



# The Journal

## That's a wrap on the 2023-24 school year!

by Susan G. Trombley  
President, Board of Education



As we close out the 2023-24 school year, I want to thank our amazing WCS employees for a great year. If you are an educator, member of our support staff, administrator, coach, custodian, bus driver, volunteer, or serve in any other role here at WCS, on behalf of the Board of Education, thank you for your outstanding commitment to our students and the community. Our staff's efforts to keep our kids safe, engaged and motivated are to be commended.

I would also like to take a moment to thank our Superintendent, Dr. Robert D. Livernois, for his years of commitment and service to this district. Under his leadership, WCS has thrived. Dr. Livernois' leadership through challenging times such as declines in state funding, facility reconfigurations, curriculum and technology infrastructure, and the pandemic is admirable. The WCS family will miss him tremendously. My board colleagues and I wish him the best in his next chapter.

Throughout the summer the district will continue to fulfill community promises as it works to complete Bond work at Green Acres Elementary, Harwood Elementary, Lean Elementary, Beer Middle School, and Warren Mott High School. Bond work includes critical need HVAC upgrades,

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## Superintendent set to retire after 36 years in education

After a distinguished 36-year career in public education, Dr. Robert D. Livernois, Superintendent of Warren Consolidated Schools, will retire effective August 30, 2024.

In 1988, Livernois embarked on his educational journey as a substitute teacher and then English teacher at South Lake High School, his alma mater. In 1998, he transitioned to Warren Woods Public Schools, where he began his administrative career as an Assistant Principal at Warren Woods Tower High School, later assuming the role of Principal. During his tenure in Warren Woods, Livernois became Director of Curriculum and then ultimately, Superintendent in 2005.

In 2008, Livernois was appointed Superintendent of WCS, where he has served the community with distinction for the past 16 years.

"Dr. Livernois is an incredibly stable force in our community," Board of Education President Susan Trombley said. "It is difficult to quantify what he has meant to our district given his steadfast devotion to the students, staff, and the community at large."

Trombley cited Livernois' leadership through challenges such as the 2008 recession, declines in state funding, facility reconfigurations, curriculum and technology infrastructure, and most recently, the pandemic.

Throughout his tenure, Livernois achieved numerous milestones that enhanced opportunities for students and staff within WCS. Reflecting on his time in the district, Livernois expressed pride in the Board of Education for their commitment to respect, efficiency, and hard work, serving as models for the community. He also cherished the privilege of living and working in a district where his own children attended school.

One of the current longest-serving K-12 superintendents in the state, Livernois leaves behind a legacy characterized by high expectations, a focus on student achievement, and a commitment to strong relationships. Looking ahead, Livernois plans to pursue educa-



Livernois, appointed Superintendent of Warren Consolidated Schools in 2008, announced his retirement from the district after 16-years at the helm of one of Macomb County's largest school districts.

tion consulting and continue his teaching at the university level, while spending more time with his wife, Jeanne, and their family.

The WCS community extends its deepest gratitude to Dr. Robert D. Livernois for his unwavering dedication and exemplary leadership.

Livernois will be replaced by Dr. John Bernia. Bernia is currently the superintendent of Walled Lake Consolidated School District in Oakland County. Prior to joining Walled Lake, Bernia was the Chief Academic Officer of Warren Consolidated Schools. Bernia is expected to start on July 1, where he will work alongside Livernois during a two-month transition period.

Read more about the appointment of Dr. Bernia on page 2 of *The Journal* Newsletter.



One of the most rewarding aspects of being Superintendent for Livernois was visiting schools and classrooms. You could always find Livernois in an elementary classroom during Reading Month, sharing stories, wowing students with magic tricks, and he even taught a few classes how to tie a Windsor knot!

## Class of 2024 Point of Pride



The Class of 2024 was awarded more than **\$14 million in scholarships!** Their hard work and dedication have paid off. Here's to dynamic futures and endless possibilities!

## Congratulations Class of 2024

by Robert D. Livernois, Ph.D.—Superintendent of Schools



I was the youngest of six children in my family. In fact, my parents had six children in eight years, and at the time I was born, they already had five other children, eight years old and younger.

For those of you, like me, who grew up youngest in your family, you may be able to relate to never being smart enough, tough enough, or in many cases tall enough, at least for a while.

You may also know that youngest children, like us, often acquire language faster, are risk takers, seek attention, and are persistent. However, despite all these challenges, growing up the youngest afforded us something very special, and that was to be part of something bigger than ourselves, which was part of a family.

Whether or not you were youngest in your family, in a few years from now, when you look back on your high school career, you will always have something in common, which is the simple fact that you were part of something bigger than yourselves, which was the Class of 2024, which is very much like a big family.

