

First Friday

A Monthly Newsletter of the Warren Township Schools



Strategic Planning Update

On January 28, 2020 district staff and community members convened at Stonecrest Community Church to kick-off the action team phase of the Warren Township Schools strategic planning process. Approximately 50 individuals dedicated their time and expertise in using input received from students, alumni, parents, and staff members to begin defining the outcome goals for the next five years.

The action teams worked within four key areas that emerged from the data: Health, Wellness & Safety; Voice & Engagement; Equity & Consistency; and Competencies. Each action team is led by a trio of chairpeople representing staff members, administrators, and the community with the support of a liaison from the Board of Education's Ad Hoc Strategic Planning Committee:



SHINING BRIGHTER EVERY DAY!



Health, Wellness & Safety

Mary de Stefano, Warren Rescue Squad
President/Chair
Jessica Halpern, Warren Middle School teacher/Chair
Christine Smith, Angelo L. Tomaso School
principal/Chair
Patricia Leonhardt, School Business
Administrator/Board liaison
Melinda Bariso, parent
Lauren Farrell, Central School teacher
Kathy Helewa, community member
Sara Kolesar, Central School teacher
Stephanie Lindy, parent
Maria Mensinger, Warren Middle School assistant
principal
San Oboh, Warren Middle School
paraprofessional
Parita Patel, parent
Kristina Traynor, Woodland School teacher
MaryEllen Weaver, Warren Middle School teacher
Michelle Wegener, Angelo L. Tomaso School teacher

Equity & Consistency

Scott Cook, Mt. Horeb School principal/Chair
Nelly Pucci, parent/Chair
Rebecca Sutherland, Central School teacher/Chair
Matthew Mingle, Superintendent/Board liaison
Jessica Bodajlo, parent
Lisa Carlson, Warren Middle School teacher
Jeff Heaney, Woodland School principal
Peter Kassalow, Warren Middle School teacher
Hannah Nizri, Woodland School teacher
Alyssa Pech, Central School counselor
Patricia Zohn, community member

Voice & Engagement

Darby Finkelstein, parent/Chair
Stacey Modugno, Curriculum Supervisor/Chair
Kristen Stoyanov, Angelo L. Tomaso School and
Woodland School instructional specialist/Chair
Derek Ressa, Director of Special
Services/Board liaison
Rohini Anandan, parent
Jill Andrews, Mt. Horeb School teacher
Carolyn Bolcar, parent
Christine Cirrotti, Warren Middle School
teacher
Mirat Dave, parent
Megan O'Donnell, Central School teacher
George Villar, Warren Middle School principal

Competencies

Lynn Degen, Warren Middle School
teacher/Chair
Danielle Lader, parent/Chair
Alison Tugya, Central School principal/Chair
Bill Kimmick, Curriculum Director/Board liaison
Meredith Landau, parent
Lynn Mazur, Warren Township Library
Simone Miller, Warren Middle School teacher
Jessica Nathan, Central School and Mt. Horeb
School instructional specialist
Alexandra Pranzo, Woodland School
counselor
Shannon Sharkey, Supervisor of Special
Services
Myranda Shimko, Warren Middle School
teacher
Heather Silver, parent

The action teams will continue their work independently over the next several weeks and reconvene in late February. A proposed strategic plan is anticipated to be presented to the Warren Township Board of Education in late March / early April.

News from the Schools

Warren Middle School

For WMS Upcoming Events please visit:
<https://www.warrentboe.org/schools/middle/>

During the month of January, WMS grade 8 students participated in Breakout EDU activities which are immersive learning games that bring the challenges of an escape room to the classroom. Spanish teachers, Mrs. Slack, Mrs. Danner, and Mr. Vaglio, collaborated with Mrs. Cassidy, Library Media Specialist, to incorporate the escape room style activity into their classroom instruction.

According to Slack and Cassidy, "during a Breakout EDU game, students review or learn content to solve puzzles and open a series of locks to break into a box. The Breakout EDU kits encourage active engagement and help students develop skills that will prepare them for success in school and careers."

Slack, Danner, and Vaglio tailored the game to be played in Spanish so the students could work on their communication and collaboration skills while also learning about a prominent winter holiday known as Three Kings Day.

Slack, Danner and Vaglio were happy with the student engagement and the knowledge they gained during the activity. "Students used authentic materials, read notes, listened to audio, wrote and communicated with each other in the target language."

WMS students enjoyed the activity and look forward to their next educational challenge! The middle school library now has seven boxes that teachers can use with their classes to help students develop skills and strategies to help them be successful.



