

September 2025



Newsletter

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Letter from Superintendent Ryan Rieber

A Great Start to the 2025-2026 School Year!

The new school year is officially underway, and our schools are once again filled with the energy and excitement of students and staff coming together for a year of learning and growth. From “Welcome Back” events to open houses and celebrations, the start of the year has been a wonderful reminder of why West Salem is such a special place.

We were fortunate to welcome educational speaker Gerry Brooks to kick off the year with our staff. He reminded us of the importance of communication, teamwork, and being active participants rather than bystanders. His message left our staff excited, energized, and enthusiastic for the year ahead. As we prepared for students to return, we were also reminded of the wisdom of Margaret Mead: “Children must be taught how to think, not what to think.” The opportunity to work with the youth of our community is one we hold in the highest regard, and I could not be more proud of our staff.

If you’ve been around campus recently, you’ve seen first-hand that a lot is happening this fall! In August, we celebrated the ribbon-cutting of the brand-new playground on the North Side of the elementary school. Families and students gathered to officially open this play space, which has already brought much joy to our youngest Panthers. The elementary parking lot project has also been completed, providing both a fresh look and much-needed improvements to safety and traffic flow during pick-up and drop-off. Thank you for your patience during this work.

We also officially broke ground on the elementary gymnasium project, and planning continues for the high school addition, with groundbreaking anticipated in early October. The fencing you see around the elementary and high school campuses is in place to protect the public and define construction areas for these projects. Please avoid entering these fenced zones for your own safety. While construction may cause temporary inconveniences, the long-term benefits for our students and community will be significant.

Letter continues on next page...

Another proud highlight this month came from our GearBox Heroes Robotics team, who designed and built the robot that cut the ribbon at the grand opening of the Wanek Center of Innovation at Western Technical College. It was an inspiring moment to see our students' creativity and talent showcased in such a meaningful way. This new center is a tremendous addition to our community, and it was humbling to see West Salem students play such an important role in its opening.

As we move into September, we are filled with optimism for the year ahead. Our classrooms, cafeterias, gyms, buses, and playgrounds are alive again with the reason we are here: our students. Every smile, every question, and every success is an opportunity to make a difference. We are deeply grateful for the support of our families

and community as we embark on this new year together, shaping futures and creating opportunities for all students to thrive.

Looking ahead, please mark your calendars for Homecoming on Friday, October 3rd. The traditional parade will be held that afternoon, followed by the football game against G-E-T.

Watch our district social media pages or our newly updated online district calendar for updates on all the Homecoming events leading up to the big day. Have a great start to the year!

Ryan Rieber
Superintendent

A Fabulous First Day



Calendar of Events September

Athletic Events

Tuesday, September 2, 2025

- 4:00pm Tennis: Girls Varsity Dual Meet vs. Reedsburg @ West Salem High School
- 5:00pm Football: C-Team Game vs. Black River Falls @ Black River Falls High School
- 5:30pm Volleyball: Girls C-Team Game vs. Viroqua @ Viroqua High School
EL Gymnasium
- 5:30pm Volleyball: Girls JV Game vs. Viroqua @ Viroqua High School
- 7:00pm Volleyball: Girls Varsity Game vs. Viroqua @ Viroqua High School

Thursday, September 4, 2025

- 4:00pm Tennis: Girls Varsity Match vs. Mauston @ West Salem High School Tennis Courts
- 5:00pm Soccer: Boys JV Match vs. Holmen @ West Salem HS Soccer Fields
- 5:30pm Volleyball: Girls C-Team/JV Game vs. Westby Area High School @ West Salem High School
- 7:00pm Volleyball: Girls Varsity Match vs. Westby Area High School @ West Salem High School
- 7:00pm Soccer: Boys Varsity Match vs. Holmen @ West Salem HS Soccer Fields

