

# PANTHER POST



WEST SALEM MIDDLE SCHOOL  
BEN WOPAT, PRINCIPAL  
AMANDA BELD, ASSOCIATE PRINCIPAL



440 EAST AVE, WEST SALEM, WI 54669  
OFFICE: 608-786-2090 FAX: 608-786-1081

Dear Dear WSMS Families,

Congratulations to students, parents and staff on a very successful school year! Looking back on the year, we have all had opportunities to grow as individuals and as a community of learners. We wish our 8th graders the best as they continue their educational journey at the high school. We know you'll do very well in the next stage of your education. You're ready!

I want to draw your attention to the many items contained within this newsletter. Some are year-end items and others are items that pertain to next school year. Please feel free to keep this newsletter someplace handy, as you may want to reference it over the next couple of months.

As always, we encourage you to take an active role in building relationships with your child, our staff and community. We thank you for your continued support of our efforts as we work together to provide the best middle school experience for your child.

Have a great summer with family and friends.

Ben Wopat  
Principal  
[twitter.com/coachwopat](https://twitter.com/coachwopat)



Calendar of Events	2
Attendance Reporting	2
From the Nurse	2
Important Information	3
Students of the Month	4
WEB Leader Training	5
Summer School	6
Band and Color Guard	7
Healthy Living	8
End of Year Highlights	9-10
8th Grade Art Elective	11
SORA - eBook & Audiobook Service	12-13
Freshman Orientation Info	14
5th Grade Class of 2033 Orientation	15
Summer Food Outreach	16
Harvest of the Month	17
2025-26 District Calendar	18



WEST SALEM  
MIDDLE SCHOOL

# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

JULY 7-25	SUMMER SCHOOL
AUGUST 11 & 12	8TH GRADE WEB LEADER TRAINING
AUGUST 12	PICTURE DAY & REGISTRATION
AUGUST 13	CLASS OF 2033 5 <sup>TH</sup> GRADE ORIENTATION
AUGUST 19	WSMS OPEN HOUSE
AUGUST 19	DRUMLINE PRACTICE
AUGUST 20-22	7 <sup>TH</sup> & 8 <sup>TH</sup> GRADE BAND AND COLOR GUARD CAMP

## ATTENDANCE REPORTING

Each day we are in school, it is very important for us to have the most up-to-date attendance for our students. There are several ways to report absences for illness, appointments, vacations, etc:

We highly encourage you to **report any absences, appointments, or vacations by 8:00 a.m.** each day. Even if your child was sick the day before and will be out again, we still need to hear from you. If you are not in contact us, we then have to call each family that has not reported their child's absence, which can become very time-consuming.

**You can call 608-786-2090, Option 2, and leave a message at any time of the day or night.**

You can leave all absence messages on this voicemail. You can even leave information that is scheduled weeks to months in advance. We keep a yearly spreadsheet with all absences that are reported to us.

**You can email at [msoffice@wsalem.k12.wi.us](mailto:msoffice@wsalem.k12.wi.us).** The office will be able to update your child's attendance in Skyward and call you back if there are any questions.

While we understand that appointments are sometimes forgotten, **advanced notification** allows us to have your child ready for pickup in a timely manner.

Final reminder....if your child has an appointment with a medical professional, **please try your best to get a doctor's note** so that we can verify the time away from school. Students are allotted 10 absences per year, and these doctor's notes are used so that appointments are not counted in the 10-day total.

**Our goal is to work side-by-side with families to ensure that all students are safe and accounted for each day!**

## FROM THE NURSE

As you prepare for the 2025-26 school year, anyone who has an allergy and has needed an epi-pen in the past, will need to have their own epi-pen in the office.

Also, students with asthma that have inhaler needs, will need to have one in the health office. This is the surest way to obtain one quickly for the student in an emergency. They may also have an order to carry one with them.



