



WASHBURN RURAL HIGH SCHOOL

JUNIOR BLUES NEWSLETTER



FEATURED STORY

BOWLING

Congratulations to Washburn Rural High School senior Cody Spangler for winning the Class 6A State Bowling Championship! Spangler rolled an impressive 756 series to capture the individual title and helped lead Washburn Rural to a fifth-place team finish.

The Washburn Rural girls bowling team delivered an outstanding performance at the 6A State Tournament, finishing as state runner-up and making history in the process.

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From the Desk of Our Principal



Hello,

By the end of today, 7,000 students across the United States will drop out of high school.

Each of those students represents more than just a statistic. They are young people with potential, dreams, and futures that suddenly become much more difficult to achieve. Their decision will have lasting consequences—not only for themselves, but for their families and communities as well.

For many years, there has been considerable discussion about the importance of obtaining a high-quality education. Rarely does a day pass without news stories highlighting the enormous cost of failing to educate a knowledgeable citizenry. The statistics are striking. Consider the following:

Nearly 70% of all inmates in state prisons, and 28.4% of inmates in the federal prison system, are high school dropouts. 23.5% of all unemployment recipients have not completed their high school education.

Statistics like these can sometimes feel distant—numbers tied to someone else’s story. But when we look more closely, the impact becomes very real. Consider the table below, which illustrates the average lifetime earnings associated with different levels of educational attainment.

| Education Level | Lifetime Weeks Worked | 2024 Weekly Wage (Median)* | Estimated Lifetime Earnings |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Less than a high school diploma | 2080 | \$738 | \$1,535,040 |
| High School Graduate | 2080 | \$930 | \$1,934,400 |
| Some College – No Degree | 2080 | \$1,020 | \$2,121,600 |
| Bachelor's Degree | 2080 | \$1,543 | \$3,209,440 |
| Professional Degree | 2080 | \$2,363 | \$4,915,040 |

When we look at these numbers, the picture becomes clearer. I shared this information with our freshmen at the beginning of the school year, and I can assure you it captured their attention. The difference in earning power between a high school dropout and a college graduate is more than \$1.6 million over a 40-year career—a difference of \$41,860 per year.

Because so much of our students’ future success hinges on earning a high school diploma, we take our responsibility to graduate every student very seriously at Washburn Rural High School. This means not only supporting students who may be struggling, but also ensuring that our course offerings remain innovative, engaging, and relevant to the interests and aspirations of our students.

To help accomplish this, we have implemented several programs designed to strengthen student success. We begin the school year with a freshman-only orientation day, helping our newest students transition smoothly into high school. Our Advisory Periods help students build stronger connections with staff and school programs, provide additional opportunities for academic support during the school day, and ultimately increase student success.

We have also restructured our Renaissance Program to not only recognize outstanding academic achievement, but also to provide incentives for grade improvement and perfect attendance. In addition, we continue to expand career pathways within our vocational departments, creating meaningful “real-world” opportunities for our students.

For example, our Construction Science program equips students with the skills and technical expertise needed to enter the workforce directly after high school if they choose. Additionally, our award-winning coffee shop, Common Grounds, is a student-run enterprise that allows students to manage their own business. From the point-of-sale system used to track purchases to the advertising and marketing of its products, every aspect of the operation is directed by our students.

Another exciting development is the continued success of the CTE Innovation Center, which provides expanded opportunities in Career and Technical Education. This cutting-edge facility serves as the hub for career pathways in Agriculture, Food & Natural Resources; Architecture & Construction; Arts; Bio-Medical; A/V & Communication; Hospitality & Tourism; and Information Technology. Designed to reflect the dynamic environments found in today’s industries, the Innovation Center fosters collaboration, creativity, and hands-on learning experiences that prepare students for success in high-demand careers.

Finally, we are proud to offer both the International Baccalaureate (IB) and Advanced Placement (AP) programs at Washburn Rural High School. For students seeking additional academic challenge, these rigorous programs provide outstanding preparation for life after high school. Whatever the future holds, please know that the staff at WRHS remains fully committed to providing your child with an exceptional educational experience. Thank you for your continued support of our students and our school. As always, please let us know how we can help.

Best,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ed Raines". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Ed Raines, Principal
raineedw@usd437.net

WRHS Counseling Office

Counseling Website: bit.ly/wrhscounselors

Crisis Hotline: 785-232-5005 or 988

[Counseling Staff](#)

Summer Programs and Volunteer Opportunities: The WRHS counseling office publishes a [summer program](#) and [volunteer opportunity](#) resource document. We encourage families to explore these resources. If you have additional programs and volunteer resources, please contact fredema1@usd437.net.

College Visits

As families start to make summer plans, we encourage students to visit college campuses. This experience can help students set goals, make decisions, and understand the application process. Advice on planning a college visit can be found at [here](#).

College Entrance Exams

Both the ACT and SAT are admission exams; students in Kansas tend to take the ACT but both are accepted wherever admission exams are required. After Covid and the cancellation of exams, the majority of US universities decided to not require test scores for admission; this includes Kansas universities. In recent years, many out of state colleges have decided to reimplement the requirement of the ACT or SAT while others have decided to continue with not requiring a test score. Policies are constantly changing and students need to check with their college for the most up to date information.

In Kansas, test scores are not required for admission as long as the GPA meets the minimum requirement. However, many colleges utilize the test score for scholarships. KU and Washburn University did not award scholarships for the Class of 2026 based on ACT, however, the other Kansas colleges did. We do not know yet if those policies will change for the Class of 2027. We encourage students to research their potential college options and decide whether taking or retaking the ACT or SAT is needed.

