“We cannot always build the future for our youth, but we can build our youth the future.” — Franklin D. Roosevelt

Important Message from Superintendent Anthony G. Smith:

Dear Parents/Guardians:

With the Thanksgiving holiday quickly approaching and the increase of new reported COVID-19 cases in Hamilton County, Winton Woods City Schools will restructure the plan to transition to Phase IV. After conducting over 40 focus groups, listening to the hearts of many dedicated parents, staff members and stakeholders, I am clearly aware that some Thanksgiving traditions will continue. With that in mind, the entire district – students and staff - will begin in virtual status on Monday, November 30. Face-to-face operations could resume as early as Monday, December 7, if the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)/Governor DeWine’s COVID-19 assessments have deemed it appropriate.

During this transition, the district will return to operate in Phase III. Students with special needs will return four days per week: Monday, December 7, Tuesday, December 8; and Thursday, December 10, and Friday, December 11. Blue students will report on Monday-Tuesday, December 7-8. Green students report on Thursday-Friday, December 10-11. We will continue to follow this schedule during the week of December 14-18.

Our students' safety is a top priority. Please look for updates during the winter break regarding the transition plan after the first semester at wintonwoods.org. I know that these transitions have been challenging; however, safety regulations must be adhered to at all times. Thank you for your patience.

Sincerely,
Superintendent Anthony G. Smith
Winton Woods Class of 2020 Fall Graduation

The word of the night was perseverance. Warrior family, friends, and staff of Francisco Navarro arrived at Winton Woods High School’s cafeteria to celebrate a momentous occasion and the first in-person commencement ceremony since the 2019 Fall Graduation. Celebratory remarks were made by assistant principals Princess Crenshaw, Amber Strawser, Tyler Arnold and his former principal Brenda Hodges-Davis. “He has dealt with roadblocks and obstacles that made his journey more difficult but nevertheless he persisted and has prevailed to be here with us tonight,” said Strawser. “He worked throughout the summer and into the fall to complete the credits needed to graduate. It would have been easy for him to walk away and enjoy the summer. Instead, Francisco...
focused on his work until his tasks were completed and his graduation goals were met.”

Superintendent Anthony G. Smith and Board of Education Vice President Katrina Rugless presented the diploma and gave the confirmation of graduate speech “hereby stating you are a graduating senior of Winton Woods High School Class of 2020.” At the end of the ceremony, all those in attendance cheered for the tossing of his cap, which he cheerfully did, signifying the completion of this step and his journey into a new one. To conclude the evening, beverages and a beautifully decorated cake stamped with the words “Congratulations Class of 2020” were served.

PHOTO CAPTION: Francisco Navarro entering the cafeteria for his graduation ceremony at Winton Woods High School. Photo by Drew Jackson.
PHOTO #2: Francisco Navarro (right) and his mother, Rosalba Lopez (left), recording his graduation ceremony. Photo by Drew Jackson.

WWCS Provides Safety See-Through Masks for Speech and ESL Students and Teachers

Verbal communication is at the forefront of how we learn, and for some students who rely on seeing lip and mouth movements, masks can be a barrier. Winton Woods City Schools, a district with a culturally diverse population of over 31 languages spoken, is prepared to make an inclusive learning environment for all. This year, see-through masks have been provided to teachers, tutors, staff, and students across the district who need these specifically designed face masks to teach and learn while remaining safe. Recipients included speech-language pathologists and their students and English as Second Language (ESL) teachers.
and English Learners (ELs). All protective coverings have a clear plastic material where the student’s mouth is positioned.

“The mask can help students who are learning to pronounce new and unfamiliar words. It helps the teachers see what the lips, teeth, and tongue are doing in order to make the different sounds,” said District ESL Coordinator Gary Giblin. “In Spanish, the letters b and v represent the same sound. However, in English, b is made with the lips coming together and then parting while v is made with the lower lip touching the upper teeth. Being able to see this process through the mask helps students learn to pronounce the different sounds correctly.”

Director of Student Services Tonya Bray said, “We have students who need to visually see and be able to look at and mimic the speech and language pathologist’s lips so that they are able to repeat and have correct articulation for speech and language. Sight and sound together are very important because this teaches our students how to form words and sounds.”

The Winton Woods City School District is host to over 1,000 EL students, whose families come from Guatemala, Mexico, Nepal, Senegal, Ghana and many other countries. Giblin spoke with some of the students who are using the masks and says they seem to be enjoying them. “The masks show that Winton Woods City Schools continues to make students’ safety and education a priority.”