Friday, September 5, 2025

- 7:00pm Football: Varsity Game vs. Viroqua @ West Salem High School

Saturday, September 6, 2025

- 8:30am Cross Country: Varsity Invitational vs. Altoona, Aquinas, Arcadia, Arrowhead, Assumption, Baraboo Beloit Memorial, DeForest, Dodgeville, Edgewood, Fort Atkinson, Madison East, Madison La Follette, Madison Memorial, Madison West, Mauston, McFarland, Middleton, Mineral Point, Monona Grove, Monroe, Monticello, Mount Horeb, New Glarus, Onalaska, Oregon, St. Ambrose Academy, Stoughton, Sun Prairie East, Sun Prairie West, Verona Area, Watertown,

9:00am

11:00am

1:00pm

Monday, September 8, 2025

- 4:15pm ASL - Soccer: Varsity Game vs. Onalaska @ Onalaska High School
- 5:00pm Football: C-Team Game vs. Viroqua @ Viroqua High School

Tuesday, September 9, 2025

- 4:00pm Tennis: Girls Varsity Match vs. Viroqua @ West Salem High School
- 5:00pm Soccer: Boys JV Match vs. Logan @ Logan High School Swanson Field
- 5:30pm Volleyball: Girls C-Team/JV Game vs. G-E-T @ West Salem High School
- 7:00pm Volleyball: Girls Varsity Match vs. G-E-T @ West Salem High School
- 7:00pm Soccer: Boys Varsity Match vs. Logan @ Logan High School Swanson Field

Thursday, September 11, 2025

- 4:15pm ASL - Soccer: Varsity Game vs. Logan @ Logan High School
- 5:00pm Soccer: Boys JV Match vs. Sparta @ West Salem HS Soccer Fields
- 5:15pm Cross Country: Varsity Invite vs. Arcadia, Blair-Taylor, Cochrane-Fountain City, Eleva-Strum, G-E-T, Independence, Lincoln, Luther, Mauston, Melrose-Mindoro, Providence Academy, Wabasha-Kellogg & Whitehall @ Ettrick Golf Course
- 6:30pm Swimming & Diving: Girls Varsity Meet vs. Eau Claire North @ Eau Claire North High School

Calendar of events continues on next page...

School District of West Salem

7:00pm Soccer: Boys Varsity Match vs. Sparta
@ West Salem HS Soccer Fields

Friday, September 12, 2025

7:00pm Football: Varsity Game vs. Westby Area
High School @ Westby High School

Saturday, September 13, 2025

8:30am Soccer: Boys Varsity Tournament vs.
Algoma, Berlin, Green Bay Preble,
Lomira, Mayville, Nekoosa & Wautoma
@ Wautoma Parkside School

9:00am Tennis: Girls Varsity Quad vs. Baraboo,
Logan & Mondovi @ West Salem High
School

9:00am Volleyball: Girls Varsity Invite vs.
DeForest, Logan, Platteville & River
Valley @ West Salem High School

9:30am Cross Country: Varsity Invite vs.
Altoona, Bloomer, Chippewa Falls, DC
Everest Co-op, Eau Claire Memorial,
Eau Claire North, Ellsworth, Holmen,
Hudson, Logan, Menomonie, New
Richmond, Phillips, Tomah &
Tomahawk @ Menomonie High School

Monday, September 15, 2025

5:00pm Football: C-Team Game vs. Westby Area
High School @ West Salem High School

