

The Case House Gazette

WESTON
PUBLIC
SCHOOLS

June 2022

Message from the Superintendent

As we wrap up another uniquely challenging and rewarding year, I want to start by thanking each of you for helping us to meet our goal, to keep our schools open safely for 180 days this year. After more than two years since the COVID-19 pandemic first disrupted our lives and school experiences, I feel proud to be part of such an outstanding district – one that values both achieving academic excellence, as well as taking care of ourselves, each other, and our school community.

This was a year of deep learning and growth for our students. We met many of our goals from our 2021-22 annual action plans at the school and district levels, with more work to be done over the summer into next year. It is with immense gratitude that I thank all of our administrators, teachers, support staff, families and particularly our students for the tremendous effort they put forth to accomplish these goals.

As we continue to see the lasting impacts of the pandemic and everything that came with it, our educators and support professionals will continue to prioritize the health and safety of all of our students, across the board. This newsletter also includes

some mental health and wellness resources, but please feel free to reach out to us any time over the summer if there is anything we might be able to help your family with.

Thank you again for the remarkable year in which many of our students displayed their talents on the stage, on the athletic fields, and in and outside of the classroom. I wish all of you a restful and joyous summer. Best,

Dr. Midge Connolly,
Superintendent



SUMMER COVID-19 INFORMATION

Unfortunately COVID-19 will continue to impact us over the summer and likely into the fall. Vaccines have allowed for relaxation of restrictions, including a recent lifting of the PCR requirement for international travel. Self care and a larger community-care focus on infection management is now the advised best practice for COVID safety. Self-testing kits should continue to help make this disease more [manageable](#).

If your family has COVID related questions during the summer break, please contact Jamy Gaynor, Director of Health Services, at gaynorj@weston.org.

About the Case House Gazette:

The Weston Public Schools Administration works in the historic Case house building, and we publish this newsletter to share some seasonal and annual highlights with WPS students, staff, families, and all our community members.

Click here for [Fall 2020, Spring 2021, and Fall 2021 editions](#)

Weston also has a weekly district PTO newsletter, called [Westword](#)

In this issue:

- Message from Dr. Connolly
- Mental Health and Wellness
- Program Review Updates
- Systems of Support (MTSS)
- WHS Wildcat Fall Athletics
- 2021-2022 Performances

Mental Health and Wellness Resources

Dear WPS Families,

After another long and often-difficult year, we want to offer some resources for the summer, should the need arise. Please consider taking advantage of any of these services and online resources. The severe shortage of mental health providers continues, and while it can be difficult to find clinicians, we encourage you to be persistent in your search, and to reach out for help if needed. Zoom and other platforms can be helpful by providing increased access to different services for many families.

There is a mental health crisis affecting students and families across the country. This has been followed carefully by educators, as well as experts such as the [US Surgeon General](#), [American Psychological Association](#) and [American Academy of Pediatrics](#), and covered in media outlets like [NPR](#), [USA Today](#), and [the Boston Globe](#).

We know our schools have an important role in supporting student mental health and wellness, and will continue to partner with families to meet students' needs.

A good starting place is with your pediatrician or with your current outpatient team. Some parents have been able to access services by calling the number for psychiatric services located on the back of your insurance card. Your insurance might also offer lists of covered providers. The local community mental health center serving Weston is the Human Relations Service (HRS) located in Wellesley (781-235-4950).

For non-urgent matters and school-related matters, you are welcome to contact our school district's Office of Student Services (781-786-5240) and your call will be directed.

Thank you for your ongoing attention to mental health and wellness. I hope you all enjoy a healthy and relaxing summer vacation, and I look forward to seeing you in the fall.

Best,

Maddy Steinberg, Psy.D.
District Psychologist
SteinbergM@weston.org

Finding Providers/Informational Guides:

Try [Interface by William James](#) & [Handhold MA](#)

Emergency Services:

In emergencies requiring immediate attention, call 911 or head to your local Emergency Room. If You Need Urgent Help, you can also contact:

Riverside Community Care - 800-529-5077

Boston Emergency Service Team - 800-981-4357

Call To Talk - 508-532-2255 - Available 24/7

Crisis Text Line - Text "CONNECT" to 741741 (Crisis Text Line serves anyone, all types of crisis, providing free, 24/7 support and information)

Samaritans - 877-870-4673 - Can call/text 24/7

Other Online Resources:

[MentalHealth.gov](#) - For Parents & Caregivers

[AdolescentHealth.org](#) - For Parents of Teens

[School Psychologists](#) - For Parents & Educators

Internal/External Program Review Process

As we near the end of this school year, we want to update you on our program review process for this past year, as well as for this summer and the upcoming school year. This article includes information about the review process along with a summary of recent and upcoming reviews. Please let us know if you have any questions about any aspects of the program review process.

All of our academic and specialist programs undergo rigorous review processes. This is done on a rolling basis with a handful of programs engaged in active reviews any given year. The typical process starts with an internal self-study from each program.