Angelo L. Tomaso School

UPCOMING EVENT

Spirit Day - Sports Jersey
Book Fair

DATE

2/3/20
2/24/20 - 2/28/20

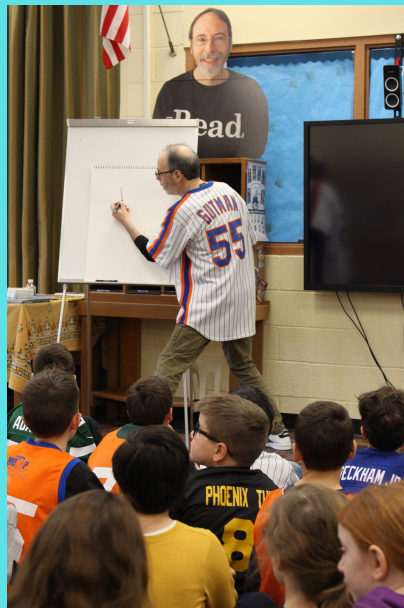
Mr. Dan Gutman, popular children's author, well known for his "My Weird School" series returned to Warren Township Schools on Friday, January 31st to visit the students and staff members of Angelo L. Tomaso (ALT) School for Visiting Author Day.

Gutman received a warm welcome upon his arrival. The library was decorated with Gutman's books, student artwork, a framed illustration Gutman himself created during a previous visit and a large cut-out picture of Gutman which he referenced on his own twitter feed. "Finally I have reached my goal of becoming larger than life." [Click Here to view.](#)

Gutman met with each grade level during his visit to share aspects of his life, including his family, travel experiences, co-workers, his daily routine and what inspires him to write children's books that are beloved by students, parents, and teachers.

The students were incredibly excited to meet Gutman and that became even more evident at the closing of Gutman's presentation when he asked his audience if they had any questions. Students got up on their knees and reached their hands as high as they could to be called upon. In addition to asking Gutman questions such as, what are his favorite books and why did he become a writer, the grade 3 students also shared many suggestions for future book ideas!

Ms. Christine Smith, principal of ALT, enjoyed Gutman's visit, especially seeing the excitement on the students' faces. "Mrs. Jackson worked for months to build up the excitement for our students who were in complete awe of such a talented author! Dan Gutman was truly an inspirational model of both writing and resilience! A huge thanks to our PTO for sponsoring his visit to ALT today!"



Central School

UPCOMING EVENT

DATE

Fingerprinting

2/4/20

K-2 Dental Presentation

2/6/20

3-5 Dental Presentation

2/7/20

Crazy Hair Day

2/21/20

Grades 1 & 2 Concert

2/25/20

Grade 3 Field Trip to METC

2/27/20

Central School students participated in the Cereal Box Challenge, a friendly competition between each grade to see which class could collect the most cereal boxes to be donated to a local food pantry. This activity was coordinated by

the Parent Teacher Organization (PTO). The grade to collect the most boxes was to win a Rice Krispies Social. The event kicked off on January 27 when students wore the color of their favorite cereal box. Two bonus points were given for participation. Central School Peer Leaders worked with Ms.

Alyssa Pech, School Counselor, to collect and tally up the boxes per grade. By Tuesday, January 28 hundreds of boxes had been donated and Ms. Pech's office was filled to the max!

Members of the Central School PTO picked up and donated 488 boxes of cereal to Feeding Hands Food Pantry, a nonprofit organization addressing the issues of poverty and helping those who are caught in its clutches.

Over the next few days, the cereal boxes kept rolling in. The efforts from the Central School community far exceeded expectations so the donations were shared with another food pantry and an organization for homeless veterans.

By the end of the week, the tally sheets were added together and the number of donated cereal boxes totaled 766! According to the Peer Leaders, the grade three students donated the most boxes of cereal and therefore won the Rice Krispies Social.

Job well done to the entire Central School Community! A perfect example of Shining Brighter Every Day, the district's motto.



Mt. Horeb School

UPCOMING EVENT

DATE

PreK - K Dental Day

2/5/20

Movie Night

2/7/20

Fingerprinting

2/18/20

Grades 1 & 2 Dental Day

2/25/20

Grades 1 & 2 Concert (day)

2/28/20

Preschool Teacher, Mrs. Tara Keller, her daughter Hailey Waldron and their therapy dog Forrest, have started a special program for preschool students at Mt. Horeb Elementary School. Throughout the 2019 - 2020 school year Waldron and Forrest will visit the preschool classes to educate the students on caring for a pet, animal training, and hopefully to bring comfort and joy to everyone who chooses to participate.