WRHS offers the ACT in June, September, and October. Students can take the test at any testing location.

ACT preparation materials can be found [here](#).

IB and AP exams

We wish our students taking IB and AP exams well! As you prepare for exams, we encourage you to set goals for yourself. In Kansas, colleges are required to award credit for 4/7 on IB and 3/5 on AP (except AP physics and AP art history that require 4s). <https://www.kansasregents.org/students/credit-for-prior-learning/ap-clep-ib>. To view specific university policies for IB and AP, search the university name plus IB or AP credit.

Sample policies are below:

[K-State](#)

[KU](#)

[Washburn](#)

[Wichita State](#)

Schedules: The pre-enrollment for the 2026-27 school year is complete. Tentative schedules will be available in July. Schedule adjustments can be requested during walk-in registration. Please note that school counselors are not available during the summer to make schedule changes.

Finals Study Tips: This [Fastweb article](#) lists several tips for students as they prepare for their final exams in May.

9th

- Road Trip Nation
- Mental Health Activity
- Advisory Community Building
- Making the Most of Summer

10th

- Road Trip Nation and Resume
- Mental Health Activity
- Advisory Community Building
- Academic Check



11th

- Advisory Community Building
- Mental Health Activity
- Academic Check
- Making the Most of Summer

12th

- Senior Naviance Wrap-up
- Mental Health Activity
- Senior Exit Info
- April 27 - Senior Meeting with Mr. Raines

Tues. & Thurs. 3:05–4:15pm

AFTER SCHOOL LABS

Library.

English

Math

Science

Social Studies

Room G2342

AF-JROTC

Room F656

Student Services Resource



**Need a ride
home?**

Sign up in the Main Office
before 6th Period!

STUDENT & TEACHER STEP CHALLENGE



CHALLENGE:

Create a group of 3 to 4 people, and log your steps for a week! This will last a week, April 20th to the 24th

The most amount of steps throughout the week gets put into a drawing!

PRIZES:

Students:

Those who reach a goal of 200,000 steps as a team (10,000 per member / per day) by the end of the week will be placed into a drawing to win:

- Stress ball and other fidgets
- Candy
- Common Grounds token

We will draw 12 winners!

Teachers & Staff:

- \$10 gift card to The Shack or Common Ground
- Bragging Rights

SIGN UP!



Hosted by KAY Club as part of our Be the Spark Grant project to promote physical health.

AFJROTC Cadets Stay Active and Engaged in March

Even with a week off for Spring Break, the AFJROTC program remained active throughout March, with cadets continuing to represent their school and community in a variety of ways.

The drill team competed at the Blue Springs South Air Force JROTC Drill Meet on March 7, earning an impressive 4th place finish in Armed Regulation Drill out of 23 teams. This competition marked the final drill meet of the season, and cadets continued their annual tradition of celebrating the end of the season with Shamrock Shakes.



Beyond competition, cadets played an important role in supporting community events across Topeka. Throughout the month, they performed multiple color guard and honor guard presentations. The month concluded with cadets presenting the colors at the Kansas Chamber of Commerce dinner held at the Stormont Vail Events Center on March 24. Cadets also served as honor guard members and ushers for keynote speaker Rob Riggle.

Overall, March was a successful and productive month for the AFJROTC program. Cadets demonstrated leadership, professionalism, and a strong commitment to service. The program now looks ahead to its Curriculum in Action trip to San Antonio in April, where cadets will connect classroom learning with real-world experiences.

The AFJROTC program continues to take pride in the way its cadets represent their school and community.

◆ Bowling

Congratulations to Washburn Rural High School senior Cody Spangler for winning the Class 6A State Bowling Championship! Spangler rolled an impressive 756 series to capture the individual title and helped lead Washburn Rural to a fifth-place team finish.



STATE CHAMPION CODY SPANGLER • CLASS 6A BOWLING

The Washburn Rural girls bowling team delivered an outstanding performance at the 6A State Tournament, finishing as state runner-up and making history in the process.

The team recorded a remarkable 3318 series across three traditional games plus four Baker games—setting a new school record since the addition of Baker scoring. This total also ranks as the third-highest score ever recorded at the girls 6A State Tournament, showcasing the team’s consistency and competitive excellence on the biggest stage.

Individually, Megan Glinka had a phenomenal showing, placing 2nd at state. She finished the season with a 215 average (2nd highest in school history), a 747 series (also 2nd highest), and a 288 game, tying for the 3rd highest game in school history. Megan also set a new benchmark with six 250+ games in a single season, the most ever recorded at Washburn Rural.