Tuesday, September 16, 2025

4:00pm Tennis: Girls Varsity Match vs. Luther
@ West Salem High School

5:00pm Soccer: Boys JV Match vs. Tomah HS
@ West Salem HS Soccer Fields

5:30pm Volleyball: Girls C-Team/JV Game vs.
Luther @ Luther High School

7:00pm Volleyball: Girls Varsity Match vs.
Luther @ Luther High School

7:00pm Soccer: Boys Varsity Match vs. Tomah
HS @ West Salem HS Soccer Fields

Thursday, September 18, 2025

4:15pm ASL - Soccer: Varsity Game vs. Onalaska
@ West Salem MS

5:00pm Soccer: Boys JV Match vs. Arcadia
@ West Salem HS Soccer Fields

7:00pm Soccer: Boys Varsity Match vs. Arcadia
@ West Salem HS Soccer Fields

Friday, September 19, 2025

7:00pm Football: Varsity Game vs. Arcadia
@ West Salem High School

Saturday, September 20, 2025

7:00am Cross Country: Varsity Invitational

vs. Abbotsford, Adams-Friendship,
Albany, Altoona, Amherst, Antigo,
Appleton East, Athens (Cloverwood),
Auburndale, Bitternut, Chequamegon,
Colby, DC Everest Co-op, De Pere,
Delavan-Darien, Divine Savior Holy
Angels, Eau Claire Memorial, Edgar,
Faith Christian Academy, Freedom,
Germantown, Independence,
Iola-Scandinavia, Kaukauna, Kiel,
Lakeland Union, Laona-Wabeno,
Little Chute, Loyal, Madison Memorial,
Madison West, Marathon, Marshfield,
Mauston, Merrill, Northland Lutheran,
Northland Pines, Oconto Falls, Oneida
Nation, Pacelli Catholic, Peshtigo,
Prentice, Pulaski, Regis, Rhinelander,
Rosholt, Seymour, Shawano
Community, Sheboygan Area Lutheran,
Sheboygan Falls, Shorewood, Spencer,
Stevens Point Area Senior High, Three
Lakes, Tomahawk, Tri-County, Two
Rivers, Waunakee, Waupaca, Wausau
East, Wausau West, Winneconne,
Wisconsin Rapids Lincoln &
Wittenberg-Birnamwood @ Wausau
East High School

9:00am Tennis: Girls Varsity Tournament vs.
Altoona, Kohler, Lodi, Newman
Catholic, Pacelli Catholic, Regis & Rice
Lake @ Regis High School

10:00am Swimming & Diving: Girls Varsity
Invitational vs. Chippewa Falls,
Menomonie, Eau Claire Memorial, Rice
Lake, Marshfield, Wisconsin Rapids
Lincoln, Holmen & Superior
@Chippewa Falls Middle School

Tuesday, September 23, 2025

4:00pm Tennis: Girls Varsity Match vs. Black
River Falls @ Black River Falls
High School

4:15pm ASL - Soccer: Varsity Game vs. Black
River Falls @ Black River Falls HS

5:00pm Soccer: Boys JV Match vs. Aquinas
@ Field for Kids

5:00pm Volleyball: Girls C-Team Quad vs.
Arcadia, Black River Falls & Westby
Area High School
@ Arcadia Elementary School Big Gym

School District of West Salem

- 5:00pm Volleyball: Girls JV Quad vs. Arcadia, Black River Falls & Westby Area High School @ Arcadia High School
- 5:00pm Volleyball: Girls Varsity Quad vs. Arcadia, Black River Falls & Westby Area High School @ Arcadia High School Wanek Center Arena
- 6:00pm Swimming & Diving: Girls Varsity Meet vs. Baraboo & Milton @ Jack Young Middle School
- 7:00pm Soccer: Boys Varsity Match vs. Aquinas @ Field for Kids

Thursday, September 25, 2025

- 4:00pm Tennis: Girls JV/Varsity Match vs. Lodi @ Lodi High School

Friday, September 26, 2025

- 7:00pm Cross Country: Varsity Invitational vs. Abbotsford, Adams-Friendship, Arcadia, Assumption, Bangor, Boscobel, Butternut, Chequamegon, Cochrane-Fountain City, Colfax, Columbus Catholic Schools, DC Everest Co-op, Flambeau, Frederic, Iola-Scandinavia, Laconia, Ladysmith, Lincoln, Logan, Loyal/Greenwood, Marathon, Marshfield, Menomonie, Merrill, Mondovi, Necedah, Owen-Withee, Phillips, Pittsville, Port Edwards, Prentice, Prescott, Regis, Rice Lake, River Falls, Royall, Spencer, Stanley-Boyd, Stratford, Tomah/Sparta, Unity, Wausau East, Wausau West & Wautoma @ Rivers Edge Golf Course
- 7:00pm Football: Varsity Game vs. Luther @ Luther High School

