



WB - CONTACT

District Newsletter – November & December 2023



Woodhaven-Brownstown School District

Learning and Leading for Tomorrow

24821 Hall Road
Woodhaven, MI 48183
734.783.3300
mywbsd.org

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WHS Esports Club Promotes Gaming Together

As fall sports wind down, things are heating up for the Woodhaven High School Esports Club.

Brian Taylor, Woodhaven High School business teacher and Esports coach said right now one of their teams is ranked 4th in the state for Super Smash Brothers Ultimate; of two of the teams playing Mario Kart, one is 14th in the state and finally in Rocket League the team is currently ranked #2 in the state; with two players ranked #1 and #5 players of the week.

The club started out modestly in his classroom but has since expanded to the classroom next to the PBLZ where students can join to play with others in person.

It was a story on National Public Radio about Esports that initially made Mr. Taylor take pause. After listening, Taylor immediately knew he wanted to be a part of the growth of Esports and wanted to start a club.

Taylor has enjoyed gaming all of his life and thought what a great and unique opportunity this could be to engage different groups of people in an afterschool program.

"Video games are a huge market," Taylor said. "It's estimated that Esports will generate more revenue than traditional sports. which it could surpass in a short amount of time as people not

only stream but attend live or in person events.”

One of the biggest misconceptions is that video games are a solitary activity.

“There’s a stereotype of kids being isolated and it’s not how video games really are,” he said. “I wanted to create a social space in school for kids to get together. There is live interaction and a lot of fun. I provide the space and structure, the kids come together and help each other, grow and encourage each other. It’s unique in that way, I’m here as support, they really lead it and it’s their team.”

Last year, the students finished in the Top 64 for the season, and advanced to the first round of the playoffs.

The goal is for the club to grow - but a lot of it depends on what is done at the state level, Taylor said. The students continue as part of the Michigan High School Esports League, run through the Michigan Association of Secondary Principals, where they compete with other teams.

The district has invested in more equipment, through the IT/Tech department because it's not like traditional athletics.

There are only a handful of schools Downriver that have teams in the league; Huron, Belleville, Taylor and Melvindale. But Woodhaven is the first school in our area to offer this club. “It’s cool to be here taking the lead and giving our students these opportunities,” Taylor said.

Currently there are around 25 total students competing in three game titles - Super Smash Brothers Ultimate; Mario Kart 8 Deluxe; and Rocket League. Each competing school can have multiple teams per title. All of the teams are doing very well.

Woodhaven’s top teams consist of:

Rocket League - Zachary Owczarzak; Colin Robbins; Ethan Petri

Smash Bros - Brandon Dunnell; Apollo Cruz; Sean Keith

Mario Kart - Mackenzie Whitman; Maxwell Dorton; Faith Fluker; Apollo Cruz

Another misconception is that gaming is only for males - and the two female students, Whitman and Fluker on the team have literally “smashed” that stigma as they are part of the rocking Mario Kart team.

Students currently practice 2:30 to 4 p.m. Wednesdays and Thursdays and compete from 4 to 5:30 p.m. on those same days.

Taylor, who has just entered his sixth year of teaching at WHS said “this club has been nice for the students who don't participate in other things and gives them something to be a part of.”

“This is something they have been passionate about forever and they have recognition and validation for it now and that part is really cool,” he said.

The fall season wraps up with the State championship at Oakland University on December 9. The spring season starts in February, and freshmen to seniors are encouraged to come and see what

"The best part is getting involved with other teams and playing against them," said sophomore Maxwell Dorton who is a second year Esports student and one of the club's founding members. "I like getting to know people who are interested in the same stuff. It's an inviting community."

Taylor provided an update on how the Esports teams performed during the playoffs:

Mario Kart - ranked 9th in the state before being eliminated in the second round

Rocket League - ranked 13th before being eliminated in the second round

Super Mario Smash Bros - ranked 12th, made it to the fourth round (Top 8) before being eliminated

Article provided by K. Stamey, Communications Director



WHS Marching Band Performs in America's Thanksgiving Parade

Mr. Brad Faryniarz, WBSD music teacher and Marching Band Director, submitted an application to The Parade Company in August to appear and perform in America's Thanksgiving Day Parade. Faryniarz got the nod in October, and on Thanksgiving Day, November 23, 2023, the Woodhaven Warrior Marching Band joined multiple high school marching bands from across the state and performed many tunes while they marched down Woodward Avenue.



The band's 130 members spent all of October and November preparing for the parade. This is the band's third appearance in America's Thanksgiving Day Parade under the direction of Faryniarz, and it definitely won't be the last.

The band also kicked off the City of Woodhaven's Christmas Tree Lighting ceremony and parade on Friday, December 1, and helped the city welcome Santa and Mrs. Claus.



WBEF Grants Many Wishes

On Tuesday, November 21, 2023, members of the Woodhaven-Brownstown Education Foundation (WBEF) made the rounds to the five elementary schools playing Santa by handing out thousands of dollars in grants to teachers. Then on Wednesday, December 6, 2023, the WBEF visited BMS, PHMS, and WHS to complete this round of grant giving.

Grants allow the teaching staff to bring innovative and exciting "extras" to their classrooms. Students benefit from enhanced learning in multiple ways as they have access to additional resources such as English, math and literacy centers, science and STEM activities, flexible seating options, sensory stimulation, 3D printing opportunities and much more.

The WBEF also gifted each elementary school with a set of 15 Little Bit codable robots for student use. A set was also purchased for PHMS and will remain with the school when it becomes a 5/6 building next school year. Lastly, the WBEF purchased a new golf cart for use on the WHS campus.

In total, the WBEF gifted teachers with about \$40,000 in classroom grants for the 2023/24 school year.