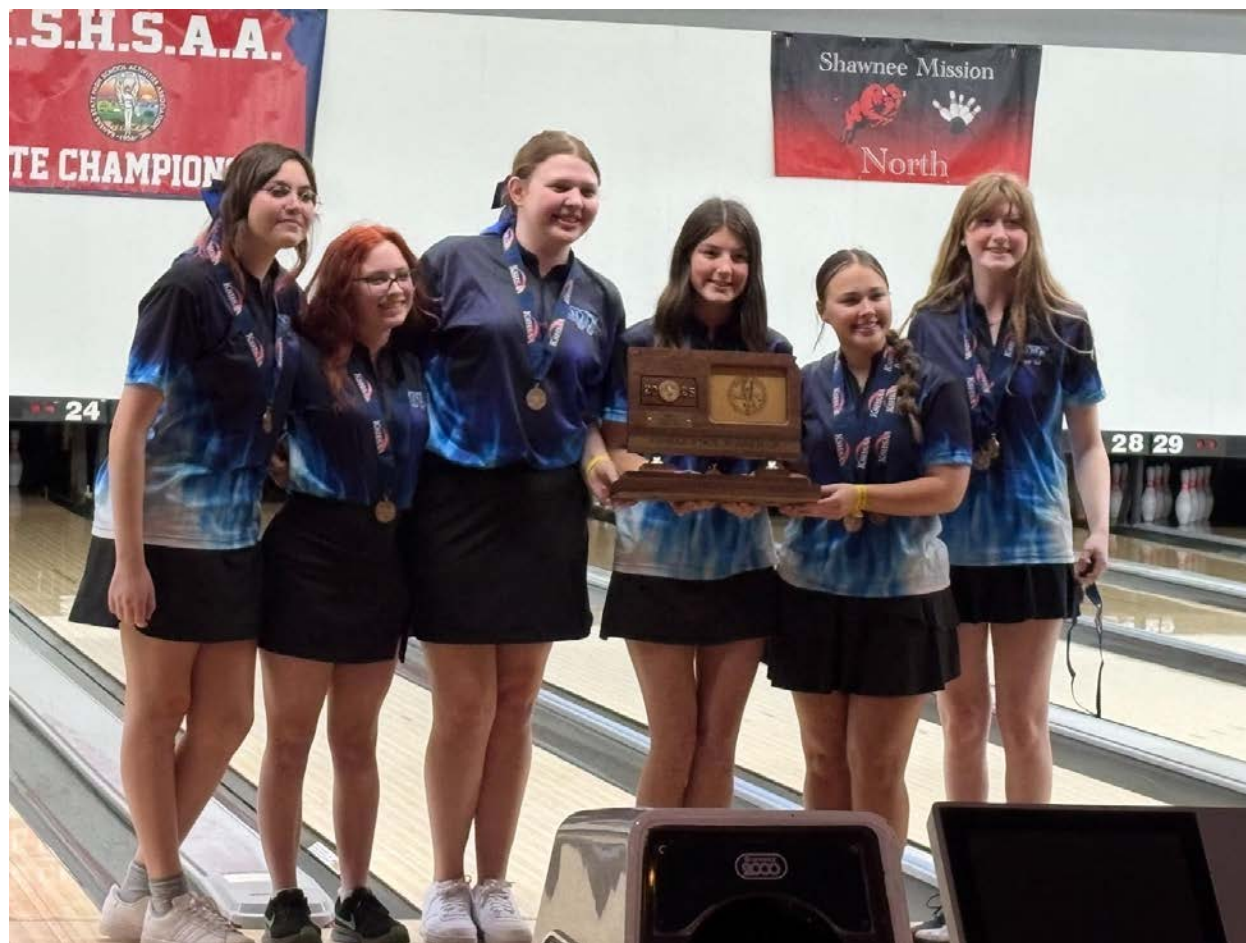
Senior Camrynn Ahrens rose to the occasion by bowling her highest game and series of the season at state, playing a key role in securing the team’s second-place finish. Stella Gordon also delivered when it mattered most, recording her best game and series of the year during the tournament.

◆ Bowling

This achievement reflects a true team effort. As the program emphasizes, success comes from everyone contributing—and that was on full display. Team members include Peyton Lawson (Fr), Ellen Austin (Sr), Kenzie Lawson (Sr), Megan Glinka (Jr), Camrynn Ahrens (Sr), and Stella Gordon (Sr).

Notably, Camrynn Ahrens and Megan Glinka have been part of an incredible three-year run for the program, helping lead the team to state finishes of 3rd, 2nd, and 2nd.

Congratulations to these student-athletes on an exceptional season and a performance that will be remembered in Washburn Rural bowling history!



WARU THEATRE PRESENTS

THE
CURIOUS
Savage

WRITTEN BY

JOHN PATRICK

April 16, 17, 18 7:00

Students \$7.00

Adults \$9.00

Tickets available at the door or at warutheatre.org



BLUEPRINT ART EXHIBITION

April 15 - 29

- Location: WRHS CTE Commons Area / H Hallway
- Open House Event:
Tuesday, April 21 5:00–8:00 PM
- Open to the Public.



Celebrate Creativity.

Support Student Artists.

Mrs. Finney's Monthly YA Book Recommendation

April 2026



This Woven Kingdom
By Tahereh Mafi
F MAF

First in a series by Tahereh Mafi, author of the *Shatter Me* series, *This Woven Kingdom* follows Alizeh, who to anyone else looks like a regular servant. In reality, she is a long-lost heir to a destroyed kingdom. When Alizeh crosses paths with Kamran, a crown prince trying to stop a disastrous prophecy that will destroy his kingdom, a set of events is initiated that will change both of their lives.

Similar Titles Include:



Connect with us @wrhslib for:

- technology support
- homework help
- reading recommendations
- area job openings
- school activities and more



Text 4 Help: 785-260-0015
Marcy Sandberg sandbmar@usd437.net
Victoria Finney finnevic@usd437.net

Visit the WRHS Library to place a hold on or check out one of these amazing books today!



WRHSLib Bookmark Creation Contest March 23rd - April 13th 2026

The Bookmark Creation Contest is back! To participate:

- Starting Monday, March 23rd, students & staff are invited to design an original bookmark using their own creative supplies or those provided by the library.
- Bookmarks must be submitted to the library by Friday, April 3rd.
- Voting opens Monday, April 6th, and closes Friday, April 10th.
- Winners will be announced Monday April 13th, 2026.

Consider creativity, neatness, and message while designing your bookmark. Bookmarks will be on display (without names) in the library and voted on by WRHS students and staff. The top 3 winning bookmarks will be printed and distributed to students and staff checking out books in the library!