The internal review is presented to the school committee along with recommended questions for an external review team to investigate. The school committee then revises the draft questions and approves their “charge” for the external review committee, and its scope, in the form of these review questions.

For example: The K-12 Math Department/Program completed its internal review in 2019-20, followed by an external review that was completed in early 2020 and presented in Spring of 2020.

- [Math Internal Review Report & Progress Report](#)
- [Math External Review Charge and Report](#)

In recent years these review processes had to pause due to the pandemic, but has since resumed on a more ambitious timeline than had been typical in Weston before the pandemic.

To the right is a brief summary of some program reviews from recent years. Thanks for your interest in the program review process! Please contact Assistant Superintendent Dr. Kimo Carter for additional information about any of the following reviews:

Email: CarterK@weston.org

Phone: 1-781-786-5220

The Social Studies and History Department completed its internal review in 2021-22, followed by an ongoing external review this spring into the summer, with a full report and presentation coming fall 2022. The external review team includes experts from other districts, universities and nonprofits and is chaired by Dr. Rob Martinelle, lecturer and Professor of Social Studies Education at Boston University.

- [Social Studies/History Internal Review Report](#)
- [Social Studies/History External Review Charge](#)

The K-12 Guidance and Counseling Department completed its internal review in 2021-22, followed by an ongoing external review this spring into the summer, with a full report/presentation Fall 2022. The external review team includes counselors, department heads, and outside experts as well as the Chair Dr. Timothy Poynton, Associate Professor of Counseling and School Psychology at UMass.

- [Guidance/Counseling Internal Review Report and Appendix](#)
- [Guidance/Counseling External Review Charge](#)

The 6-12 Athletics Department/Program completed its internal review in 2021-22, followed by an ongoing [external review](#) this summer, with a full report/presentation fall 2022. The external team includes HS and College Athletic Directors, and a PE Teacher/Coach, as well as Chair Mr. Kalon Jenkins. Mr. Jenkins is an educator at Marshfield High School and a state-championship winning HS Basketball Coach.

The **K-12 Science** and **K-12 Music** departments have each begun internal reviews this year, expecting to complete internal review later in 2022 or early 2023. This will be followed by their external reviews, to be carried out next school year and then presented to the school committee at the end of next school year.

The next reviews on the calendar after Science and Music are METCO, Health/Wellness and PE, World Languages, and Visual Arts. Those will be followed by programs that have been reviewed more recently, such as Special Education or English Language Arts.

Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS)

One fundamental belief shared by all in WPS is that every child is capable of success. However, we know that students have different learning needs: some need academic, social-emotional, or behavioral support while others need extension in these areas. How can we systematically organize schooling to meet the needs of all learners? We do this by creating and enhancing Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS).

Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) is a framework that schools use to provide targeted support for students. The goal is to proactively identify the strengths and needs of all students, provide support when needed, and help students succeed. MTSS focuses on the “whole child,” and uses data to optimize decisions, progress monitoring, proactive interventions, and other types of evidence-based strategies designed to help sustain deep learning.

MTSS helps to ensure the highest achievement for students of all ages, identities, and abilities. Implementing MTSS requires faculty and school leaders to develop a range of adaptive and technical skills. These include how to foster collaborative classroom environments (leadership), how to build on existing educator capacity (competency), and how to sustain effective MTSS (implementation). When implemented across classes and schools, MTSS helps to prevent and lessen potential negative impacts from social-emotional, behavioral, and academic challenges.

MTSS typically contains three levels of tiered instruction (tiers 1, 2, and 3). Tier 1 is available to all students, and often includes academic, social, emotional, and behavioral supports that empower students to succeed in their schoolwork without further interventions or long term formalized support. Tier 2 supports supplement tier 1 with more targeted interventions, often in small group settings. Tier 3 provides concentrated, intensive, individualized supports over a longer period of time. Tiered supports build upon one another, rather than fully replacing earlier tiers. Movement along tiers is fluid and students are not labeled within a specific tier, nor are tiers determined by a disability diagnosis.

Two MTSS pillars, 1) Equitable Access and 2) Universal Design for Learning (UDL) are crucial to all tiers of instruction. Equitable Access is about including all students regardless of status or identity, so all students can bring their whole self to school, access educational environments, and fully participate in learning. UDL focuses on reducing barriers to learning by understanding the variability of students’ learning styles. [Click here to read more about UDL and Equity.](#)



As you look at DESE’s MTSS graphic, you can see that MTSS has a lot of components all interconnected. Our challenge is to make all these pieces fit together to ensure a high quality education for all students.