PHOTO CAPTION #2: Winton Woods City Schools ESL Coordinator Gary Giblin and WWMS ESL teacher Lisa Giblin wearing new protective masks. Photo by Drew Jackson.
Winton Woods High School’s senior Nicolantonio (Nico) Prentosito is a National Merit Semifinalist. When asked how he felt when he found out he was a semifinalist, Prentosito said, “I felt good but not surprised. Semifinalists are selected based on their PSAT score. I had a good idea of what my score would be because I had taken a practice test and scored well.” To become a National Merit Commended Student this year, a selection index score of 209 was required, and to become a National Merit Semifinalist in Ohio, a selection index score of 215 was required. Nico scored 220. Each year, the National Merit Scholarship Corporation rewards exceptionally gifted scholars for their academic success. Last year, the prestigious organization rewarded over $31 million in scholarships nationwide.

Some of the academic achievements listed on Prentosito’s impressive resume include his 4.576 Grade Point Average (GPA) at Winton Woods City Schools and 4.0 GPA at Miami University. Nico has been taking college courses at Miami since 2016; he also created a non-profit called “Scholar Power” that promotes academic excellence. One of Scholar Power’s current projects is producing a video series on preparing for the PSAT, because Nico wants to help other students also do well on the test.

Nico will find out in a few months if he is advancing from semifinalist to finalist in the National Merit Scholarship Program. According to the National Merit Scholarship Corporation website, the purpose of the program is to promote a wider and deeper respect for learning. The corporation’s mission is to shine a spotlight on outstanding students and encourage the pursuit of academic excellence, and stimulate increased support from individuals and organizations that wish to sponsor scholarships for outstanding scholastic talent.

PHOTO CAPTION: Winton Woods High School senior Nico Prentosito is a National Merit Semifinalist.
WWHS Assistant Principal Selected as Equity Fellows Member

Winton Woods High School (WWHS) Assistant Principal Amber Strawser can add Equity Fellows member to her growing list of professional achievements. For the next two years, her and sixteen other hand-picked educators will dedicate a significant portion of time toward creating ways to impact their districts and local communities through independent or collaborative Fellow capstone projects. This cohort-based leadership program aims to develop, strengthen, and sustain this diverse group of exceptional leaders to influence policies and practices related to deeper learning and equity in public education across the country. “I have participated in a virtual meeting and multiple convenings,” said Strawser. “We have had a number of discussions and sessions with the authors of our readings, and I am excited to learn more and share my knowledge with my Winton Woods colleagues.”

In a welcoming newsletter to the new members Co-Directors Carlos Moreno and Claire Sylvan said, “Our goal in developing Deeper Learning Equity Fellowship is to create a diverse, expansive community of Equity Warriors who are committed to extending and ensuring deep learning opportunities to students who are historically farthest from them, due to exclusion and structural inequities.” Strawser was one of the 16 recipients selected to be a part of Deeper Learning’s fifth Equity Fellows cohort in September after her colleague, fellow cohort member, and WWHS Principal Eric Martin nominated her. In addition to her nomination, she had to complete a rigorous application and interview process. In the end, she was selected amongst 177 leaders from around the country.

PHOTO CAPTION: Winton Woods High School assistant principal Amber Strawser speaking at Winton Wood High School’s Fall Graduation ceremony. Photo by Drew Jackson.
WWCS Recognizes Principals at Board Meeting

Winton Woods City Schools honored all ten district principals at their October board meeting for National Principals Month. “These incredible administrators have been on the frontline leading the way and working tirelessly throughout the week and weekends to ensure our students receive a rich academic experience despite a global pandemic. They have been absolutely diligent in connecting with our children, families, teachers, and people in the community.” said Superintendent Anthony G. Smith. “I am glad we can recognize them for all their hard work and dedication to our staff and students.” Brenda Hodges-Davis, Jeremy Day, Jahquil Hargrove, Nelson Homan, Eric Martin, Michele Plummer, Heather Ranford, Kelly Rozelle, Doug Sanker, and Elizabeth Styles each received a certificate and a sleek glass award designed by our education partner Neusole Glassworks for their admirable efforts and contributions. PHOTO CAPTION: Winton Woods City Schools honors principals with awards for National Principals Month. Photo by Drew Jackson.