Connect with us @wrhslib for:

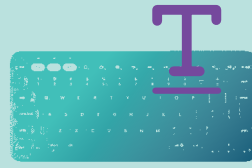
- technology support
- homework help
- reading recommendations
- area job openings
- school activities and more



Text 4 Help: 785-260-0015
Marcy Sandberg sandbmar@usd437.net
Victoria Finney finnevic@usd437.net

6 things to know about AI

Artificial intelligence technology is not new, but dramatic advances in generative AI have captured the world's attention and are transforming the information landscape. **Here are six news literacy takeaways** and implications to keep in mind as this technology continues to evolve.



TEXT

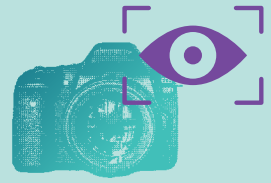
TOOLS

Chatbots: ChatGPT, Google Gemini, Microsoft Copilot, Claude, etc.

HOW THEY WORK

Generative AI chatbots rely on a technology called a **large language model** to synthesize large amounts of information and imitate human writing. They are trained on vast databases of internet text and digitized online writings, including books, articles and websites.

Chatbots use probability to predict what words and phrases go together to answer a given prompt. Some experts compare them to autocompletion tools on steroids.



VISUALS

TOOLS

Image generators: DALL-E, Midjourney, Stable Diffusion, etc.

HOW THEY WORK:

These tools have **learned how to arrange pixels** to generate digital images after being trained on billions of images and text captions scraped from the web.

They allow anyone to generate compelling and custom visuals from written prompts and can imitate styles of paintings or create photo-realistic images.



1 Generative AI tools are not objective ...

They are subject to the biases of the humans who make them — and integrate any biases baked into their training data. Data sets often include copyrighted, misleading and overtly biased material. These tools do not just learn human biases; they can also amplify, extend and entrench them.

T Researchers have raised concerns about AI chatbots generating misinformation and providing responses that include conspiracy theories, pseudoscience and harmful content.

[] AI image generators amplify biases in race and gender and can default to harmful Western stereotypes. A [Bloomberg experiment](#), for instance, found that Stable Diffusion produced AI images dominated by people with lighter skin tones for high-paying jobs, while images of fast food workers and dish washers skewed toward darker skin tones.

2 ... or reliably factual.

AI tools might feel authoritative and credible, but the responses they generate are routinely riddled with inaccuracies.

T Chatbots have been known to make up sources, provide incorrect answers to simple questions and write persuasive responses that include misinformation. Experts refer to false information presented with confidence as “hallucinations” — a persistent issue with this technology.

[] AI image generators can create anything you ask for — however absurd, whimsical or potentially harmful and misleading. While many people use image generators to make fun, fanciful images, bad actors can use them to smear public officials or produce other damaging fakes.

3 It's not all bad.

It can be easy to get swept up in alarmist takes, but AI tools also have tremendous upsides. For example, they can boost scientific research and make complicated or specialized tasks more accessible, like writing computer code or building websites. Some news organizations use AI to responsibly automate certain tasks, such as [The Associated Press](#) using AI to compile corporate earnings and sports box scores.



4 Content is easier than ever to create — and fake.

AI chatbots and image generators produce text and visuals at an unprecedented scale — and have the potential to supercharge the spread of misinformation. Some tools are even being used to produce fabricated news broadcasts using realistic-looking AI anchors. Be ready to encounter even more information with less transparency about its origin.

5 It signals a change in the nature of evidence.

Don't let AI technology undermine your willingness to trust anything you see and hear. Just be careful about what you accept as authentic.

T Traditional signals of credibility — such as clean writing, academic footnotes or sleek website design — are relatively easy to fake in today's information landscape. But AI chatbots make them easier than ever to game — at scale. Skills like “[lateral reading](#)” become even more critical.

[] The rise of more convincing fake photos and videos means that finding the source and context for visuals is often more important than hunting for visual clues of authenticity. Any viral image you can't verify through a reliable source — using a reverse image search, for example — should be approached with skepticism.

6 Reputable sources matter more than ever.

Credible sources follow processes to verify information before sharing it, and this should translate into higher levels of trust. Professional journalism ethics — such as fairness, transparency and accuracy — can be seen in the quality of information published by standards-based news organizations. Generative AI tools don't show the same concern for truth, verification or the public interest.



This infographic was created by the News Literacy Project with support from SmartNews, a news app for mobile devices.

For a future founded on facts

newslit.org

Is it legit?

Five steps for vetting a news source

Many sources compete for attention online, including partisan blogs and bogus sites posing as legitimate news organizations. It can be tough to know what to trust. Follow these steps to cut through the noise and learn how to evaluate sources for signs of credibility – as well as for red flags that signal a source should be avoided.

Test your source savvy!

Scan this QR code to put your source-vetting skills to the test.



1



Do a quick search

Conducting a simple search for information about a news source is a key first step in evaluating its credibility. It's important to look beyond social media. Go to a search engine and plug in the name of the website or publication. Do other legitimate sources, such as standards-based news organizations or [fact-checking websites](#), describe this publication as unreliable? Satirical? Is it a state-run propaganda "news" site? If so, there's no need to spend more time vetting. Look elsewhere for reliable information.

- **Tip:** Wikipedia can be a good place to start and lead you to relevant source links; just keep in mind that some credible local newsrooms may not have an entry there. You can also see if a source has been vetted for inclusion on news aggregators, such as [Google News](#), [Apple News](#) and [SmartNews](#).

2



Look for standards

Reputable news organizations aspire to ethical guidelines and standards, including fairness, accuracy and independence. These standards should be available publicly – often in the form of editorial policies or a code of ethics. Look for evidence that a source follows such standards. If someone is mentioned in a critical story, for instance, did the journalist give that person a chance to comment?

