



WILLIAMSPORT AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

Developing responsible citizens through excellence in education.

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Dear Community,

For the past 18 months many of you may have heard about the Williamsport Area School District Education Foundation's *Return to Glory* capital campaign. The main subject of the project is the renovation of our stadium complex on the campus of the Williamsport Area High School. This facility was built more than 40 years ago, and is in need of major renovation including: storm water drainage and piping, field surface replacement, and lighting.

In addition to serving our students for sports, band and physical education opportunities, *Return to Glory* will allow the WASD stadium complex to become a "destination location" for regional sports, athletics, band and non-profit events and competitions. The renovated stadium will allow us to host events that will bring individuals to our community and provide an economic boost to the Williamsport region. Funding for this project has come from a variety of sources. Initially, the district committed \$1 million to the project from the sale of its three unused schools. An additional \$1.2 million has been raised from businesses, corporations, individuals from the local community and school district employees. The foundation also was awarded a \$242,000 grant to address many of the issues related to excavation and storm water drainage.

The foundation, in partnership with the district, continues to pursue additional funding for this project through grants and private donations. Many businesses and individuals continue to come forward to support this project as we approach the initial construction phase in May 2015. As a community, we can accomplish wonderful things by working together. Thanks for your support of *Return to Glory*.

Sincerely,



Don C. Adams, Ph.D.
Superintendent
570-327-5500
dadams@wasd.org

WASD Education Foundation's *Return to Glory* Capital Campaign Nears Goal

Thank you!

Thanks to our many generous alumni, parents, community members, businesses and organizations, the WASD Education Foundation's *Return to Glory* capital campaign is closer to meeting its goal of \$2.7 million. To date, the amount secured in cash and commitments to the campaign represents a total of more than \$2.2 million, or 81 percent of the goal.

While the campaign is close to reaching its financial target and some needs have already been met, there are still many needs that have yet to be filled.

Two of the most significant milestones in the campaign this school term have been the donation of the Balls Mills Soccer Complex, located along Lycoming Creek Road, to the district last fall, as well securing a \$242,837 state grant through the Commonwealth Financing Authority.

As a result of the soccer complex donation, the WASD Education Foundation's fundraising goal for the *Return*

to Glory capital campaign moved from \$3.5 million to \$2.7 million.

By securing the Balls Mills Soccer Complex, it put the district in a position to move from a two-venue to one-venue project at the high school stadium, which will include a new eight-lane track and all-weather football field at STA Stadium, as well as other infrastructure improvements. Renovations remain on schedule to start mid- to late May and be completed in the fall of 2015.

While work is scheduled to begin in the spring following track season, an additional \$500,000 is needed to meet the foundation's campaign goal.



To learn more about the campaign, or ways to make a gift to this important project, call the foundation office at 570-327-5500, ext. 33495, or visit: www.wasd.org/returntoglory.

Cochran Named National Title 1 Distinguished School

Cochran Primary School was recognized as a National Title 1 Distinguished School by the state Department of Education.

The 1500 Cherry St.-school was one of only two schools in the state selected based on its performance for significantly closing the achievement gap between subgroups of students as indicated by the Pennsylvania System of School Assessments (PSSA) for reading and math.

“The National Title 1 Distinguished Schools Program is a project of the National Title 1 Association that publicly recognizes schools for their positive educational advances,” according to information released by the association.

Of the 1,764 Title 1 schools in the Commonwealth, 82 of them were named as High Achievement schools, 16 as High Progress schools and only two were chosen as a National Title 1 School of Distinction. As a result, Cochran was formally recognized at the 2015 National Title 1 Conference in Salt Lake City in February, as well as at the 2015 Title 1 Improving School Performance Conference in Pittsburgh in January.

The driving factors that Principal Cindy Schuyler said she believes helped in the achievement is not only the high-quality instruction students receive at Cochran but also the support of the school community as a whole.