# IMPORTANT INFORMATION

## WSMS STUDENT DROP OFF AND PICK UP

Buses will drop off students at the high school sidewalk, then they will use the new sidewalk by the track/football field to walk to the middle school.

In the interest of your child's safety, all students dropped off or picked up by parents needs to take place on East Avenue. Temporarily stopping your vehicle on Mark Street to have students get out is NOT safe, as Mark Street is very busy during peak morning and afternoon hours.

Please pull forward all the way to the end of the sidewalk to drop off your child so that more cars can get out of the street and into the lot.

## ALLERGIES

We have several students in the district who have severe allergies to peanuts, tree-nuts and latex. For this reason we are asking that you follow the district policy below:

Our schools are latex-controlled schools. Materials that contain high concentrations of latex, such as most balloons, are prohibited. Our schools are also peanut/tree-nut aware. Please do not send any foods that contain peanuts or tree-nuts (cashews, almonds, pecans, etc.). Please contact the office or the school nurse w/questions regarding any product or material you may wish to bring to the school before bringing the item into the school.

## NEWSLETTERS

Middle School newsletters can be found on the district website under the Families tab along the top. An e-mail reminder will be sent each month to let you know when it is available, along with a link to the actual newsletter. If you would like a hard copy of the newsletter, please let the Middle School office know.

## MORNING PROCEDURES

Doors open at 7:15 a.m. At this time, students will be allowed into the building or they may stay outside on the playground until the 7:43, when the bell rings.

**Students are expected to be in their classrooms and ready for instruction at 7:50.**

## SCHOOL SECURITY

The middle school doors will be locked during the school hours of 8:00am - 3:10pm. When coming to the middle school, you will need to be buzzed into the building by using the button located on the east wall of the main entrance on East Ave (door A). Once you enter the building, please sign in in the office.



# STUDENT OF THE MONTH



Each month, teachers send nominations for Student of the Month. May's focus was Work Hard - Quality Work Completed in a Timely Manner. Below is a list of three students from each grade level that exemplified this focus. Mr. Wopat, Ms. Beld, Ms. Becker and Ms. Broughton notified parents of this accomplishment.

## GRADE 5

AUBRIELLA HART  
WILL HEASER  
CHASE KALINA

## GRADE 6

PIPER BUISMAN  
ELAYNA SCHOLZE  
COLTON SIEBENALER



## GRADE 7

ARIYAH BALL  
LILLY HELVEY  
MIAH HOOKER

## GRADE 8

PIPER JAMBOIS  
ELLIE PETERSON  
TAVIANNA VINER

# CONGRATULATIONS

for making a difference  
in others lives!

# We appreciate YOU!





**8TH  
GRADE**

**8TH GRADE WEB LEADER TRAINING**  
**AUGUST 11 & 12 | 8AM-1PM**  
**WEST SALEM MIDDLE SCHOOL GYMNASIUM**

Meet in the gym at 8:00am each morning with your water bottle, a pen or pencil, and some light snacks (no nuts or peanut/peanut butter allowed).

Wear comfy, school appropriate clothes (no skirts) for the activities we will do and learn.

During your training you will receive information about expectations such as report time and attire for the 5th grade orientation day.

The WEB Coordinators,  
Amber Coe, Nicole Shrake and Whitney Folkers

Questions? Call (608) 786-2090 ext. 4219



The West Salem School District prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact the Pupil Services Director at (608) 786-0700. To file a complaint of discrimination write to: Pupil Services Director at 405 East Hamlin Street, West Salem, WI 54669 or call (608) 786-0700. The West Salem School District is an equal opportunity provider and employer.



# 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> GRADE BAND & COLOR GUARD CAMP

This camp is for ALL 7th & 8th Grade students who are registered for band or color guard for this upcoming school year.

This does not include students signed up for 7th Grade Beginner Band.

We will be preparing for our two fall parades and our halftime performance on September 5th.