Whether you played sports, marched in the band, sang on stage, were in Leadership, Student Council, the National Honor Society or simply had a great group of friends, you were part of something bigger than yourself and it gave you an identity. And when you look back on this time

in your life, you will appreciate that attending school was really a universal human experience that you all share. As a measure of it, ask anyone you know, whether your Mom, Dad, Grandma or Grandpa, or even your next-door neighbor, and they will all be able to tell you the year they graduated high school, what their team mascot was, and even their school colors -- for me it was 40 years ago as a member of the Class of 1984, our mascot was the Cavalier, and Blue and Gold were our school colors. It is something we just do not forget because it is all about being a part of something bigger than ourselves.

So, as you walk down that aisle and through those doors to set a new course in your life, no matter the path, I encourage you to be a part of something bigger than yourselves. Whether you start your own family, maintain a close circle of friends, serve your place of worship, or go on to success in the workplace, BE A PART OF SOMETHING, because you will help make the world a better place, and you will be better because of it.

As I close this message in what is my final correspondence, it has been an extraordinary honor and privilege to serve as your superintendent, which by all accounts, has afforded me the opportunity to be part of something bigger than myself, and I am hopeful that I have made Warren Consolidated Schools a better place because it most certainly has made me a better person. Congratulations Class 2024. My best to each of you.

## Dr. Bernia appointed Superintendent

The Warren Consolidated Schools Board of Education unanimously voted to appoint Dr. John C. Bernia as the next superintendent of schools at their May 1, Board meeting.

Bernia is currently the superintendent of Walled Lake Consolidated School District in Oakland County. Prior to joining Walled Lake Consolidated School District, Bernia served as the Chief Academic Officer for Warren Consolidated Schools for six years.



Dr. John C. Bernia

"I do not know of anyone more suited to fill Dr. Livernois' shoes at this time," Board President Susan Trombley said. "The familiarity with our district and the comments made during his interview were overwhelming that this is the right choice for WCS."

Bernia brings with him a combined 21 years in public education. He began his career as a 7<sup>th</sup> grade Social Studies teacher in Lake Orion Community Schools, was promoted to assistant principal and principal in Lake Orion, served as principal at Carleton Middle School in WCS, before being appointed the WCS Chief Academic Officer in 2016.

While at Warren Consolidated Schools, Bernia served as a member of the superintendent's cabinet, supervised and lead building administrators, the curriculum department, Special Education department, public relations, and student services. Bernia also served as the superintendent's designee for bond projects.

Bernia holds a Doctorate in Education in Organizational Leadership from Oakland University, an Education Specialist Degree in Education Leadership from Oakland University, and a Master of Arts degree in Education Leadership from Oakland University.

"I can't tell you what this means to me and my family," Bernia said. "I can't describe how hard it was to leave this district, but we are so excited to come back here and be part of the community again. I can't thank the board enough for the opportunity, and I want you to know that I will come back and work as hard as you would expect me to and deliver a product you can be proud of."

Bernia's expected start date is July 1, where he will work alongside Livernois during a two-month transition period.

"Dr. Livernois saw something in me that I didn't see in myself a long time ago, and I owe him a lot," Bernia said. "I know how much he cares about WCS and I promise you, I will take good care of it."

Bernia is married to Jennifer, and together they have two daughters.

## Trombley—continued from page 1

flooring replacement, and site work improvements.

Security upgrades are taking place throughout the district, which include a new public address system integrated with classroom audio systems. Other upgrades include new playground equipment slated to be installed at each elementary school, and the re-purposing of the Angus Elementary building to house

Early Childhood Special Education classrooms.

There will be a lot of work going on in the district this summer, and I can't wait for our community to see the upgrades in the fall.

I wish the WCS community a safe and restful summer and I look forward to seeing our students when school resumes on August 28.

## Around the district...

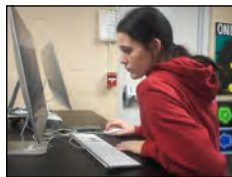
### CTE students awarded

The Macomb Career and Technical Education Administrators Association (MCTEAA), honored Macomb County's most outstanding career and technical education students during its annual MCTEAA Awards Breakfast. During this year's event, MCTEAA honored WCS students Dylan Boucher and Dakota Rapson.

**Dylan Boucher**, a senior at Sterling Heights High School and a second year student in the Computer Information Systems program at the Career Prep Center, was awarded Outstanding CTE Student. Boucher is described by his teacher as a hard worker, who is always willing to help his classmates when they need assistance. Between working with several programming languages, learning about computer hardware, software, and operating systems, and helping fellow students, Dylan maintains the computer lab and computer repairs station. Dylan plans on majoring in Computer Information Systems, focusing on cybersecurity in college.