“It became apparent that what is done on a daily basis is good for our students,” Schuyler said. “One common factor that our students get is quality instruction from quality teachers, along with the entire Cochran community helping as a support system. Our entire staff deserves recognition for their effort in helping us achieve such an honor.”

The recognition came on the heels of also being named a Title 1 2014 High Progress Reward School in December, during which Cochran was named as one of the only 16



schools in the state to earn that designation.

Both designations celebrate and recognize the unprecedented gains Cochran demonstrated in just one year. During the 2012-13-school term, Cochran’s School Performance Profile (SPP) had a score of 66.3, which climbed to 77.1 at the end of the 2013-14 term.

“The collective work of the team is award-winning, but the heart of this accomplishment are the teachers who work tirelessly with students daily to improve student achievement,” said Federal Programs Director Dr. Susan Bigger. “Cochran teachers embrace parents as vital partners and know that families have a major influence on their child’s achievement in school and through life. Cochran’s success is a strong example of the Williamsport system, where delivering a high-quality education with a focus on achievement is priority No. 1.”

“This recognition is reflective of the high-quality instruction, leadership and programs that are present in the Williamsport Area School District,” said Superintendent Dr. Don Adams. “We are proud of our staff and their efforts to provide the very best educational experience for all students.”

COCHRAN PRIMARY AWARDED \$50,000 INNOVATION GRANT

AS A HIGH PROGRESS REWARD SCHOOL, Cochran Primary became eligible to apply for a \$50,000 Innovation Grant that faculty and administration worked to complete for submission in January.

In early March, the school learned it was awarded the grant, which was designed to promote the implementation of new learning structures and processes created to meet individual student needs.

The grant application had to identify the school’s best practices that enable students to continue to achieve at high levels while also following goals established by the U.S. Department of Education.

The Innovation Grant will fund the purchase of 85 iPads, apps to support achievement, as well as opportunities for professional development.



Photo used courtesy of Highland Photography Studio



COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS Over the last several months, WASD has continued to strengthen its ties in the local community. Clockwise from top left: WAHS art students partnered with SouthernCare Hospice in an "Art with a Heart" project that allowed the community to paint and donate artwork to local nursing home residents; the WASD Education Foundation celebrated its "decade of growth" at the Community Arts Center with a celebration that featured WAHS grad and Grammy award-winner Dashon Burton with the WAHS orchestra and choir; and the First Community Foundation Partnership of Pennsylvania established a \$155,000 endowment fund for the district as part of its county-wide "Beyond the Budget" grant to schools.

KINDERGARTEN & NEW STUDENT REGISTRATIONS AT WASD!

The best beginning for the brightest future.

Registrations for the 2015-16 school year will be taken at Cochran, Hepburn-Lycoming, Jackson and Stevens primary schools from **March 30 through April 2, 2015**.

MONDAY & TUESDAY 9:15 a.m. to 3 p.m.
WEDNESDAY 9 a.m. to 7 p.m.
THURSDAY 9 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.

Children **must** be age 5 on or before Sept. 1, 2015, in order to enroll. All registrations **after** April 6 will be taken at the WASD District Service Center, 2780 West Fourth St., Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Please be prepared to spend at least 30 minutes at registration and provide: Child's Birth Certificate • Guardian ID (driver's license, state ID, etc.) • Proof of Residence (rent or utility receipt, etc.) • Child's Immunization Records • Record of School Age Dental Examination and Medical Examination, if completed.



Williamsport Area School District



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Construction Trades Team Takes 1st Place in Las Vegas

The National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) Student Chapter at Williamsport Area High School won first place in the High School/Secondary category of the NAHB Residential Construction Management Competition held at the 2015 NAHB International Builders' Show in Las Vegas in January.

More than 75,000 builders, remodelers, students, faculty members and suppliers packed the aisles at the 2015 International Builders' Show, Design and Construction Week. Fifty-four teams representing universities, community colleges, high schools and career technical schools across the U.S. participated in the annual competition.