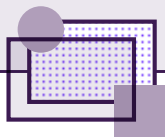
- **Note:** Some professional journalism standards are commonly shared across the industry, such as the [Society of Professional Journalists Code of Ethics](#). Other policies are unique to different newsrooms.

Beware of these trust busters!

If you spot any of these problems, look elsewhere for credible news.

- ✗ **False or untrue content:**
Publishing a demonstrably false claim without correcting it
- ✗ **Clickbait tactics:**
"Baiting" you with sensationalized language, including misleading or exaggerated headlines, or headlines that are purposely vague to drive clicks
- ✗ **Lack of balance:**
Consistently focusing on one angle or side of a legitimate debate or controversy, while ignoring or distorting other perspectives
- ✗ **Manipulated images or videos**
Tip: You can do a [reverse image search](#) using [Google](#), [TinEye](#) and [Yandex](#) (among other tools) to see if visuals have been misrepresented or altered in some way.
- ✗ **State-run or state-sponsored propaganda:**
Using government-controlled news organizations to further national agendas and improve public image
- ✗ **Dangerous, offensive and malicious content:**
Could include discriminatory language, unverified pseudoscience, content that promotes violence or coverage that – as the SPJ Code of Ethics states – panders "to lurid curiosity"

3

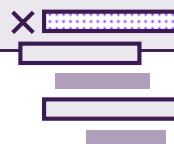


Check for transparency

Quality news sources should be transparent, not only about their reporting practices (see Step 2), but also about their ownership and funding. Is it clear who owns and runs this website or publication? Is advertising labeled responsibly? Can you tell who is writing and producing content? Is there a way to contact newsroom editors and reporters?

- **Remember:** "About" pages can provide some of these details, but they can also be misleading and omit important information (about a source's ownership or lack of independence, for example). **Don't be fooled** by a [sleek web design](#), or trust the "About" page on an unfamiliar site without further verification. If something seems suspicious, check it out.

4



Examine how errors are handled

Credible news sources are accountable for mistakes and correct them. Do you see evidence that this source corrects or clarifies errors?

5



Assess news coverage

An important step in vetting sources is taking time to read and assess several news articles: Do you see original reporting? Do they provide straight news reports, or just commentary and opinion? Are there grammatical and/or spelling errors? How do news articles from this source compare to coverage from other standards-based newsrooms on this same topic? Many people have strong opinions about news sources without evaluating them firsthand.

- **Tip:** Take note of bylines (names) on news coverage. These bylines can help you confirm that this coverage was written or produced by professional journalists. Bylines are also a sign of transparency and accountability.

News Literacy Project



SmartNews

This infographic was created by the **News Literacy Project** in partnership with **SmartNews**, a news app for mobile devices.

For a future founded on facts [newslit.org](#)



STUDENT SERVICES

CIRCLE OF FRIENDS AND UNIFIED SPORTS

UNIFIED BOCCE

We had four incredibly talented Unified Bocce teams battle hard at their tournament on February 28th at Topeka West High School. It was a day full of teamwork, friendly competition, and laughter - where every player felt welcomed, valued, and part of something bigger than the game itself. Congratulations to our 2026 Unified Bocce teams and coaches for an outstanding season and show of sportsmanship.



SPREAD THE WORD WEEK

Spread the Word is an annual worldwide campaign that encourages inclusion and kindness. We'd like to thank everyone for joining us for a fun week of activities that highlighted the importance of inclusion and creating a culture of belonging for all.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

- April 18th and 25th - Unified Soccer Tournaments
- May 1st - Adaptive Field Day
- May 9th - Unified Track and Field Meet

Email sippbro@usd437.net for information on how to join us for soccer and track!



SIGN UP TO JOIN US!



◆ Career and Technical Education

For the 2026-27 school year, WRHS will be offering classes in the following Career Clusters and Pathways

- **Agriculture, Food & Natural Resources:** Animal Science, Health and Related Industries, Diversified Agricultural Science, Natural Resources & Environmental Sustainability, and Plant Science & Industry Operations Pathways
- **Information Technology:** Media Design & Communications and Programming & Software Development Pathways
- **Business Finance:** Finance Pathway
- **Marketing:** Marketing Pathway
- **Manufacturing:** Manufacturing Pathway
- **Education & Training:** Teaching/Training Pathway
- **Health & BioSciences:** Biotechnology and Health Science Pathways
- **Law, Public Safety, Corrections & Security:** Corrections, Security, Law & Law Enforcement Pathway
- **Architecture & Design:** Construction & Design Pathway
- **Hospitality & Tourism:** Restaurant & Event Management Pathway

Visit the CTE website for more information: WRHS.net/cte or WRHS counselor page: [WRHS Course Planning Guide](#)

Manufacturing Pathway



Students in welding 2 recently had the opportunity to tour HME Structural Steel Solutions, also known as Haas Metal Engineering, a company that has been delivering quality structural steel solutions since 1996. As a leading AISC-certified provider, HME specializes in high-quality structural steel, custom metal fabrication, and professional erection services. During the tour, students observed the steel fabrication process from raw materials to finished structural components. They learned about precision cutting, welding, quality control measures, and the importance of safety standards in an industrial setting.

Industry professionals shared insight into the wide range of career opportunities available within the field, including welding, drafting, project management, engineering, and on-site construction. Students also gained a deeper understanding of how structural steel plays a critical role in building schools, businesses, and infrastructure within their communities.

The visit provided valuable real-world exposure, helping students connect classroom learning to practical applications in manufacturing and construction. Experiences like this continue to highlight the importance of career and technical education and the many pathways available in the skilled trades industry.

