

# Western Hills High School Cougar Pause



**We Are...Western Hills**

Volume 1, Issue 1

IMAGINE THE POSSIBILITIES

## Principal's Corner with Mr. Wellman



James Wellman: Principal WHHS

The beginning of school stirs up a great deal of anxiety for both students and parents. I am feeling the anxiety as a parent for the first time as my own has entered kindergarten. I question myself constantly as to whether my 5 year old is ready for school, did I do all the right things, etc. As I began to write this monthly piece, I reflect on not only my son's adventure into school, but my own as well. I recall as a young child what it felt like to be a slow reader, but shining in math. I remember taking achievement tests I was told to "do your best" on, rather than a high stakes test that determines what grade I am in. I recall having nap times and

extended recess in kindergarten rather than 2 hours of reading and math and learning how to journal and taking reading tests in the first few weeks of school.... Times have certainly changed from my kindergarten year in 1974.

This leads me to Western Hills High School in September 2009. We were working with students after school from 3:45 – 5:45 on items they either missed in class due to attendance or simply did not do in class. Regardless of the reason students are out, at the high school level they are expected to complete the work they missed. An excused absence does not excuse them from doing the work. **All** students are expected to complete **all** work in **all** their classes. This is where I need your help. As my son's teacher requests that I sit with my son and work on

reading & math every night, I am simply asking you to verbally check on what your child is doing in classes. Are they bringing work home? Do they have any remnants of projects they are supposed to be working on at home? Do you ever see textbooks at the house? If you feel you may not be getting the "entire" story, I highly advise you to access our school's website located on the FWISD website at [www.fortworthisd.org](http://www.fortworthisd.org). Look under the schools tab at the top, then to High schools and select Western Hills HS. Most of our teachers have websites they host on this site and can provide valuable information to you. You also may just need the teachers' contact information. Each teachers' name is hyperlinked, so you can simply click and email them directly. These are some quick and easy items to

### Special points of interest:

- PARENTS ARE INTEGRAL TO STUDENT SUCCESS
- NINE CHOIR STUDENTS ADVANCE TO ROUND TWO TMEA ALL STATE CHOIR
- WESTERN HILLS STUDENTS ARE GLOBALLY MINDED

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# Western Hills High School

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## Principal's Corner contd...

*I AM SIMPLY ASKING YOU TO VERBALLY CHECK ON WHAT YOUR CHILD IS DOING IN CLASSES.*

checklist with your teenager. Please understand that if they are failing in a six weeks at some point late in the grading period, they will be pulled to the cafeteria to get caught up on their work. There will be no bus at 5:45 to provide transportation home, so our 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade academic team teachers will be calling you in advance to let you know when your teenager is going to be pulled for this makeup time and you will need to arrange transportation for your son / daughter on that day. I was in each study session with between 20-30 students in each one. I can honestly say that sessions were not pleasant at first, but students were getting caught up. My plea for

help from you is that students are not in there in the first place. Hopefully some of the information I have provided above will help with that. If you have questions or concerns, feel free to contact the school, your teens' teachers, or myself. I thank you for your time.

## Cougar Idol Kicks Off Homecoming

The fifth annual Cougar Idol Talent Competition on Monday, October 5th was a great success. Playing to a very large audience at WHHS, vocalists, dancers, instrumentalists, and even a magician wowed the audience with their talent. The winners in each category were, Vocals: Spencer Burton, who also played his guitar, Instrumental: Cody Mazza, Dance: The Lost Boys with William Hoover, Michael Freeman, Dominique Williams, Jordan Gatewood, and Nathaniel Peoples. The

Larry Boston and Debra Rue

show closed with Miscellaneous winner, Devin Hall performing magic. Mercedes Hughes was chosen as the Cougar Idol for her original song and dance routine. Mercedes will ride in a convertible during the Homecoming Parade.

## Students Clean-Up At Western Hill

Samantha Siebenthall & Alyssa Harrington



Junior, Kim Riddle recently organized a trash pickup at Western Hills.

During these first few weeks of school students have been learning about global warming, and how to improve the environment.