There is no special registration for this camp. Camp is held at the Middle School Band Room. Students are to dress comfortably, wearing socks with athletic shoes. **Absolutely no flip-flops, crocs, or sandals. Please also bring a water bottle.**

## Camp Times

- |                        |             |                             |
|------------------------|-------------|-----------------------------|
| • Tuesday, August 19   | 3:00-5:00pm | Drumline Practice           |
| • Wednesday, August 20 | 4:00-7:00pm | Marching Band & Color Guard |
| • Thursday, August 21  | 4:00-7:00pm | Marching Band & Color Guard |
| • Friday, August 22    | 8:00am-Noon | Marching Band & Color Guard |

## UPCOMING DATES

### “Band Night” with WSHS Marching Band at Football Game

**Friday, September 5 | 5:45pm report time**

Band will perform at halftime of West Salem Varsity Football game. Students wear performance uniform. ALL band and color guard.

### Torch Light Parade in La Crosse

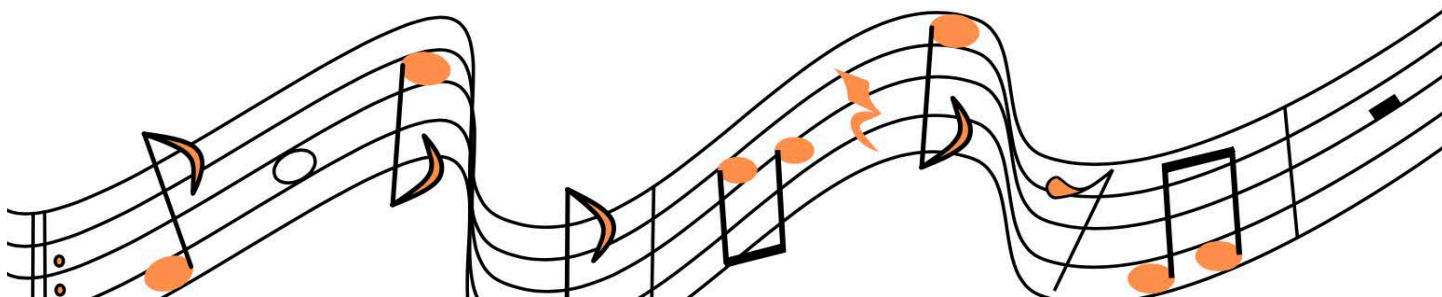
**Thursday, September 25 | 5:45pm report time**

Band will march in the parade, starting at 7pm. Students wear performance uniform. ALL band and color guard.

### WS Homecoming Parade

**Friday, October 3 | 1:30pm report time**

Band will march in the parade starting at 2pm. Students wear “School Spirit” Orange, Black & White (or uniform)



# Hello' Summer

We've made it! Thank you for a great year! The students were able to stay active and work hard each day. We're hoping that they brought home some fun ideas for your family to stay active this summer.

Enjoy your time off!!!  
- Healthy Living Team



# END OF YEAR HIGHLIGHTS!



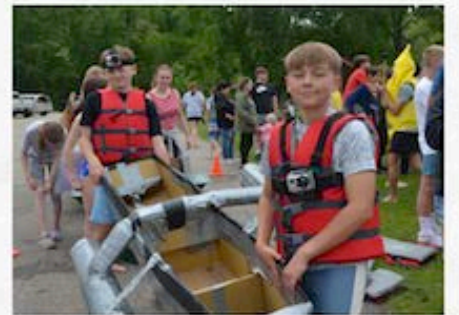


JUNE 2025

MEET US IN THE MIDDLE



**YOU  
DID  
IT!**





# 8TH GRADE ART ELECTIVE



Mrs. Hemker's 8th grade art elective students welcomed West Salem's Kindergartners for an art exchange! The prompt for Kindergarten was "draw your favorite place", and for the 8th graders it was to respond to the K drawings by drawing their version of that place. They came together to share their drawings. Some of the 8th graders also did a drawing of their favorite place and sent that with the K's afterward.