The District recently created a MTSS Task Force which is co-chaired by Principals Erin Maguire and Paul Peri, supported by Dr. Kimo Carter and Amy Kelly from the Office of Teaching and Learning. Additionally, we are currently undergoing an MTSS review with *Novak Consulting* to assess our strengths and areas for improvement with MTSS. For more information about MTSS please review these resources or contact your principal:

- Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) - [Systems for Student Success Office](#) (a DESE resources list)
- Multi-Tiered System of Support [DESE Deep Dive](#)
- [What’s Multi-Tiered System of Support?](#) - Article
- [MTSS Essential Components](#) - Research Primer

Weston Athletics



WILDCAT TRACKS

Wildcat Tracks is the student-run news site for [Weston High School](#).

It's good to be a Wildcat! The energy at WHS has been electric as spring sports come to a close. This year, Wildcats won state championships in at least 3 sports, with 2 more state finalist teams, 11 DCL champs, and 19 MIAA playoff runs. Students won individual awards/titles, and coaches John Monz (Girls XC), Jason Montrose (Girls Indoor Track) and Nicole Freedman (Boys Nordic Skiing) were honored with the Boston Globe Coach of the Year Award. All head coaches are returning for the 2022-23 year, aside from John Monz who is partially retiring. He will remain XC and Outdoor Track coach. Coach Monz is an icon in MA Track and will be sorely missed this Winter.

- **354 WHS Students participated in Fall Sports:** Soccer, Golf, Field Hockey, XC, Football, Crew & Volleyball; **and 221 WMS students participated in Fall Sports:** Soccer, XC, Field Hockey, Football & Girls Volleyball

- **331 WHS Students participated in Winter Sports:** Hockey, Basketball, Swim/Dive, Indoor Track, Wrestling, Alpine Skiing & Nordic Skiing; **and 107 WMS Students** participated in the Winter Basketball season this past year.

- **340 WHS Students participated in Spring Sports:** Baseball, Softball, Crew, Outdoor Track, Tennis, Lacrosse, Sailing, and Boys Volleyball; and **164 WMS Students** did spring sports of Baseball, Softball, Outdoor Track & Tennis!

Recent articles include coverage of [student reflections](#), student and [coach achievements](#), [the referee shortage](#), [WHS rivalries](#), [college recruitment](#), [concussion protocols](#), [Olympian alumni](#), and [much more](#).

SPOTLIGHT: Athletic Trainer Andrew “Riz” Rizza



As Athletic Trainer for WMS and WHS since 1998, Andrew provides injury prevention, evaluation, rehab, and even emergency care to the student athletes of WMS / WHS.

In addition to this role, he previously worked for Sports and Physical Therapy (SPTA) as a staff Athletic Trainer and Physical Therapist assistant from 1996-2016, when he became the Clinical Director for their Wellesley location. He also serves on the Board of Allied Health Professions for the State of MA and two concussion advisory boards. He also serves as a clinical instructor for Lasell University's Athletic Training Program. He graduated from Northeastern University in 1996 with his BS in Athletic Training, and in 2009 with his MS in Leadership and Health Management. He later earned his Physical Therapist Assistant degree from Kent State University in 2014.

Currently in the process of completing a 2nd master's degree in Applied Sports Science Analytics, he hopes to focus on using data analytics to improve athlete performance, reducing sports related injury, and improve rehabilitation outcomes. In his free time he enjoys spending time with his wife and daughter, traveling, exercise, skiing, and scuba diving. Big thanks to him for helping keep our students healthy!

Weston Boosters

Boosters is a parent-run organization supporting local student athletes and encouraging community participation in Athletics and other extracurriculars

Please consider getting involved with Weston Boosters to help support our student-athletes and equip our teams.

Visit [WestonBoosters.net](#) or click below to [learn more](#) and [show your support!](#)

2021-22 Performances and Events



WHS Class of 2022 Graduation on the Town Green

Thank you all for being part of many great events and student performances this year. We look forward to even more next year! Below is a partial list of performances, events, and other related recordings. Thanks to the Weston Media Center for publishing!

- [Country School Orchestra Winter Con.](#)
- [Country School \(pk-1\) Spring Concert](#)
- [Country School \(2-3\) Spring Concert](#)
- [Woodland School Orchestra Winter Con.](#)
- [Woodland School \(pk-1\) Spring Concert](#)
- [Woodland School \(2-3\) Spring Concert](#)
- [Field School Winter Concert \(4th and 5th\)](#)
- [Field School Spring Concert](#)
- [Middle School Masquerade Concert](#)
- [Middle School Chorus Spring Concert](#)
- [Middle School Orchestras Concerts](#)
- [Middle School Bands Spring Concert](#)
- [High School Chorus Winter Concert](#)
- [WHS and WMS Orchestra Winter Concert](#)
- [WHS and WMS Bands Winter Concerts](#)
- [Weston High School Winter Art Show](#)
- [Weston Public Schools "String Fling"](#)
- [Weston Public Schools 2022 Band Fest](#)
- [Weston Public Schools "Spring Sing"](#)



WHS Students Rehearsing Together for Fall Play



Cast of WMS Fall Play, "The Last Resort" (written by Mr. Mills)



Artwork done by Natalie Zhang, WHS Class of 2023