Monday, September 29, 2025

- 5:00pm Football: C-Team Game vs. Luther @ West Salem High School

Tuesday, September 30, 2025

- 9:00am Tennis: Girls Varsity Conference Tournament vs. Assumption, Black River Falls, Luthzer, Mauston & Viroqua @ West Salem High School
- 4:15pm ASL - Soccer: Varsity Game vs. Holmen @ West Salem MS
- 4:30pm Cross Country: Varsity Invite vs. Adams-Friendship, Black River Falls, Chippewa Valley-Lightning Bolts, Cochrane-Fountain City, Ellsworth, Lincoln, Mauston, Reedsburg, River

- Valley, Sparta, Viroqua & Westby Area High School @ Skyline Golf Club
- 5:00pm Soccer: Boys JV Match vs. Central High School @ Field for Kids
- 5:30pm Volleyball: Girls C-Team Game vs. Arcadia @ Arcadia High School
- 5:30pm Volleyball: Girls JV Game vs. Arcadia @ Arcadia High School Wanek Center
- 7:00pm Soccer: Boys Varsity Match vs. Central High School @ Field for Kids

Band Events

Thursday, September 4, 2025

- 6:40pm Volleyball Game vs. Westby

Friday, September 5, 2025

- 6:30pm Football Game vs. Viroqua
Arrive at 5:45

Marching Band Uniform Required

Sunday, September 7, 2025

- TBA Kellogg Watermelon Days Parade
Marching Band Uniform Required

Tuesday, September 9, 2025

- 6:40pm Volleyball Game vs. G-E-T

Friday, September 19, 2025

- 6:30pm Football Game vs. Arcadia
Arrive at 6:00

Marching Band Uniform Required

Sunday, September 21, 2025

- TBA La Crescent Applefest Parade
Marching Band Uniform Required

Saturday, September 27, 2025

- TBA Oktoberfest Parade
Marching Band Uniform Required

Elementary School Events

Monday, September 1, 2025

- All Day No School-Labor Day

Tuesday, September 2, 2025

- 8:00am First Day of School for 4K Students

Middle School Events

Monday, September 1, 2025

- All Day No School-Labor Day

School District of West Salem

Friday, September 5, 2025

6:30pm Band Night @ Home Football Game
Arrive at 5:45 p.m.
Performance Uniform Required

Thursday, September 25, 2025

7:00pm Oktoberfest Torchlight Parade
7th & 8th Grade Band
Arrive at 5:45pm
Performance Uniform Required

High School Events

Monday, September 1, 2025

All Day No School-Labor Day

Thursday, September 25, 2025

All Day Picture Retake Day

Monday, September 29, 2025

All Day Start of Homecoming Week

New Online Calendar

We are excited to announce that we have completed the transition to a new online calendar system for all district events, athletic events and facility requests!

Instead of having to click through multiple calendars, you will be able to find all events in one place. You can access the calendar by clicking the calendar icon in the top right of the district website. From here you can filter events by location and building, as well as utilize the search function. You can also view events by month, week, or day. For athletics, there will also be links to Coulee and MVC events for high school sports and Three Rivers events for middle school sports.

We are excited for this streamlined format and hope that it is easier to use for families, students, and community members. Thank you for your patience as we adjust to the new system.

If you have questions, please call the High School Office at (608) 786-1220.

CLASS OF 2026: IT IS YOUR TIME

Senior year is finally here! We have an important yearbook deadline to keep in mind. Each senior needs to submit the following photos:

1. Yearbook Portrait

This photo is a traditional, formal head and shoulders pose. You may use this same portrait for everything if you would like.

***No full-length poses, hats, props, "misty" filters, or distracting backgrounds.**



2. Times of Our Lives

This may be less formal.