Agriculture and Education & Training Pathways

Guest Speaker Inspires Students with Real-World Landscape Insights

Recently, students in Plant & Soil Science and Career & Life Planning had the opportunity to learn from a seasoned professional in the landscape industry, James Widman, owner and lead designer of Cornerstone



Landscape Studio, LLC. Widman shared his journey from student to business owner and offered valuable advice about careers in horticulture, design, and entrepreneurship.



James Widman has built his company around a passion for plants, thoughtful design, and hands-on problem-solving. Under his leadership, Cornerstone Landscape Studio focuses on creating personalized outdoor spaces through careful landscape design, hardscape construction, lighting, and plant installation, blending both artistic vision and practical knowledge of soils, plants, and site conditions.

During his talk, Widman discussed the importance of understanding the science behind plants and soil, knowledge that

bridges the classroom and the workplace. He emphasized how skills learned in Plant & Soil Science classes help professionals choose the right plants for each environment, improve soil health, and design landscapes that thrive year after year. Students also heard about the daily realities of running a small business, managing clients, and planning projects, giving them a real-world perspective on possible careers after graduation.

In addition to technical tips, Widman offered encouragement to students exploring career paths, stressing the value of continuous learning, networking, and pursuing work that aligns with personal passions. His visit provided meaningful inspiration and practical takeaways for both aspiring scientists and young adults thinking about their future in the workforce.

Mission Township Fire Department to Speak to Culinary Classes About Kitchen Safety

On Monday, March 9, culinary students will welcome Tom Rodman from the Mission Township Fire Department for a special presentation on home and kitchen safety.

Rodman will share his professional experience in fire prevention and emergency response, helping students better understand the importance of safety practices in both residential and commercial kitchen settings. His presentation will focus on common kitchen hazards, proper use of cooking equipment, grease fire prevention, and how to respond quickly and effectively in case of an emergency.

For culinary students preparing for careers in food service, safety knowledge is just as essential as cooking skills. Learning directly from a fire service professional provides real-world insight into how small mistakes can lead to serious consequences, and how proper preparation can prevent accidents.

This visit offers students a valuable opportunity to strengthen their awareness of fire safety while reinforcing responsible habits they can carry into their careers and homes.

Programming & Software Development Pathway

On March 9, Washburn Rural High School welcomed alumnus Noah Haskins back to campus to speak with Computer Science classes about his experiences after graduation. Noah, a 2021 graduate of WRHS, is currently

◆ Career and Technical Education

majoring in Electrical Engineering and Computer Science at the University of Kansas. During his time at Washburn Rural, he completed several of the same computer science courses now offered to current students.



While visiting with classes, Noah shared insights about his involvement in college extracurricular activities, the process of choosing housing, and navigating life as a college student. He also reassured students that it's completely normal not to have every detail of their plans figured out yet. Noah highlighted a major project he led as part of a team that designed and built a printed circuit board. Students learned about the steps involved in developing the board, from early planning through the final presentation, and even had the opportunity to handle pieces from the project themselves. His visit gave students a valuable look at the many opportunities available to them after high school and encouraged them to stay open to new experiences. Noah emphasized the importance of trying new things, taking risks, and not being afraid to fail along the way.

WRHS
SUMMER
CODING
CAMPS

JUNE 1ST - 4TH, 2026

GRADES K-4
8:00 AM - 10:00 AM

GRADES 5-6
10:30 AM - 12:30 PM

GRADES 7-9
1:30 PM - 3:30 PM

75 STUDENTS MAXIMUM EACH SESSION, EARLY REGISTRATION DUE APRIL 30

The banner features a background of glowing blue and white digital patterns, including binary code and abstract shapes. The text is in bold, sans-serif fonts. The dates and session times are listed on the right side, and the registration information is at the bottom.

Link to our CSHS event website and more info:

<https://sites.google.com/usd437.net/cshs/events/summer-camp>

The Computer Science Honor Society is hosting our annual Binary Bingo Night, and we'd love to invite you and your family. Don't worry if you don't know binary numbers, the students will teach you!!

WRHS
COMPUTER SCIENCE HONOR SOCIETY PRESENTS

FUNDRAISER
BINARY
BINGO
NIGHT

APRIL 21ST @ WRHS CAFETERIA

The banner has a background of colorful, glowing binary numbers (0s and 1s) in shades of green, pink, and blue. The text is in bold, sans-serif fonts. The event title 'BINARY BINGO NIGHT' is the largest and most prominent text, with 'FUNDRAISER' written vertically to its left. The date and location are at the bottom.

Site for more info: <https://sites.google.com/usd437.net/cshs/events/binary-bingo-fundraiser>

Registration link: <https://forms.gle/6JxKJRJ7TiixVPyk8>

For only \$10, you can play 10 rounds of bingo and have a chance to win some cool prizes. There is a taco bar available for \$7 per person, a 50/50 raffle, and other opportunities to support CSHS. All of the proceeds go directly to our CSHS and allow us to do events like the STEAM Carnival for our community for free.

◆ Career and Technical Education

National Technical Honor Society

5th Grade Students Explore Future Opportunities at CTE Center

Fifth-grade students recently had the exciting opportunity to tour the CTE Innovation Center, where they explored the wide range of programs available to them in the future. Led by members of the National Technical Honor Society, the visit gave younger students a firsthand look at the 15 career pathways offered at WRHS. Throughout the tour, the fifth graders rotated through various classrooms and labs, where high school students showcased hands-on projects and demonstrated real-world skills. From engineering and health sciences to digital media and skilled trades, each pathway highlighted unique opportunities for students to discover their interests and begin planning for their futures.