"Congratulation to the NAHB Student Chapter at Williamsport Area High School," said Jerry Howard, CEO of NAHB. "They and their competitors showed a great deal of talent along with a depth of understanding of building industry management, from land development to marketing to scheduling to estimating."

During the competition, students solved real-life construction management problems and presented their solutions to a judging panel of residential construction industry experts.

"I could not be more proud of these students," said Randy



Williamson, construction trades teacher at WAHS. "They have worked so hard on this project since September creating the set of working drawings, construction schedule and material/labor estimates for this house. They did an outstanding job presenting the project to the panel of judges and fielding 10 minutes of questions."

WAHS Career and Technical Education Director Randy Zangara said he and the school are extremely proud of Williamson and his student team.

"The award is a testament to all of their hard work over numerous weeks," he said. "Williamsport Career and Technical Education has always prided itself in providing exemplary programs and this competition result goes a long way in showing the high quality of students, instructors and programs that we have."

The NAHB Student Advisory Board is proud that the RCMC has evolved into a prestigious event for the participants, their schools and the building industry, said Bill Faulk, chairman of the High School Competition Committee for the NAHB Student Chapters Advisory Board.

The WAHS Pennsylvania Builders Association's Student Chapter and Williamson expressed their thanks to WAHS teacher Brian Soars, who volunteered to work with students on the AutoCAD software; WAHS teacher Marie Fox for public speaking coaching; and all the academic teachers at the high school who helped provide the students with the skill sets necessary to accomplish the project.

The project and trip also were helped with assistance from the local construction industry that freely gave its time and money to assist the PBA Student Chapter.



A COOPERATIVE VENTURE between WAHS and Pennsylvania College of Technology automotive students has brought new life and purpose to a 1979 Lincoln Continental Mark V. The luxury coupe was donated to the WAHS automotive department by a district employee a little more than a year ago, and, with funding from the WASD Education Foundation, has been completely refurbished in the district's traditional Cherry-and-White colors to become the official Millionaires automotive mascot.

2 Curtin Students Selected for National Program in D.C.

Two fifth-grade students from Curtin Intermediate School were chosen to participate in People to People's World Leadership Forum: Learning to Lead in Washington, D.C., and Gettysburg.

The People to People World Leadership Forum allows students the opportunity to "dive into leadership styles of prominent historical leaders, develop your own leadership skills and self-confidence alongside some of the world's most motivated students," according to its website.

Among the multitude of activities scheduled between March 23 and March 28, students **Teagan Marty and Nelson MacDonald** have opportunities to visit the Lincoln Memorial; explore the U.S. Capitol and learn about the branches of government; experience a Congressional speaker panel; walk onto Gettysburg battlefields and relive the Gettysburg Address at Soldiers National Cemetery; witness the Changing of the Guard at the Tomb of the Unknowns; infiltrate the International Spy Museum; and visit D.C.'s national monuments.

Both students said they are looking forward to meeting new people and traveling around the nation's capital.

"I'm excited," Marty said, while adding that she enjoys learning about government and politics. "I know some people who have gone and had a good time. I'm looking forward to meeting people from all over the country and learning things I didn't know before."

MacDonald said he's equally excited.

"All the things we're doing have to do with the history of D.C.," he said. "I'm excited to learn and have a good time."



Both students were nominated to participate in People to People last year by their gifted support teacher Amy Neylon, who said that in the time she has known them, they have shown outstanding abilities in problem solving, creativity and communication skills.

"I nominated them for People to People because of the strong leadership and academic abilities they show in the classroom," Neylon said. "For the two of them to embark on this opportunity will only serve to further enhance their educational and real-world experiences."

Their primary fifth-grade teacher, Carey Taddeo, said MacDonald and Marty's leadership qualities are "second to none."