# Getting started with Sora



**Sora is an eBook and audiobook service available to all students at West Salem Middle School. It acts a lot like the Libby app from the public library!**



On school devices, students can download the app from Self-Service. Many students already have it in the LMC folder on their iPad.

Students have access to thousands of age-appropriate materials from novels to comics to magazines to audiobooks!



You can send many of the eBooks to your Kindle to read! Others you can just read in the Sora app

Love **audiobooks**? You can listen to them on your device from the Sora app just like any other audiobooks!



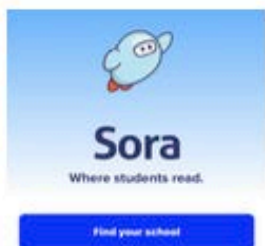
You can install the *\*free\** Sora app from the Apple App Store or Google Play Store, or go to [soraapp.com](http://soraapp.com) on your personal devices



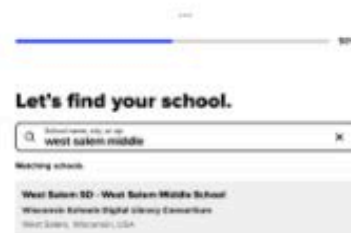
# Getting started with Sora at home



You can install the \*free\* Sora app from the Apple App Store or Google Play Store, or go to [soraapp.com](https://soraapp.com) on your personal devices



Tap on Find your School  
Type in West Salem Middle  
Tap on West Salem Middle School

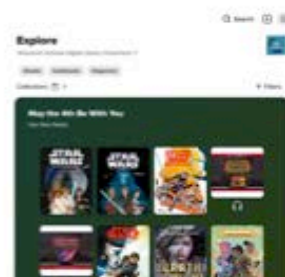


Type in West Salem again  
Tap on Sign in using West Salem Middle



Your student will log in using their school district email and password (via Google).

Once you get logged in, tap on the Explore tab on the bottom to search and see all the curated collections!



# FRESHMAN ORIENTATION

CLASS 2029

WELCOME  
TO WSHS



AUGUST 25  
2025

7:45AM-3:15PM



WS HIGH SCHOOL  
490 N. MARK ST



Half of the day will be spent at the high school. Half of the day will be at the Outdoor Education Center. At school students will get their laptops, building tours, locker tutorials and classroom information. At the OEC, they will do team building with their homeroom. Students should dress for the weather and bring a water bottle. Students are expected to attend and stay for the duration of the event.

School pictures will be taken before departing for the OEC.  
Lunch will be provided.

Registration is an online process. More information will follow this summer.

**If you have any questions, please contact the high school office at 608-786-1220.**







# 5<sup>TH</sup> GRADE ORIENTATION DAY

CLASS OF  
2033



AUGUST 13, 2025, 8:30AM-12:30PM



WSMS GYMNASIUM



**Wear comfy clothes (no skirts) and  
leave your bags, backpacks, hats,  
and phones at home...travel light!**

The purpose of this orientation day is to make the transition from elementary school to middle school a positive one. Eighth graders will be serving as leaders and mentors to the fifth graders. Large and small group activities are designed to address students' needs and concerns in an enjoyable manner. Students will be eating a school-provided lunch with their leaders that day.

We can't wait to meet your child!  
The WEB Coordinators,  
Amber Coe, Nicole Shrake & Whitney Folkers

**\*Please do not drop off your student  
early because there is no supervision  
available.\***

Dear Families,

With school meals ending, here are some great options for food this summer!

### FEED OUR CHILDREN SUMMER LUNCH PROGRAM



The Feed Our Children Summer Lunch Program will be up and running again this summer. Lunch will be served on Tuesdays and Thursdays starting June 3rd. You can pick up a lunch for your child at Our Saviors Lutheran Church 359 Leonard St N from 11am - 12:30pm. Delivery can also be provided within the Village of West Salem.