**Dakota Rapson**, a junior at Cousino High School and a third-year student in the Advanced Video, Film & Radio class at the Career Prep Center. Her teacher describes her as a constant force who pushed the entire broadcasting and film program toward excellence. As a student leader, Dakota is the Program Director for WPHS FM (Macomb County's only high school operated radio station). As a broadcast talent and mentor, Dakota has been instrumental in the launch of Cousino's new Video Announcement class. She has hosted several live programs, played significant roles in two award-winning short films, and is a positive influence for broadcast newcomers. In addition to her academic interests, Dakota is an exceptional student-athlete. Her future career options include media production, education, and the mental health field.



### Schools honored with Green Schools designations

Twenty-one Warren Consolidated Schools were recognized by the Macomb County Board of Commissioners for their efforts in "going green" at the 2024 Renewable Energy Michigan Green Schools Celebration.

The Michigan Green Schools program is an educational initiative which encourages students to participate in activities that are good for the environment and promote energy efficiency and savings. Categories include: recycling, energy savings, environmental protection, and special activities.

Schools are categorized into green, emerald, or evergreen status based on how many activities the school performs to preserve natural resources, protect the environment, and promote energy efficiency and savings.

The following schools received Green School designations for 2024:

**Evergreen**—Black Elementary, Career Prep Center, Carleton Middle School, Cousino High School, Cromie Elementary, Susick Elementary, Warren Mott High School, Wilkerson Elementary, Willow Woods Elementary.

**Emerald**—Butcher Educational Center, Jefferson Elementary, Pearl Lean Elementary, Sterling Heights High School, Wilde Elementary.

**Green**—Carter Middle School, Community High School, Green Acres Elementary, Grissom Middle School, Harwood Elementary, Holden Elementary, Siersma Elementary.

### WCS receives recognition for Music Education

Warren Consolidated Schools was recently honored with the Best Communities for Music Education designation from The National Association of Music Merchants Foundation (NAMM) for its outstanding commitment to music education.

The Best Communities for Music Education designation is awarded to school districts that demonstrate outstanding achievement to provide music access and education to all students.

To qualify for the Best Communities designation, a team of music educators from Warren Consolidated Schools answered detailed questions about funding, graduation requirements, music class participation, instruction time, facilities, and support for the music program and community music-making programs. Responses were verified by school officials and reviewed by The Music Research Institute at the University of Kansas.

"The benefits of music education for students is immense," Chief Academic Officer David Meengs said. "Warren Consolidated Schools is fortunate to have a team of music educators who

work tirelessly to offer music education in our schools."

Warren Consolidated Schools is among 975 school districts awarded the Best Communities for Music Education in the nation, and is one of five school districts in Macomb County to receive the designation.

"Music is important to our schools because it allows students to be expressive, while also learning life skills, such as leadership, determination, and grit, while also helping students to develop a high level of empathy and social skills," said Jason Rose, Director of Bands and Choirs at Cousino High School. "Our team of music teachers is second to none, and strives to serve our community by providing a comprehensive music education that is accessible to all students, K-12."



### MEET UP and EAT UP

The WCS Meet Up and Eat Up FREE summer meals program for children 18 years-old and younger, is taking place at Black Elementary, Carleton Middle School, Cousino High School, Holden Elementary, Jefferson Elementary, Willow Woods Elementary, and Wilde Elementary School throughout the summer. Visit WCSKIDS.NET for dates, times, and locations.

## WARREN CONSOLIDATED SCHOOLS

# NOW HIRING

Join our team!

Open Positions Starting at:

✔ Bus Drivers - \$24.00	✔ Classroom Aide - \$17.41
✔ Custodial - \$18.59	✔ Latchkey Caregiver - \$16.00
✔ Nutrition Services - \$16.04	✔ Locker Room Aide - \$16.00
✔ Skilled Trades - \$28.72	✔ Secretary - \$18.87

\$500 signing bonus upon completion of probation period.

Visit [WCSKIDS.NET/EMPLOYMENT](http://WCSKIDS.NET/EMPLOYMENT) or call 586.698.4521 for employment opportunities.

**Warren Consolidated Schools**  
31300 Anita Drive  
Warren, MI 48093  
**1.888.4WCS.KIDS**  
**WCSKIDS.NET**

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## Stay connected...



## Congratulations Outstanding Teachers of the Year

Warren Consolidated Schools named **Jeff Gruca**, **Jennifer Huyghe**, and **Amy Trandell** as the district's Outstanding Teacher of the Year recipients for 2024.