Junior Kim Riddle did her part by organizing a trash-pickup at Western Hills, the trash-pick up

was very successful with about 10 people showing up. Kim says, "I did it because the campus needed it, and it was good for the environment." Her English teacher, Mrs. Williamson, says, "It's not the maintenance guys job!". Kim and her

crew will be meeting with Mr. Cerja to organize a school-wide paper recycling program. There will be more trash-pickups throughout the school year. If you would like to join Kim's crew, please contact Mrs. Cindi Williamson.

## Moving Forward Toward A Global Perspective — IB Progress

The teachers and students are working diligently toward authorization to become an International Baccalaureate (IB) World School. Although WHHS is in the candidacy phase of the Middle Years Program, teachers have begun full implementation of the IB Middle Years Program (MYP) curriculum. Western Hills teachers are attending training across the country and bringing back valuable teaching strategies to help make the Western Hills pyramid schools the best in the district.

The MYP Program is for all students in 6<sup>th</sup> through 10<sup>th</sup> grade. While the MYP is challenging, the IB curriculum does not change or advance the content in each subject area; however, the content is placed in a real-world context which is meaningful to students. This strategy enables students to learn how to learn and understand their world so they may become life-long learners.

Western Hills is also preparing to teach the IB Diploma Program (DP) to Juniors beginning next fall. This year's sophomores will be eligible to apply to this rigorous program. Similar to Advanced Placement

courses, the Diploma Program awards college credit. The DP, however, requires students to take these advanced courses in 6 subjects over their Junior and Senior year. DP students also engage in international service activities, write an Extended Essay (similar to a senior thesis) and the Theory of Knowledge course which focuses on the question, "how do we know what we know?" Colleges in Texas award a minimum of 24 hours of college credit to Diploma Graduates.

Central to the IB Programs is the development of international-mindedness. The Learner Profile outlines the ten most important attributes of an international-minded person and answers the question, "How do we learn best?" At Western Hills, students and teachers are learning to embody the ten characteristics of the IB Learner Profile: inquirers, thinkers, communicators, risk-takers, knowledgeable, principled, caring, open-minded, well-balanced and reflective.

Stephanie Stuart

## They Are...Western Hills Now

The Western Hills High School Administration is excited to announce new teachers and staff for the 2009-2010 school year. Their presence and expertise compliment the wonderful teaching staff at WHHS. Please give a BIG Cougar welcome to the following teachers: English: Celia Cephas and Georgia Clark; World Languages: Kim Hyde; Mathematics: Linda Moreno and

Bobby Shed; Music: Kristen Hall; Science: April Altman, Tommy Hamiter, and Gary Tolar; Social Studies: Tim Summers and Brian Traugher; Special Education: Hillary Timmers; Technology Education: Mike Smith; Family and Consumer Science: Jill Gibbons; and Administration: Bill Hudson, and Jill Lively.

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Western Hills is in the process of becoming an IB Middle Years and Diploma Programme School

AT WESTERN  
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STUDENTS AND  
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## We Are...Western Hills

# WESTERN HILLS HIGH SCHOOL

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Western Hills is a member school of Fort Worth Independent School District. Western Hills High School welcomes students of all races, colors, national origins, ages, handicapping conditions, religions and military status.

Western Hills is a candidate school\* for the Middle Years Programme and the Diploma Programme. This school is pursuing authorization as an IB World School. These are schools that share a common philosophy—a commitment to high quality, challenging, international education that Western Hills believes is important for our students.

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### We're on the web at:

<http://schools.fwisd.org/westernhills>

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## Cougar Choir

Western Hills Cougar Choir members blazed through Round 1 TMEA All-State Choir competition in Granbury on September 26. A total of nine students advanced to Round 2 competition which will be held on October 31 in Stephenville. Leading the pack of advancing cougars was James Lockhart who was awarded the position of first chair tenor. Following James' lead were Stephen Morris, Stefon Green, Justin Baylor, Chris Clemments, Chris Fernandez, Abigail Juarez, Alexa McCamey, and Coyia Cleveland. Each of the nine students has been awarded membership in the Fort Worth ISD Honor Choir.



We Are... Western Hills

## Follow Us On The Web

Western Hills Cougar Website is updated on a daily basis with news about upcoming events and brags about past events. In the future look for a video directed by Stephanie Stuart and Viren Patel about Western Hills' IB Process, feature stories about senior and Magician extraordinaire, Devin Hall, stories about our sports, arts, academia, and culture at Western Hills.

After all...

We are...Western Hills.