"Both are role models not only in the area of academics, but also in the various other interests and organizations they are involved in," Taddeo said. "I am excited about this fantastic opportunity that Teagan and Nelson are participating in and look forward to hearing about their adventure when they return."

WAHS SENIOR IAN PERRY NAMED AS A NATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT SCHOLAR



WILLIAMSPORT AREA HIGH SCHOOL senior Ian Perry has been named a 2015 National Achievement Scholar from the National Merit Scholarship Corporation.

The upcoming grad is one of only 800 high school students nationwide to earn the \$2,500-scholarship from a pool of 1,300 finalists.

According to its website, the National Achievement Scholarship Program "is an academic competition established in 1964 to provide recognition for outstanding Black American high school students. Black students may enter both the National Achievement Scholarship Program and National Merit Program by taking the Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship

Qualifying Test and meeting other published requirements for participation." At the high school, Perry is a member of the track team, on the Cherry & White staff, and National Honor Society. In the community, he participates in church mission trips, youth group, a pre-school assistant, and is founder and co-host of "Williamsport Weekly," a radio show/podcast on 88.1.

He plans to pursue a degree in political science, and is a candidate for admission to Yale, Harvard, Columbia, Hamilton, and Franklin & Marshall universities.

"As a school, it is critical that we celebrate and recognize Ian, as he is one out of 800 students who obtained this status," said Head Principal Brandon Pardoe. "Ian's success is our success at Williamsport. It is our goal to be competitive in every facet of our programming that is offered to students at WAHS."



AT A GLANCE Over the course of the year, a number of events and special programs have helped celebrate and enhance the education students receive at WASD. From volunteers to students teaching students to community organizations, WASD continues to embrace opportunities to strengthen and promote learning. During Read Across America Week in March, which celebrates Dr. Suess's birthday, a number of volunteer readers visited classrooms (as depicted at top) and activities held to observe the importance of literacy. WAHS students led an after-school "science club," (shown at right) where sixth-grade students from Curtin were able to get hands-on experiences in STEM during a five-week Mentorship Through Science program held again this winter. Other volunteers, such as those at City Alliance Church, once again partnered with Stevens Primary for its after-school tutoring program, C.H.E.E.R., for first-grade students (below).



SAFETY PLAN CHANGES

WASD IS IN THE PROCESS of making a change to one portion of its safe school plan.

The part of the plan that is to be altered is the schools' reaction to a situation in which a dangerous intruder gains access to the inside of a school building while occupied by students and staff. While the probability of such an event is low and the district has done much in recent years to prevent access by such an individual, recent national events have demonstrated the need for upgraded preparation.

For nearly 20 years, the district has benefited from the advice and coordination of multiple local law enforcement, fire and emergency management agencies. Representatives of these organizations meet monthly with district staff to devise and review the district's safe school plans.

Known as the Incident Management Planning Group, this team has assisted WASD to gain access to the advice and data of national organizations and experts to aid in planning security and emergency responses.

The Incident Management Planning Group is now supporting a move to the ALICE Institute's response to a dangerous intruder situation.

ALICE is an acronym for the components of a response plan designed to empower school personnel to act swiftly and decisively in an intruder situation. The plan includes training on each of its parts – Alert, Lock-down, Inform, Counter and Evacuate actions – to be undertaken by the occupants of a school in order to reduce the likelihood of injury or worse in such a circumstance.

Previously, the advice offered to schools was only to lock down, which moved everyone away from doors so that an intruder cannot see them. Studies of the intruder events of recent years have led to the conclusion that no single action is enough to manage this kind of emergency. Staff must be trained in a range of responses, focused primarily on getting students and staff away from danger, but including methods to improve safety if evacuating is not possible. ALICE provides preparation for all of these response choices.

"The Williamsport Area School District has been training and practicing evacuations with staff and students for several years," said David Wright, director of student services. "The district is well positioned to benefit from the upgraded safety that the ALICE approach offers us. We anticipate that a training program will begin soon."