3. Baby Photo

This photo will be used to morph into the "big kid" photo for the Senior Slideshow.

The best morphs are created using baby photos where the baby's face is the dominant part of the photo.



4. Senior Photo for Slideshow

This photo will be the photo that the baby photo morphs into for the slide show. It can be the same photo used for the Yearbook or Times of our Lives if you would like.



Photos due:
Friday, Nov. 7,
2025

Submit **300 dpi jpeg** photo(s) via email to
armstrong.andrea@wsalem.k12.wi.us

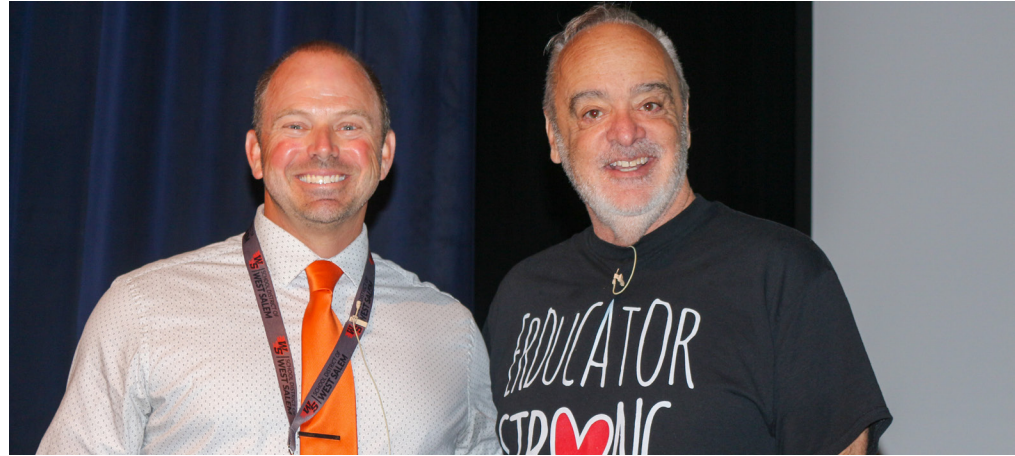
Please label photos with the student name and publication - ex. JoeSmithYearbook.
Labeled hard copy photos can be dropped off to room 241 - silver box.

Fun at the Forest

The Class of 2029 kicked off their high school careers with their annual Freshmen Orientation at the OEC! Students participated in a variety of team-building and problem-solving exercises before taking on the low ropes course. From trust falls to trying to lift a bucket of water from several different strings, the variety of activities throughout the day are designed to help prepare them for not only their high school careers, but the various challenges they will face throughout life. Link Crew leaders, upperclassmen selected for their leadership abilities helped to organize and run the day. The students did an excellent job working together and keeping positive attitudes to accomplish their goals! Thank you to our amazing Link Crew members, freshmen homeroom advisors, Mr. Neuman, our OEC Coordinator, and all of our staff that helped make this a memorable day for our students!



District Announcements



One-of-a-Kind Kickoff!

We were privileged to welcome the one and only Gerry Brooks as our staff inservice speaker this year! Gerry is a veteran educator and administrator from Lexington, Kentucky, known for his humorous and relatable social media videos, where he has over 5 million followers. It was difficult to keep the surprise a secret, but the look on our staff members' faces when they realized who they would be listening to was priceless! He kicked off our morning by sharing important messages about creating a positive school culture and successfully leading by connecting with students and staff. It was the perfect way to kick off our year with lots of laughs and connection, and we are so thankful Gerry was able to make the trip up to Wisconsin!