Yake Elementary



Erving Elementary



Bates Elementary



Gudith Elementary.



Wegienka Elementary.



WHS



PHMS



BMS

Bates 5th Grader Bakes His Way to 5th Grade Camp

Bates Elementary student Xayden Ramirez come up with a unique way to to pay for his 5th Grade camp fee of \$350.00 - he's baking and selling breads. Xayden started out making zucchini breads but soon branched into pumpkin and banana breads as well.

Xayden's success soon reached the News Herald, and reporter Jackie Martin featured an article about Xayden's budding entrepreneurial aspirations. Click the link below to read the News Herald article.

Xayden's success has carried into the school district. His breads are being offered to students in the various school cafeterias.



Bates student, 9, cooks up plan to launch zucchini bread business, pay own camp fee
His bread started selling like hotcakes.

[the newsherald.com](https://www.thenewsherald.com)

Nature is Amazing!

Check out this sweet display of love between a momma polar bear and her cub. Nature at it's best!

Nature is Amazing ♣ on Twitter: "momma bear and her cub 🐻🐻 pic.twitter.com/9jE0ObZksx / Twitter"

momma bear and her cub 🐻🐻 pic.twitter.com/9jE0ObZksx

twitter.com

A Day in the Life of a Warrior . . .



Athletics
Hockey shenanigans!



TOTE Early On
TOTE Pizza Party with Santa.



Athletics
Jevon Campbell is ready to tip off the season.



Wegienka

Kindergartners learn to code.



Wegienka

Mrs. Briegel meets Santa.



Wegienka

Young Fives are twinkling stars.



Bates

Coffee Cart every Thursday!



Erving

Lego Robotics Team.



WHS

Women of Woodhaven Club learns self-defense techniques.



Athletics

Brooke Taylor signs with Tiffin University to play softball.



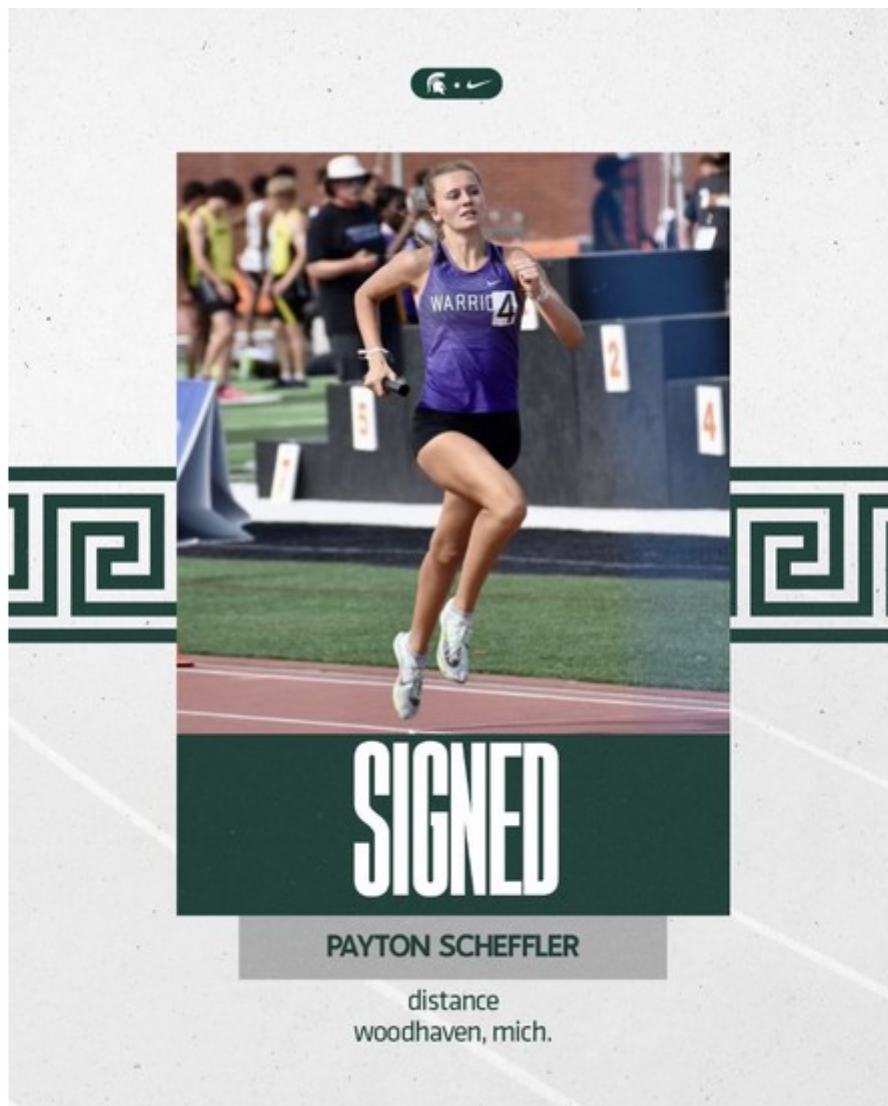
Athletics

Jim Chwalek to play baseball for Kalamazoo College.



Athletics

Grace Usher signs a letter of intent with Grand Valley State University to play softball.



Standout athlete Payton Sheffler will continue her running career at Michigan State University.



Woodhaven-Brownstown School District

Business Hours:

7:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Monday - Friday

Email: wbsdcares@wbsdweb.com

Website: mywbsd.org

Location: [24821 Hall Road, Woodhaven, MI, USA](#)

Phone: [734.783.3300](tel:734.783.3300)

Twitter: [@WBSDStrong](https://twitter.com/WBSDStrong)



Melanie Abair

Melanie is using Smore to create beautiful newsletters

