

Westhill News



WESTHILL AND PROUD
www.westhillweb.com

Volume 3, Issue 2
Spring, 2014

All Settled In: Westhill Peer Mentoring Program a Huge Success!

By Lisa Forbes, Social Department Head and Peer Mentoring Coordinator

Westhill High School recognizes that the transition to high school is a major event in the life of a young person. There are numerous studies that show the transition to high school is marked by a period of stress for adolescents, often times the result is a decrease in academic achievement and difficult social adjustment.

Thanks to our Junior and Senior Peer Mentors the Westhill Peer Mentor Program ***Viking to Viking*** is finishing up an extremely successful year of mentoring. The overall purpose of the Peer Mentor Program is to:

- To pair upper-classman with freshman to improve the high school culture through positive

relationships;

- To assist all 9th grade students in the process of adjusting to Westhill High School;
- To promote student success through academic support and skill development.

When asked in a survey whether or not the mentoring program helped them transition to high school and if they en-



joyed their time spent with peer mentors, more than 80% of ninth graders responded positively. Asked if they would suggest the program for incoming freshmen, almost 90% said yes.

Heartfelt thanks to the WPTSO for the unique and extravagant treats they prepared for all of us throughout **Teacher Appreciation Week**.

Call the Westhill Sports Hotline at (203) 977-5705 for up-to-the-minute news on athletic events.

Help for Students...

The Humanities Resource Center, (HRC) located in Room 426, is at the ready to support student achievement in ELA and Social Studies classes. Teachers in the HRC provide students with individual academic support, enrichment opportunities, and access to technology. Teachers may send students to the HRC during a class period to:

- Make up a timed write or an exam in a supervised environment;

- work individually with a teacher on a particular assignment;
- work on a computer ;
- complete skill-based learning activities.

HRC teachers can also provide students with study skills and strategies that will help them prepare for finals.

In addition, **Writing Center** seniors are available daily for extra help; students from all grades can drop off essays for written feed

back. On 'A' Days students can schedule an appointment with a Writing Center student consultant for one on one support. Writing Center is taught by Mrs. Brown and meets in Room 219.

For yet another opportunity for extra help and support, **Period 8 teachers and National Honor Society students** provide tutoring in all subjects on Thursdays in the WHS Media Center from 2:15 to 3:00 pm.

Who Should Take Advanced Placement Computer Science Next Year?

by Chandon Sarkar, Math Teacher

Does your son or daughter like to play video games? Wonder how they are created? Computer Science is the science (and the art) of writing specific instructions that tell a computer what to do. Programmers use computer languages to perform this task.

These days, a computer language called *Java* is the most popular way of doing this – it is the language we use to teach Advanced Placement (AP) Computer Science at Westhill. But the specific language is not as important as learning the basic concepts of: how to tell a computer what to do, how to write code that others can maintain for decades, how to document work, and how to write software. These are ideas students will be able to use forever, even as computer languages continue to evolve. So, while students in the course will learn and use Java (which, in itself, is a highly marketable skill) the focus will be on learning key programming concepts.

If your son or daughter has never taken an AP course before, this AP course may be a great place to start. Is your son or daughter good at math? Does he or she like to work on computers? Have strong artistic or music skills? These are usually good

indicators that a student is an excellent candidate for this course. Even for students who have no future plans in the field of computers, skills learned in AP Computer Science will be invaluable. Here are some real life examples of how the ability to program a computer can enhance life:

- A soccer league needs someone to set up teams for the upcoming season. Each player has a profile that includes height, speed, goals scored in the previous year, experience level, etc. There are 100 players in the league. The job is to set up 10 teams of equal ability. How might a person do this? By putting each profile on an index card and moving them all around on the floor? Imagine doing this at the start of every season or, when some players leave and others enter the system? A computer programmer can handle this task easily and efficiently.
- In math class, the assignment is to figure out how many different ways (using U.S. money) to make \$2.63 cents. Students list all the ways but want to be sure they haven't forgotten any. For a computer science student it's

easy - a short program can print out all the possibilities.

- A physician has a booming practice and wants to be certain to accurately track patients' progress. He or she needs a computer program that can process huge amounts of data. A doctor with knowledge of Computer Science can easily tell programmers exactly what they need.

There are many advantages to taking AP Computer Science. In addition to the opportunity a student has to earn college credit while in high school, one of the biggest benefits is that a student can learn early if software engineering and programming is a path they may wish to pursue. This knowledge can help winnow career choices and help in selecting the right college. In addition, AP Computer Science students who take additional computer science courses in college have a significant advantage over their peers. Lastly, have you seen how competitive the summer job market has gotten lately? How do you think Java programming experience will look on your son or daughter's resume?