School Board Members

Catherine Griffin, President ~~~~~(608) 769-1714
Erik Peterson, Vice President ~~~~~ (608) 792-5370
Bob Gollnik, Treasurer~~~~~ (612) 720-1852
Caitlin Wilson, Clerk~~~~~ (608)780-3836
Bob Minard, Director~~~~~(608)786-9998
Ben Garbers, Director~~~~~(608) 498-9510
Trish Harman, Director ~~~~~(608) 332-9222

Board meetings are held the second and fourth Monday of every month

District Announcements

Heider Center



Art Gallery

"I Play Dress Up for a Living" - Set Designs, Costumes, Renderings, Props and Photos from the World of Theatre by Jen Brown

Runs September 3-October 10, 2025

Reception: Friday, October 3

6:00-7:30p.m.

Box Office Hours
(608) 786-2550
Monday & Thursday: 1:30 to 4:00 p.m.
www.heidercenter.org

2ND ANNUAL HEIDER CENTER BARN BASH & CHILI COOK-OFF

Sunday, September 14, 2025 | 3 - 6 PM
Horstmann Homestead & Event Barn
W3351 Horstman Road, West Salem

Calling all Chili cooking experts! Join in the Chili competition at the **2nd Annual Heider Center Barn Bash and Chili Cook-Off**, a major fundraising effort for the continued support of the Arts. All proceeds will go to supporting our Community Education, Children's Educational outreach programs, and our annual Heider Center Senior Scholarship program.

This event will take place on Sunday, September 14 from 3:00 p.m.-6:00 p.m. at the Horstmann Homestead Farm and Event Center in West Salem. Tickets are \$25/person or \$60/family (parents with children) and will go on sale starting August 15 at 8:00 a.m..

We are now currently accepting COMPETITORS for the chili cook-off! Register on the Heider Center website by August 30. Prizes will be awarded for the Best Overall Chili as well as People's Choice.

In addition, there will be live music, a wine auction, 50/50 raffle, yard games, cash bar, and more!

Looking for Important Dates?



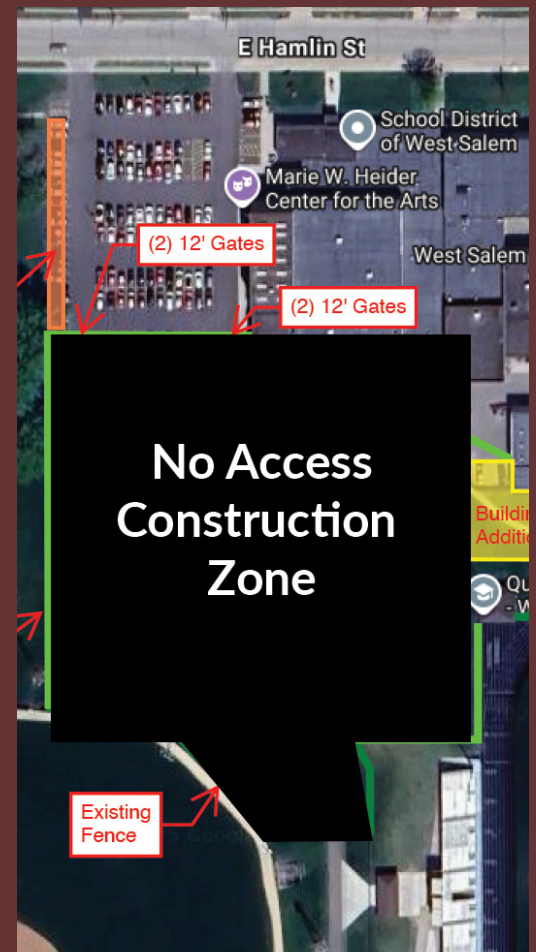
The district school year calendar, as well as individual building events and athletic events can all be found on our district website. Go to www.wsalem.k12.wi.us and navigate to the top right corner and click on the calendar icon. From here, you can view the school year calendar, Coulee Conference Athletic calendar, Mississippi Valley Athletic calendar, and individual building events.

Construction Reminders

Attention West Salem Community!

As a reminder, due to construction at the high school, there will be NO access to the football field through the Heider Center lot. Please DO NOT move construction fencing. The fences are set up for the safety of everyone on campus. The photo below shows the area that is blocked off.