Keller and her family adopted Forrest at the age of one from the Somerset Regional Animal Shelter where Waldron works as a Veterinary Technician. Forrest originally came from a shelter in Kentucky. Waldron has devoted time to training Forrest in basic obedience classes, Nosework exercises, and agility. Forrest is a registered therapy dog through The Bright and Beautiful Therapy Dogs, Inc. and he enjoys participating in 5K races with Waldron.

During Forrest's visits, children are invited to pet him if they are comfortable doing so. According to Keller, "Forrest enjoys interacting with people and other pets. Forrest is one of three dogs, two cats, and one foster kitten. Forrest's tenderness with the tiniest of creatures is heartwarming."

Most recently during a visit, the students enjoyed exercising with Forrest by jogging around the All-Purpose Room. Keller expects that most visits will be a very active experience for the students and Forrest. Forrest also enjoys showing off his skills by following commands like; sit, lie down, give paw and hug!

The Preschool program at Mt. Horeb School is very much looking forward to welcoming back Waldron and Forrest for their next visit.



Woodland School



UPCOMING EVENT

DATE

Grades 1 & 2 Musical Performance	2/6/20
Fingerprinting	2/11/20
PTO Sweetheart Dance	2/13/20
Spirit Day: Wear Red	2/14/20
Dental Assemblies	2/21/20



The National Geographic GeoBee is an annual competition in its 32nd year that is designed to inspire students to learn about the world. Each year thousands of students throughout the country compete in this competition. For the past several years Mrs. Nicole Panos, grade 5 teacher has coordinated the event for Woodland School, this year Mrs. Tiffany Serafin, grade 5 teacher assisted as well.

During the month of January, all Woodland students in grades 4 and 5 participated in the Bee. Each homeroom hosted an "in class" preliminary competition consisting of seven rounds of 35 questions. The questions covered not only geography, but also ancient and world civilizations, cultures, and physical features.

Following the preliminary rounds, ten students moved on to the school wide final competition. The competition was fierce and lasted about 30 minutes before Aidan S was determined to be the winner. According to Serafin, the competition ignited a spark in her class. "The students were very excited for the competition, and many were motivated to learn more about the world and the location of countries, cities, important places, oceans, rivers, etc."

Congratulations to all of the Woodland School students who participated during the GeoBee. Keep shining brighter every day!!



Parents vs. Staff Volleyball Game.

Congratulations to the parents for beating the Woodland Staff! Fun was had by all.



Upcoming Events

DISTRICT WIDE



EVENT

DATE

Board of Education Meeting	2/10/20
Schools Closed - Presidents Day	2/17/20
Board of Education Meeting	2/24/20
Read Across America	2/24/20 - 2/28/20
Large Group Strategic Planning Event	2/25/20

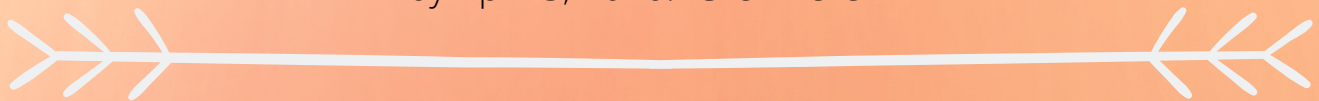
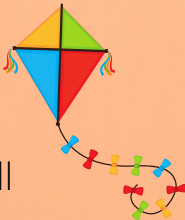
What is the 2020 Census?

The 2020 Census counts every person living in the 50 states, District of Columbia, and five U.S. territories. [Click Here to respond to the Census.](#)



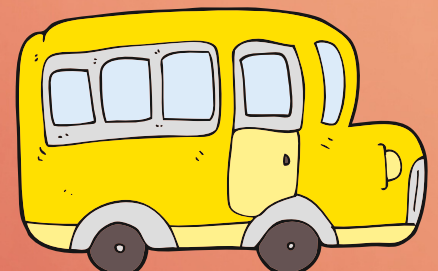
Summer Fun

It's never too early to start planning for the summer! [Click Here](#) for details about the AWESOME Summer Fun program that will be held at Mt. Horeb School from June 29 - July 31!! Early Bird discount if you register and pay in full by April 3, 2020. [Click Here](#)



2020 - 2021 Open-Registration Information

The open registration portal to pre-register your new to the district student for the 2020-2021 school year is now active. Please [Click Here](#) to access the registration link to begin the 2020-2021 registration process for new to the district kindergarten students, grades 1st - 8th students, or preschool students selected in the lottery process to attend in the 2020-2021 school year. If you have neighbors or friends seeking to register students, please share this link or encourage them to visit the Warren Township School District's [web page](#) to access the link.



Shining Brighter Every Day!!