The National Technical Honor Society students served as knowledgeable guides, answering questions and sharing their own experiences within the programs. Their leadership helped create an engaging and welcoming environment, making the younger students feel comfortable and excited about what lies ahead.

The visit not only introduced fifth graders to the possibilities within career and technical education but also inspired them to start thinking about their goals and passions early on.



Media Design & Communications

Photography students in Jennifer Luetje's and Steve Buhler's classes reached an exciting turning point when they moved beyond single-frame images and began experimenting with composite techniques. One particularly engaging unit introduces multiplicity photography, a creative approach where multiple images of the same subject are captured and later combined in editing software like Photoshop to produce a single, cohesive artwork. At the heart of this process lies a deceptively simple but essential tool: the tripod.

Building a Stable Foundation

Before students even begin shooting, they must understand why stability is critical. When capturing multiple images intended for layering, consistency is everything. Even the slightest camera shift between shots can create alignment issues later in post-production. A tripod eliminates this problem by locking the camera into a fixed position, ensuring that each frame lines up perfectly with the next.

Instructors typically begin by demonstrating proper tripod setup. This includes selecting a sturdy surface, adjusting the legs to maintain balance, and ensuring the camera is level. Students learn to avoid extending the

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center column too high, as this can reduce stability. They also practice securing their cameras firmly to the tripod head and checking for any movement before shooting.

Planning the Composite

Once the tripod is set, students move on to planning their compositions. In multi-plasticity photography, the goal is to photograph one subject in multiple positions or states within the same environment. For example, a student might capture a person walking across a room, pausing in different spots for each shot. Because the camera remains fixed, the background stays consistent while the subject changes. This consistency is what makes the final composite believable. Students are encouraged to think ahead, mapping out where the subject will appear in each frame and ensuring there is no overlap unless intentionally desired.

Shooting with Precision



With the tripod in place and a plan established, students begin shooting. They quickly discover that manual camera settings are crucial. Automatic settings can shift exposure, focus, or white balance between shots, which complicates the editing process. By using manual mode, students maintain uniformity across all images.

A remote shutter release or timer is often introduced to further reduce camera shake. Students also learn to check each shot carefully, ensuring the subject is well-positioned and that lighting remains consistent throughout the sequence.

Bringing It All Together in Photoshop

After capturing their images, students transition to post-production. This is where the concept of multi-plasticity truly comes to life. Using Adobe Photoshop, they import their series of images as layers within a single document.

The key technique taught here is masking. Students use layer masks to reveal only the parts of each image where the subject appears, effectively “stacking” multiple versions of the subject into one frame. Because the tripod kept the background identical, the layers aligned seamlessly, allowing the subject to appear multiple times in a single scene.

This stage also introduces students to blending techniques, edge refinement, and minor adjustments such as color correction to ensure the final image looks natural and cohesive.

Learning Outcomes and Creative Growth

By the end of the unit, students gain more than just technical skills. They develop an understanding of planning, precision, and the relationship between shooting and editing. The tripod, once seen as a basic accessory, becomes a critical tool for creative expression.

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Perhaps most importantly, students begin to see photography not just as capturing a single moment, but as constructing an image through multiple moments. This shift in perspective opens the door to more advanced techniques and encourages experimentation.

In mastering tripod setup and multi-image compositing, photography students take a significant step forward—transforming simple scenes into imaginative visual narratives.

Construction & Design Pathway



Our construction students have built and sold another dog house, making it four dog houses built and sold this year! We would like to extend a special thank you to the community members who have supported this project by allowing us to build for them.

Your support allows our students to apply real-world construction skills in a meaningful way. Through these projects, students learn how to plan, organize materials, measure, and build while working as a team to complete a finished product.

Under the direction of our instructor, Kyle Fowler, hands-on experiences like this help students gain confidence and better understand how the skills they learn in the classroom apply to real-life situations. We appreciate the continued support from our community in helping provide these valuable learning opportunities for our students.

If you are interested in purchasing a dog house, please contact Teresa Goldena at goldeter@usd437.net.

Construction & Design Pathway



Students enrolled in Principles of Woodworking and Intro to Industrial Technology recently had the opportunity to explore real-world careers during a tour of Custom Wood Products in St. Marys. During the visit, students were guided through the manufacturing facility, where they observed how raw materials are transformed into high-quality custom cabinetry. The company, which has been producing handcrafted wood products since 1981, specializes in building custom cabinets and millwork for homes across the United States.

In addition to the tour, students attended a presentation led by company representatives who shared insights into the wide range of careers available in the woodworking and manufacturing industry. They discussed positions such as cabinet makers, designers, machine operators, and production specialists, as well as the importance of teamwork, precision, and technical skills in the field.

Students also learned about the advanced technology used in modern woodworking, highlighting how the industry blends traditional craftsmanship with innovative tools and processes. The presentation emphasized that careers in industrial technology offer strong opportunities for growth, competitive wages, and hands-on work environments.



The experience provided students with a valuable look into potential career paths and helped connect classroom learning to real-world applications. By touring Custom Wood Products, students gained a deeper understanding of the skills and education needed to succeed in the woodworking and manufacturing industries.



Manufacturing



Welding 1, 2, and 3 students in Mr. Harvey's classes recently had the opportunity to explore careers in the manufacturing industry during a tour of PTMW, Inc. in Topeka.

During the visit, students were guided through the company's large-scale manufacturing facility, where they observed advanced metal fabrication processes firsthand. PTMW specializes in producing metal enclosures and equipment for industries such as power, rail, and data centers, using techniques like CNC machining, robotic welding, and powder coating.