If you need to access the football field, we suggest parking in the middle school or Lion's Shelter parking lots for the most convenient access to the field. We appreciate your cooperation!





REFERENDUM PROJECT UPDATES

What is Happening with the Construction Projects?



School is back in session and our referendum projects are beginning to come to life! Administration, along with ISG and Kraus-Anderson have been busy over the summer completing the next steps for the elementary school gym addition and high school CTE lab.

Elementary Gym

The School Board accepted bids for the elementary school project and selected contractors at their August 11 meeting. Following this, staff, students, and contractors joined us for the official groundbreaking on the elementary school gym addition that took place on August 14th. Construction barriers went up on August 20th and dirt is officially moving.

High School Addition

Design development continues for the high school CTE lab and fitness center as administration and staff have reviewed plumbing, electrical and HVAC for the spaces, as well as finishes. This phase is over 50% complete and further development of construction documents continues. The design for the CTE lab was developed after several community task force meetings, staff meetings, and important input from local businesses.

Due to construction, the current long jump, triple jump, and pole vault areas will need to be relocated and the final drawings for these spaces have also been completed. In preparation for a groundbreaking later this fall, construction barriers have gone up at the high school near the Heider Center parking lot.

What Is Next?

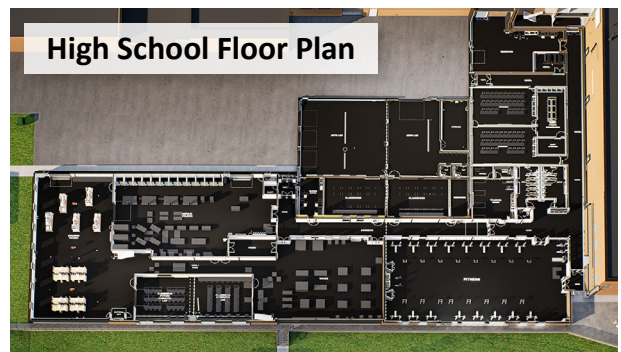


- High School design development cost estimate approval from board.
- Complete high school construction documents.
- High School groundbreaking.

Gym Ground Breaking



High School Floor Plan



New Year, New Playground

A week before classes started, West Salem Elementary students and staff enjoyed the 2nd Annual Back to School Bash in conjunction with Open House! As part of the fun, they also got to take part in the opening of our new playground! The playground has been a work in progress all summer and we were excited to be able to share it with our students before the first day of classes.

They were thrilled to be able to take part in the “ribbon cutting” before they dashed to try out the swings, slides, and climbers. We would like to give a huge thank you to the West Salem Elementary PTO for their generous donation that helped make this playground a possibility. We know our students will enjoy it for years to come!



Did You Know?

In Aztec, Incan, Mayan, and Native American cultures, corn was grown in companionship with squash and beans!



Check out videos and photos of the innovative things happening in your student's classroom at our district Facebook page and X page. Our social media features videos of student activities, teacher features, classroom selfie photos, etc...

Check out our Facebook page
@SchoolDistrictofWestSalem
and
Follow us on X
@WestSalemSD
and Instagram
@schooldistrictofwestsalem



For WSHS athletic events, visit our website:

*click Calendars and then
*click Coulee Conference/Mississippi Valley Conference

You can also set yourself up to receive automatic text or e-mail notifications for any of the activities listed OR subscribe to RSS.

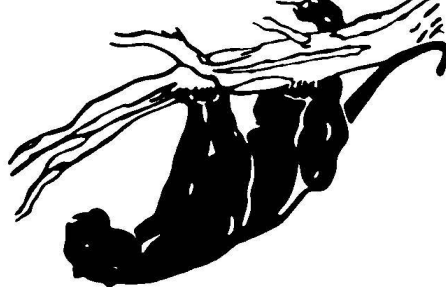


School District of West Salem

“Serve with Passion to Ignite Creativity,
Innovation and Excellence.”



#WeAreWS



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