WWCS Recognizes District Nurses at Board Meeting

At the September board meeting, Winton Woods City Schools board, staff, and Superintendent Anthony G. Smith took
turns expressing their deep appreciation for their district nurses who were honored for all their work during COVID-19. Superintendent Smith thanked those “who have spent much time and effort this summer to ensure our students and staff are safe.” Each nurse was acknowledged individually and received a plaque. “These ladies have been wonderful,” said Executive Director of Human Resources Courtney Wilson, Esq. “They have taken the lead with all of our contacts to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention with suspected cases, confirmed cases, and all of the unknowns that go with COVID-19. They have kept us informed and educated and in that kept us calm.” The district nurses who received special recognition are Jinette Goins, RN; Lisa Lipp, RN; Kimberly Morris, RN; Erin LeMaster, LPN; Juanita Russell, LPN; and Marilyn Terry, LPN.

“I thank you, we appreciate you, we love what we do, and are happy to continue to serve,” said Morris.

PHOTO CAPTION: Winton Woods City Schools nurses (shown l-r) Kimberly Morris, RN; Jinette Goins, RN; and Lisa Lipp, RN, being honored at the September board meeting. Photo by Drew Jackson.

Meet Winton Woods Primary South’s New Interim Principal

Things have come full circle for Winton Woods Primary South’s (WWPS) new interim principal Michele Plummer. In 2014, she began her Warrior career at WWPS as a second-grade teacher. “Winton Woods City Schools was doing big things,” said Plummer as she reminisced on her start at the school she now leads. “They were looking for teachers who were really committed and ready to do the work. I connected with this belief system and was inspired so I interviewed at WWPS and got the job.” In 2018, she left the district for an assistant principal position. She was excited one year later when the same opportunity came to fruition at a place she had learned to
call home. Not to mention, where she loved working and teaching. “I wanted nothing more than to come back to an innovative and forward thinking district where I spent so much time educating students.”

Now, a mother of two boys, with one enrolled at Winton Woods, she could not see herself working anywhere else. “My team is amazing, and I can not imagine being with a different group of educators other than the ones I have now.” Even amidst a unique time, her aim is to continue to provide a rich, engaging learning experience for her wee warriors and have a great academic year. “With the new world of technology, our students are doing amazing things and becoming familiar with technology much earlier,” said Plummer. “We are going to see some serious growth in project-based learning now that our wee warriors are learning to share their screens, and toggle between two screens. Virtual learning has given them a new level of responsibility they have never had before. We can look forward to great things in the years to come.

PHOTO CAPTION: Winton Woods Primary South new interim principal Michele Plummer. Photo by Drew Jackson.

New Interim Principal at Winton Woods Primary North

For five years, she was known as the principal of Winton Woods Primary North’s (WWPN) 5-star Preschool Village. Now, the district welcomes her in addition to her old role, a new position as interim principal of WWPN. Elizabeth Styles made the transition just before the school year and spoke about how much her staff helped to make it a smooth transition and successful start for their students, who began the new year online with a virtual learning experience. “I am extremely grateful for my incredible staff,” said Styles, who has two sons attending WWPN. “I am proud of their determination and ability to adapt to all the changes that have come with this
unique year. I could not have done it without them.”

For this school year, Styles did not want to make many changes. “I think the system we have is great and with all the changes already being made, I did not want to add to that.” In October, the district started its blended learning model for students who wanted to return to the classroom. “All the students who are back are happy to be here, and we can tell by how their faces light up every morning when we greet them,” said Styles. “We are glad to have them back as well.” For two days of the week, students receive a more hands-on and in-person learning experience. And although this school year is unlike any other, Styles’ passion for early childhood education drives her to create an environment where all students can learn and receive a truly excellent and well-rounded education that prepares them to be future ready.

PHOTO CAPTION: Winton Woods Primary North’s new interim principal Elizabeth Styles. Photo by Drew Jackson.

WWES Welcomes Heather Ranford as Dean of Students

Winton Woods Elementary School (WWES) is glad to welcome Dean of Students Heather Ranford as a new addition to their Warrior staff for the 2020-2021 school year. Before transitioning into her new role in August, Ranford was a special education teacher for ten years. Six of those years were spent educating students in the district, including at the intermediate school, middle school, the high school and Project Success. When asked what her job entails, she mentioned that most people think it is just discipline. However, Ranford would describe it as being a mediator and helper for students, staff, and WWES Principal Nelson Homan. Since students have not been in the classroom, Ranford has had a unique experience connecting with her students. “We have never experienced school like this before. It has been great being able to grow in
a relationship with students before meeting them in person.” Ranford is a huge advocate for mental health and emotional wellness, and encourages teachers to take care of themselves in order to properly teach and care for their students. She knows the skills she has gained from her previous positions has prepared her to meet students where they are. “The connection and relationships that you build with students last forever,” said Ranford. “I’m excited to be a part of the elementary staff and looking forward to making these students my forever children.”