Sign up for deliveries here: [Link to Summer Lunch Delivery](#)  
Watch the Facebook Page, district newsletter and direct any questions to [Feedourchildrenws@gmail.com](mailto:Feedourchildrenws@gmail.com)

### WEST SALEM CARE AND SHARE FOOD PANTRY

Our Saviors Lutheran Church (359 N. Leonard). Use the alley entrance. West Salem, Barre Mills, Bangor, Rockland, and Mindoro communities. Saturdays from 10am - 12pm. You will need to present 1 form of ID. Contact Melody at 608-498-9099. Volunteer opportunities available.

### WAFER FOOD PANTRY

1603 George St, La Crosse - (608) 782-6003 - [WAFER LaCrosse FAQs](#)

#### Food distribution

Mon-Fri 10:00am - 12:45pm; Mon, Tues, Thurs Evenings 4:00pm - 7:45pm

\*Must be in the lobby and checked in 15 minutes prior to close.

#### Mobile Food Pantry - West Salem

Anytime Fitness Parking Lot. 1500 WI-16 Trunk, West Salem  
1st Friday of each month 10:45am-11:45am.

#### Things you will need:

1. Photo ID with every visit.
2. Mail verification once a year or when you change place of residence for all members of the household. Mail needs to have been received within the last 30 days (i.e. cable bill, bank statement, lease, utility bill, Food Share statement, etc.)



### TO FIND ADDITIONAL SUMMER MEAL SITES NEAR YOU

[USDA Summer Meal Finder](#)

Call 2-1-1

(2-1-1 is a free, easy-to-remember phone number connecting callers with health and human services in their community.)

Text 'SFSP' to 914-342-7744

If you have questions, don't hesitate to call West Salem School District at 608-786-0700 or visit the nutrition services webpage for more information: [WSSD Nutrition Services](#)

We look forward to continuing to serve our students next school year.  
Have a great summer and see you in the fall!

Sincerely,  
Emily Klunk, Director of School Nutrition



## HARVEST OF THE MONTH NEWSLETTER JUNE 2025



### Farm Highlight



**Jolivette Farms:** W3452 State Road 16  
West Salem, WI 54669

Jolivette Farms is a 500 acre farm, raising strawberries on 13 of them! June is the perfect time to visit this local farm to pick your own strawberries and pick up other fruits and vegetables that are grown on their remaining 487 acres during the rest of the growing season. This 54 year-old farm has been sustainably supporting the 7-Rivers communities ever since its purchase by John Jolivette in 1970! Visit their Facebook page or website for more information on hours and produce availability.



#### FUN FACTS:

- Strawberries are the only fruit with the seeds on the outside. There are on average 200 seeds per strawberry!
- Strawberry plants are perennials, meaning they will come back every year after being planted!
- Strawberries are a member of the rose family!

**Nutrition Info:**  
One cup of whole strawberries has 46 calories and provides vitamin C, fiber and folate

**PICK:**  
Choose brightly colored berries with green caps attached. Avoid berries with soft spots or mold.

**STORE:**  
Refrigerate unwashed berries in a non-airtight container and use within a couple of days. To freeze, place clean, hulled berries in a single layer on a cookie sheet and freeze, then place in a sealed plastic bag and use within 1 year.

**PREPARE:**  
Rinse under cold water and remove green tops just before consuming!

**USE:**  
Make fruit kebabs with strawberries, watermelon, grapes, cantaloupe, blueberries and pineapple! Strawberries are a great addition to breakfast on pancakes, waffles cereal or parfaits. Dip fresh berries in melted dark chocolate for a treat!

### Recipe of the month

#### Strawberry Banana Parfait Serves 1



- 1/2 medium ripe banana, mashed
- 1/8 teaspoon vanilla
- 1/3 cup plain non-fat yogurt
- 1/2 cup sliced fresh strawberries
- 1/2 cup bran and wheat flakes ready-to-eat cereal

#### Directions:

1. Wash hands with soap and water.
2. Stir banana and vanilla into yogurt and combine well.
3. In a 10 to 12 ounce glass, alternately layer the yogurt-banana mixture, strawberries, and cereal.
4. Serve immediately and enjoy.

