sophomores, Alanna, and our school psychologist, Ms. Pa Lee.

Alanna joined Walsh Academy at the beginning of this school year and has already made a wonderful impact on our school community. She's incredibly creative and often designs uplifting notes and messages to share with students and staff. We appreciate her positivity and the energy she brings to Walsh. We can't wait to see all that she will accomplish.



Ms. Pa has been with us for a little over year and serves as our dedicated school psychologist. She's a joy to have at Walsh and always brings warmth and insight to every conversation. She truly enjoys getting to know our students and supporting them in every way she can.

CTE Update!

By: Barbara Samaniego – Paraprofessional/Job Coach

Something new has been added to CTE activities! Walsh Academy has partnered with the Citadel at St. Benedict Nursing Home directly across the street to offer students job experience in Human Services.

This partnership started off with autumn festivities. The students assembled scarecrows outside while residents watched on and chatted with staff and students. The Scarecrows were later displayed on the front lawn of St. Benedict's as part of their fall decorations.



Students and staff also helped residents celebrate Oktoberfest. There was a talented musician who sang while playing music on a keyboard and then an accordion. Ms. Beth and Carter joined the entertainment by dancing several Polka's. They were later joined by Kelvin and Jacob and danced in a circle while everyone clapped and sang. It was a fun and festive atmosphere.

There is a resident, Loretta, who is a talented artist. She sketches students and staff during visits. She completes two sketches per visit with just the use of a black ballpoint pen and crayons.



Students will continue to go to St. Benedicts to help with Bingo for an hour on Thursday afternoons. They encourage residents with conversation and company while they help them place their chips. Students cheer and award the winners with candy bars.

Ms. Bonnie, paraprofessional and job coach, has an aunt in residence. Her name is Mary, and she participates in Bingo. Mary's family sent a message of thanks to Walsh Academy students for visiting the facility. Mary's daughter Laura said, "I'm so glad the students want to help! It makes it so much easier for the staff there."

Walsh Academy appreciates the CTE students helping our neighbors. What a great way to contribute to the community!

What is your favorite color?	
A – Red, black, and pink	P - Purple
What is/was your favorite subject in school?	
A – My favorite subjects are Math and ELA	P – Math, but I no longer enjoy it
Have you ever had a nickname?	
A – It's Tink	P – Polly Pocket (doll →)
What is your favorite holiday?	
A – February 14th, Valentine's Day	P – Christmas (It's the pretty décor and Christmas lights that I love)
What is something you've done that you are proud of?	
A – I would say my poetry	P – Moving to a new city and rebuilding a community
What is your favorite movie, show, and/or book?	
A – My favorite movie is Wonder	P – Harry Potter series
If you were a superhero, what powers would you have?	
A – My powers would be love and kindness	P – I would be able to teleport instantly because then I can go anywhere I want and dodge Chicago's traffic
If you could travel anywhere in the world, where would you go and why?	
A – I would like to go to Jamaica	P – Switzerland; t's been on my travel list for a while! I'd love to hike through the mountains and take in the beautiful nature.
What's your go-to comfort food?	
A – Jerk chicken	P – Definitely Asian food, specifically pho, a Vietnamese beef noodle soup. It's warm, flavorful, and always comforting.
Tell us something interesting about you.	
A – I can do a handstand for two minutes	P – I used to perform in a Hmong dance group growing up and even competed in several Hmong dance competitions. It was such a fun and meaningful part of my youth.
What is the best part about being a student/staff at Walsh Academy?	
A – Is that there are always people around willing to help others.	P – What I love most is the opportunity to make a real difference every day. Whether it's supporting a student through a tough moment or celebrating progress, it all matters here.

Classroom Corner

By: Natalie Greenfield - Teacher

Leaves are changing, students are dressing warmer, and everyone is looking forward to Thanksgiving approaching fast! This November has the Full Beaver Moon on November 5th. It's called the Beaver Moon because this marked the time for pilgrims and indigenous people to lay their traps for beavers who were more active setting up for winter. Let's look at what plans our teachers have during this November month!

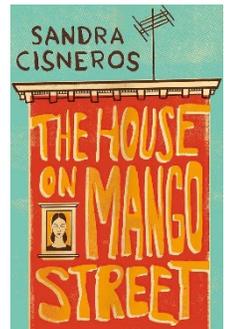
What's New at Walsh? Preparing for the Holidays

By: Mark Trerotola - Teacher

Our parent/teacher conferences were a great success, giving parents and guardians the opportunity to hear about both the accomplishments and challenges of their students. This event also marked the start of our second quarter – hard to believe we're already nearing the end of the first semester! Time always seems to fly after Halloween as we head into the busy holiday season.

One of our Walsh community's favorite traditions is the annual Thanksgiving luncheon, which we were thrilled to bring back this year. The celebration will take place the week before Thanksgiving, with each classroom contributing a homemade side dish to complement the delicious turkey, stuffing, and holiday punch provided by our administrators and kitchen crew. As students sit down to eat, the excitement is always palpable – friendly chatter and proud boasts about whose dish will taste best will fill the air. It's always such a joy to see our students come together to share a meal and enjoy the fruits of their labor – no pens or papers required!

- Ms. Karlesky's class is reading *The Hate U Give*. This novel follows an African American girl who witnessed a traumatic event, and how she grapples with it in the aftermath.
- Mr. Trerotola is overlapping his classes, by using short stories that relate to world geography and having students write paragraphs about these short stories in English.
- There is something brewing in Ms. L's class. In biology they are working on creating a sourdough starter, understanding what it takes to feed it and keep it alive!
- Mr. Steven's class is learning about the different continents in geography and how they differ and relate to each other.
- In US history students are learning about the beginning of the industrial revolution in Mr. Steve's class. Mr. Steve has been talking about Nicola Tesla and the changes in electricity over time.
- Mr. Robert's class is reading *The House on Mango Street*. This story follows a young Latina girl as she navigates her new life on Mango Street in Chicago.
- Mr. Justin is teaching about the surface area of 3d shapes, and how to find them. Students seem interested in the concept as they find them in their school surroundings.
- OSHA guidelines and safety in the trades are being taught in Ms. Natalie's class. Many of her students have expressed interest in the trade electives and will greatly benefit from this prerequisite. They are all working to pass their OSHA certification together!



The weather is quickly turning, and we are preparing for another Chicago winter. Make sure to bundle up and prepare for a warm and cozy November.