Family Center's School Based Health Center at Westhill High School

What is a School Based Health Center?

A free standing medical center located on school grounds that provides medical, mental health and dental services.

What services does the School Based Health Center provide?

-Physical exams for school and college
-Sports physicals
-Treatment of acute injuries and illnesses such as colds, ear infections, skin problems, etc.

-Laboratory testing
-Assistance with chronic diseases
-Diagnosis and treatment of STDs
-Nutrition counseling and weight management
-Immunizations
-Crisis intervention
-Prescription and dispensing of medication
-Individual, family and group counseling regarding family and school issues
-Dental Care
-Referral & follow-up specialty care

Who can use the School Based Health Center?

All students who are enrolled at WHS and have completed a SBHC enrollment form with their parent/guardian signature.

Who Staffs the School Based Health Center?

Licensed nurse practitioners, clinical social workers, medical assistants and dental staff that specialize in child/adolescent health.

Thanks to Stamford Sports & Spine who honored all Teachers & Staff during Teacher Appreciation Week by providing free chair massage, pampering, and fun!

End of Year Reminders

A Reminder About Early Dismissal:

If there is a need for your child to leave school early, please send in a note (including a morning telephone number to confirm dismissal) with your child. They will be issued a yellow dismissal pass from class and you can meet your child in the office. Students should report to the main office before the warning bell for Block 1 to get the dismissal approved. We are hoping to greatly decrease the classroom interruptions that occur when we do not follow this procedure...

A Reminder About Absences:

When students are absent from school, on their return, they are to report to the **main office between 7 to 7:30** in the morning and see Mr. Pereira for a re-admit slip. Students must bring documentation for their absences.

Grade 11 students will take the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) assessments at various dates and times between 5/19 and 5/30. Daily schedules for students in grades 9, 10, and 11 will not be impacted by the 11th grade testing.

A Reminder About Student Parking:

With a school assigned permit, juniors and seniors are permitted to park in the lots designated for students in the front of Westhill. Students are not permitted to park in the lots near the football, baseball, or softball fields or on the sides or in the back of buildings as those lots are for teachers, guests, and Stamford Health Center visitors who display official hang tags. Students who do not park where assigned will have stickers placed on their cars beginning May 1st and may lose their parking privileges.

A Reminder About Leaving Campus:

Westhill is a closed campus. Students may not leave the campus or be anywhere outside **on** the campus for any reason without proper permission.

Upcoming Events

Saturday, May 3rd, 10th, and 17th~FFA Plant Sale.

Thursday, May 22nd~World Language Honor Society Induction. 7-8 pm in the media center

Friday, May 23rd~Junior Prom at The Italian Center, Stamford, CT. 8pm to midnight. Tickets are on sale through Friday, May 9th.

Tuesday, May 27th~National Honor Society Induction. 6-9 pm, WHS auditorium.

Thursday, May 29th~AVID Family Night.

Friday, May 30th~Senior Prom at The Hyatt Regency Hotel, Greenwich, CT.

8pm to midnight. Tickets are on sale through Friday, May 23rd. *After Prom at Westhill High School immediately following the prom until 3am.*

Tuesday, June 3rd~Meet the Coaches Night. 6:30 pm in the media center.

Thursday, June 5th~FFA Awards Banquet.

Thursday, June 5th~Spring Concert. 7pm, WHS auditorium.

Monday, June 9th~Senior Awards Night. 7pm, WHS auditorium.

Friday, June 13th~Rainbow Ball at the Italian Center, Stamford, CT. 8~12 pm.

Tuesday, June 17th~Academy of Finance Graduation. 6:30 pm in the media center.

Thursday, June 19th~ Graduation. 6 pm on the football field.

SENIOR CELEBRATION: MASQUERADE BALL

Senior Prom is a very special event to celebrate the culmination of your student's efforts over the past four years. It is a memorable gala that takes a lot of work and planning. Senior Prom is in fact for seniors who are graduating with the class of 2014. Inclusion of August graduates is determined by Ms. Figluizzi and her administrators on a case by case basis. Students who have been

expelled and or are suspended the week leading up to prom are not permitted to attend. Students who have repeatedly broken school rules can also have this privilege revoked. Seniors who will be repeating their senior year shall attend their senior prom with their actual graduating class.

All students attending the prom are required to submit a

contract to be signed by the student and his or her parent/guardian, as well as a table plan indicating the ten people with whom they wish to sit, when they purchase prom tickets from May 12th- May 23rd. Tickets will be on sale before/after school and during 3rd lunch wave. Seniors who have not completed their senior dues obligation will not be able to purchase a prom ticket.