"Jeff, Jennifer, and Amy's remarkable dedication to the teaching profession, the inclusive learning environments they create, and their efforts to embrace a commitment to collective efficacy are to be commended," Chief Academic Officer David Meengs said. "Their recognition serves as a reminder that Warren Consolidated Schools is a place where great things happen every day."

**Jeff Gruca** is a 6th grade Math teacher at Grissom Middle School. He has been with Warren Consoli-

dated Schools for the past 19 years. He has also coached at Warren Mott and Cousino High School, and Grissom Middle School.

**Jennifer Huyghe** teaches 10<sup>th</sup> grade general and honors level English and Public Speaking at Sterling Heights High School. She is also the National Honor Society advisor. She has been with the district for the past 24 years.

**Amy Trandell** is a Special Education teacher in the Resource Room at Wilkerson Elementary, where she meets with students to provide direct instruction in reading, written expression, and Mathematics. She has been with WCS for the past 22 years.

## Register TODAY: Early Childhood and Transitional Kindergarten

Warren Consolidated Schools is currently accepting registration for the following early childhood and transitional kindergarten programs.

The programs focus on early childhood objectives for development and learning including

### Transitional Kindergarten—

- FREE full-day program
- Five days per week
- For students born between September 1 and December 1, who would benefit from an additional year of growth between preschool and kindergarten.
- A program that combines academics with critical social and emotional development standards

### World of Fours—

- Must meet income eligibility guidelines and be a Macomb County resident to qualify
- Half-day and full-day programs available
- Must be 4 years old on or before September 1

### Tuition-based Preschool—

- 30 week program
- For students who will be 3 years of age on or before September 1; Class meets two days per week for two hours

- For students who will be 4 years of age on or before September 1; Class meets four days per week for three hours

### Early Childhood Special Education—

- Special Education preschool program for children ages 3-6 with a current IEP
- Offers half-day programs and one full-day program
- Classes taught by a certified special education teacher with one paraprofessional per classroom
- Skills taught include: communication, behavior training, fine motor, gross motor, and preschool academics individualized to the student

### Project Find—

- Concerns about your preschooler's communication, behavior, physical or cognitive skills? Concerns that your preschooler is developmentally delayed or might have autism?
- Call 586.698.4129 to request a Project Find preschool-age child screening today

**For more information on the district's Early Childhood programs, call 586.698.4046 or visit WCSKIDS.net.**

## 2024-25 Calendar

**August 28**—K-12 half day; No PM ECSE

**August 29**—K-12 half day; No AM ECSE; PM reports in AM

**August 30-September 2**—NO SCHOOL; Labor Day Break

**September 17**—K-12 Early Release

**October 2**—Official Student Count Day

**October 9**—K-12 full day; 6-12 grade ONLY Evening Parent Teacher Conferences

**October 10**—K-12 half day; No PM ECSE; 6-12 grade ONLY afternoon and evening Parent Teacher Conferences

**October 15**—K-12 Early Release

**October 23**—K-12 full day; K-5 ONLY evening Parent Teacher Conferences

**October 24**—K-12 half day; No AM ECSE; PM reports in AM; K-5 ONLY afternoon and evening Parent Teacher Conferences

**November 5**—NO SCHOOL

**November 8**—K-12 half day; AM ECSE; No PM ECSE

**November 26**—K-12 half day; No AM ECSE; PM reports in AM

**November 27-29**—NO SCHOOL; Thanksgiving Break

**December 10**—K-12 Early Release

**December 23-January 3**—NO SCHOOL; Winter Break

**January 15**—9-12 half day; High School exams

**January 16**—9-12 half day; High School exams

**January 17**—K-12 half-day; ECSE AM only; NO PM ECSE; High School exams

**January 20**—NO SCHOOL; Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

**January 28**—K-12 Early Release

**February 12**—Supplemental Student Count Day

**February 14**—K-12 half day; No AM ECSE

**February 17-21**—NO SCHOOL; Mid-Winter Break

**March 4**—K-12 Early Release

**March 13**—K-12 half day; No PM ECSE; K-12 afternoon and evening Parent Teacher Conferences

**March 18**—K-12 Early Release

**March 21**—K-12 half day; No AM ECSE

**March 24-31**—NO SCHOOL; Spring Break

**April 9**—HS/MS Testing Day (date subject to change/schedules to follow)

**April 15**—K-12 Early Release

**April 18**—NO SCHOOL district wide

**May 6**—NO SCHOOL district wide

**May 13**—K-12 Early Release

**May 23**—K-12 half day; AM ECSE only; Senior Last Day

**May 26**—NO SCHOOL; Memorial Day

**June 7**—High School Graduation Ceremonies

**June 10**—9-11 half day; High School exams

**June 11**—9-11 half day; High School exams

**June 12**—K-12 half day; No AM ECSE; PM reports in AM; High School exams