Winton Woods Primary North Welcomes Dean of Students Jahquil Hargrove

Each morning begins with greeting students in the hallways and making it a goal to enter each classroom. Winton Woods Primary North (WWPN) Dean of Students Jahquil Hargrove is intentional with his students, actions, and words. His morning routine serves a bigger purpose of letting his students become familiar with him as their new dean and affirming the consistent support they will receive from him. “I work closely with students, getting to know them on a personal level, and their families, to turn challenging days into positive ones.” said Hargrove. “I try to think of how I can best support them and the teachers.”

Before transitioning to his new role, Hargrove was a second grade teacher at Winton Woods Primary South (WWPS) for five years. “In college, I student taught at Winton Woods Primary South and began working there soon after.” When asked what he enjoys most about his job, he said everything, “the engagement, the smiles, the stress, all
of it.” He knew this job would be difficult and challenging but rewarding more than anything. “Even when I was a kid, I loved being around kids.” said Hargrove who will be working with the new WWPN Interim Principal Elizabeth Styles for the 2020-2021 school year.

PHOTO CAPTION: Winton Woods Primary North’s dean of students Jahquil Hargrove. Photo by Drew Jackson.

Weekly Warrior Highlights

Our Winton Woods varsity football team had an amazing season. We are proud of them and the positive attitude they displayed during this topsy-turvy season. Here are some eye-opening stats and facts we’d like to highlight:

During our first official year in the East Cincinnati Conference, we became league co-champions; Winton Woods High School’s head coach Andre Parker was named Coach of the Year; Defensive Player of the Year is Winton Woods High School senior Cam Sanders, co-Offensive Player of the Year is Winton Woods High School senior MiChale Wingfield; Andrew Booker, Tamarion Crumpley, Will Edwards, Cam Sanders, Tyrek Spikes, Mikhale Stewart, Caleb Tubbs, and MiChale Wingfield made All-Conference First Team; Nate Mofford, Leonard Taylor, Seven Blue, Tyvon Boler, and Jayron Gibson made All-
Conference Second Team; and Cortez Gatewood made All-Conference Honorable Mention.

It truly takes a village to make our district a district of destination, and even though there are no official categories and ratings for our amazing band and incredible cheerleaders, they are essential ingredients to our successful season and music and athletic programs. We are stronger together. We are Warriors.
Congratulations to our varsity football team’s ECC Conference award recipients! #GoWarriors

WWHS Key Club prepared goody bags for 50 of the Alios Center senior citizens and administrative staff. Advisors Kathy Gray and Christina Jeranek delivered the bags for the students who were all present on a Google Meet call to greet and thank them. Key Club President Camron Love said it was to show their care for the residents and appreciation to the staff for all they do. After the delivery, he mentioned to the students “being virtual does not have to limit our ability to contribute to a greater cause.” #GoWarriors #TheWarriorWay
Meal Distribution Reminder

Reminder Warrior Families: Our Child Nutrition Department will be distributing meals every Wednesday at Winton Woods Intermediate School from 3:30 to 7 p.m. for our virtual learning students. Warrior families unable to make this time can call (513) 619-2480 to schedule an appointment for pick up. For more information about student meal distribution, please visit https://rb.gy/lzubbp. #NutritionIsTheMission

Health Check

Check out this informative article by our community partner Mercy Health on learning the differences between allergies, colds, flu and COVID-19: https://bit.ly/3I6hAkb. Stay healthy and be safe Warriors!
Virtual Campus Videos

Check out this cool virtual video of our South Campus for Grades K-6. For more construction updates about our new innovative campuses, go to wintonwoods.org/construction-update. https://bit.ly/2FdsgxB.

Check out this cool virtual video of our North Campus for Grades 7-12. For more construction updates about our new innovative campuses, go to wintonwoods.org/construction-update.https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OM6JLSf40MY.

Storytime with Superintendent Smith

Our Wee Warriors can follow along as Superintendent Anthony G. Smith reads "I Promise" by Lebron James as a welcome back to our kindergarten students on their first day back in the school buildings.

https://youtu.be/ejjL_pHlUn4
We are pleased to share the latest issue (11/6/2020) of the Weekly Blitz Construction Update. For additional information, go to www.wintonwoods.org/construction-update. #CreatingOpportunities
Winton Woods Today is a weekly (during the school year) email newsletter that reflects the district’s emphasis on global education and project-based learning, as well as staff and student accomplishments. If you would like to subscribe to the Winton Woods Today email newsletter, please email Drew Jackson. For additional articles, visit our website at www.wintonwoods.org/news.

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