Source: laxf2s.org

Per serving: 190 calories, 1g fat, 10 g protein, 44g carbohydrate, 7 g fiber, 235 mg sodium



LA CROSSE COUNTY  
Health Department  
*Nationally Accredited*



MAYO CLINIC  
HEALTH SYSTEM

GUNDERSEN  
HEALTH SYSTEM.



FOOD  
WISE  
*Healthy choices. Healthy lives.*

UW-MADISON EXTENSION

Coulee Region Farm to School is a partnership between UW-Madison Division of Extension, LaCrosse County Health Department, Mayo Clinic Health System-Franciscan Healthcare, Gundersen Health System, and the School Districts of Bangor, LaCrosse-Hokah, Holmen, LaCrosse, Onalaska, and West Salem.

# 2025-2026 DISTRICT CALENDAR



## WEST SALEM SCHOOL DISTRICT 2025-2026 CALENDAR



AUGUST 2025					5/4
M	T	W	T	F	
				1	
4	5	6	7	8	
11	12	13	14	15	
18*	19*	20*	21*	22	
25	26	27	28	29	

SEPTEMBER 2025					21
M	T	W	T	F	
NS	2	3	4	5	
8	9	10	11	12	
15	16	17	18	19	
22	23	24	25	26	
29	30				

OCTOBER 2025					21
M	T	W	T	F	
		1	2	3	
6	7	ER	9	10	
13	14	15	16	17	
20	21	22	23	NS	
27	28	29	30	NS*	

October 3, Homecoming

NOVEMBER 2025					17
M	T	W	T	F	
3	4	5	6	7	
10	11	12	13	14	
17	18	19	20	21	
24	25	NS	NS	NS	

DECEMBER 2025					17
M	T	W	T	F	
1	2	3	4	5	
8	9	10	11	12	
15	16	17	18	19	
22	23	NS	NS	NS	
NS	NS	NS			

JANUARY 2026					19
M	T	W	T	F	
			NS	NS	
5	6	7	8	9	
12	13	14	15	16	
NS*	20	21	22	23	
26	27	28	29	30	

FEBRUARY 2026					19
M	T	W	T	F	
2	3	ER	5	6	
9	10	11	12	13	
16	17	18	19	NS*	
23	24	25	26	27	

MARCH 2026					21
M	T	W	T	F	
2	3	4	5	6	
9	10	11	12	NS	
16	17	18	19	20	
23	24	25	26	27	
30	31				

APRIL 2026					19
M	T	W	T	F	
		1	SD	NS	
NS	7	8	9	10	
13	14	15	16	17	
20	21	22	23	24	
27	28	29	30		

MAY 2026					20
M	T	W	T	F	
				1	
4	5	ER	7	8	
11	12	13	14	15	
18	19	20	21	22	
NS	26	27	28	29	

May 6 - ER  
\*ER K-8 Only  
\*9-11 No  
School  
\*12-Panther  
Portfolio  
presentation  
day

JUNE 2026					0
M	T	W	T	F	
1	2	3	4	5	
8	9	10	11	12	
15	16	17	18	19	
22	23	24	25	26	
29	30				

**First Day of School:** August 26  
**First Day for High School:** August 25  
**4K first Day:** September 2  
**Last Day of School:** May 29 12:20 dismissal  
**Graduation Day:** May 22

**SERVE WITH PASSION TO  
IGNITE CREATIVITY,  
INNOVATION, AND  
EXCELLENCE**

**NS** = No School for All students  
**ER** = Early Release (Students dismissed at 12:20, Buses leave at 12:30 on October 8, February 4, May 6)  
**SD** = Snow Day or Make-up date (April 2)  
**\*** = Teacher Inservice (August 18, 19, 20, & 21, October 31, January 19, February 20)