In addition to the tour, students attended a presentation led by company representatives, who shared insight into the wide range of career opportunities available in welding and manufacturing. They discussed positions such as welders, fabricators, machine operators, and engineers, emphasizing the importance of technical skills, safety practices, and continued training in the field.

Students also learned how modern welding careers combine hands-on craftsmanship with advanced technology, highlighting the strong demand for skilled workers in the

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industry. PTMW representatives encouraged students to consider career pathways in manufacturing, noting opportunities for growth, stability, and competitive wages.

The experience provided students with a valuable connection between classroom learning and real-world applications, giving them a clearer understanding of the skills and education needed to succeed in welding and industrial careers.

Health Science Pathway

The Washburn Rural High School HOSA (Health Science) Club recently attended a career exploration event at Stormont Vail Health. This visit provided an engaging behind-the-scenes experience of Stormont Vail's



healthcare professionals. The Stormont Vail Health Talent Acquisition Team hosted their career exploration event, “Life – Choose Your Path,” for Topeka area high school juniors and seniors interested in a healthcare profession. Students heard directly from professionals representing a variety of hospital departments. Each healthcare presenter shared insights into a typical workday, career outlook, and salary information, opportunities for advancement, and their personal career journeys. Most impactful was hearing what they genuinely love about their professions. These stories brought the realities of healthcare careers to life in a powerful and relatable way. This visit provided our WRHS students with an inside look at the many dedicated professionals who work each day collaboratively to care for patients and support families throughout our community.

The purpose of the field trip was simple yet meaningful: to help students interested in healthcare careers explore the wide range of pathways available to them. From hands-on patient care and laboratory diagnostics to cyber security, administrative leadership, and ongoing professional training, students were able to see firsthand

the depth and diversity of opportunities within the healthcare field.

Following the presentations, students participated in one-on-one conversations with professionals in areas of personal interest. Students asked questions, gained valuable perspectives on educational pathways, and career preparation. Several departments also incorporated hands-on demonstrations and equipment, giving students an interactive glimpse into the skills and tools used daily in healthcare settings. It was a wonderful experience for our WRHS HOSA students, who gained meaningful connections with professionals. The event sparked their curiosity and strengthened students’ confidence as they began to explore their next steps in achieving their future career goals.

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* Program is only for students going into their Senior year of high school.



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April 24, 2026**

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tinyurl.com/summerscrubs



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SENIOR SPOTLIGHTS



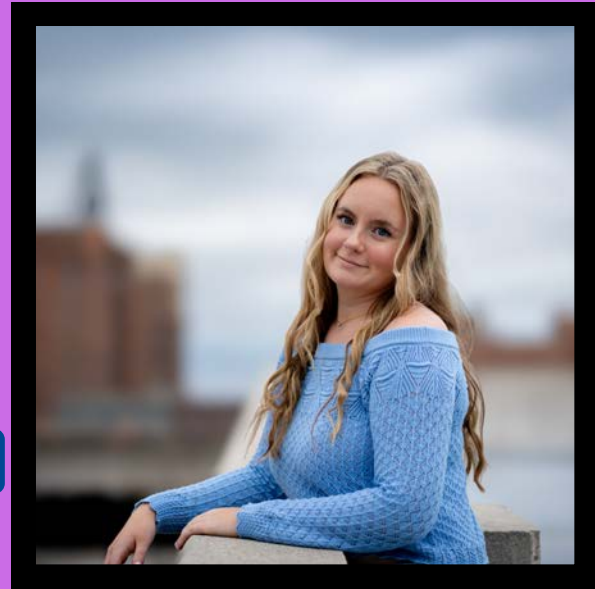
Giselle Foster

Favorite Drink: Peach Lemonade
Favorite Marketing Experience: Playing Mafia with the OG crew. Nothing compares to the 2023-2024 staff.
College: Baker University



Meredith Clark

Favorite Drink: Sugar Cookie Blender
Favorite Marketing Experience: Making Mayson wash the dishes every day 😊
College: Washburn University



Mayson Hughes

Favorite Drink: A Carmel Chai
Favorite Marketing Experience: When Meredith knocked over the mop bucket in the middle of the hall, and water went everywhere
College: Oklahoma Wesleyan University





SENIOR SPOTLIGHTS



Brecken Murphy

Favorite Drink: Snickerdoodle Frappe!

Favorite Common Grounds Experience: The field trip to Advisors Excel, when we talked the bus driver into taking us to

Chick-fil-A first!

College: Hutchinson Community College



Hayden Bolejack

Favorite Drink: A Frappe

Favorite Common Grounds Experience: I was making a drink and it wouldn't come out at first so I smacked the blender against the table then it all shot up everywhere

College: Undecided



Josiah Walker

Favorite Drink: Iced Vanilla Latte

Favorite Common Grounds Experience:

Giving out free drinks

College: Washburn University





SENIOR SPOTLIGHTS



Mayson Huges

Years in The Shack: 3 Years
Intended Major: Psychology
College: Oklahoma Wesleyan University



Kimber Shaffer

Years in The Shack: .5 Years
Intended Major: Psychology
College: Washburn University



Meredith Clark

Years in The Shack: 1 Year
Intended Major: Health Science
College: Washburn University



SENIOR SPOTLIGHTS



Leah Dittmer

Years in The Shack: 2.5 Years
Intended Major: Architecture
College: Kansas State
University



John Hoytal

Years in The Shack: 3 Years
Intended Major:
Kinesiology
College: Washburn
University



Dawson Leahy

Years in The Shack: 2.5 Years
Intended Major: Business
Marketing
College: Washburn
University



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Washburn Rural High School

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