October 2026

ECHO

Westfall Sports Sees Historic Fall Season

Attendance Pledge

By Adelaide Williams

The attendance pledge, a new program to help students focus on maintaining a strong attendance record, made its debut at Westfall High School this year.

To enroll, students filled out a form where they promised to try and be at school and not receive unexcused absences.

The benefits of high attendance will help individual students and the school as a whole. Public schools usually receive funding according to their attendance rates rather than the enrollment rate, and if attendance has high rates, a school will continue to receive better funding.

At the end of each nine weeks, administration gives students who have enrolled in the program and have good attendance a treat. For example, students who had perfect attendance or only excused absences at the end of the first quarter received an ice cream sandwich.

Mr. Stepp, Westfall's assistant principal, explained that "the attendance pledge is meant as an incentive to reward students for good attendance!"

According to teachers and administrators, the pledge has worked during the early part of the school year.

"Attendance has been better this year," said Ms. Oney, Spanish teacher.

Mr. Stepp added that this program also has helped Westfall star members to "gauge where our students are as far as attendance and allows us to help with students who are struggling."

The current plan is to continue this attendance pledge in the future. Mr. Stepp also said that cadministration hopes to "grow it with some more/better incentives!"

Ag Day

By Maizy Barnes

On October 1, more than 30 Westfall FFA members jumped at the opportunity to team up with the Teays Valley FFA and teach fourth graders about agriculture at the Pickaway county Ag Day.

Ag Day is an annual event where Westfall, Logan Elm, Teays Valley, and Circleville PRCTC FFA chapters team up to educate local fourth graders. The event spans two days, with two chapters hosting students from their respective districts on the first day, and the remaining two chapters taking over for the second day.

At the event, the elementary students rotated through interactive stations where FFA members taught them about livestock, crop systems, soils, and agricultural careers. The Westfall FFA chapter took on several key responsibilities, which included organizing the student group leaders, managing the Ag Careers booth, and providing the animals for the livestock education station.

Sophomore Cameron Grooms, who was in charge of the chicken wholesale meat cut station, described his experience as “amazing,” stating that “it was a valuable experience for both me and the kids.”

Grooms explained his hope that the students he taught will turn out to be better “chicken-eers.”

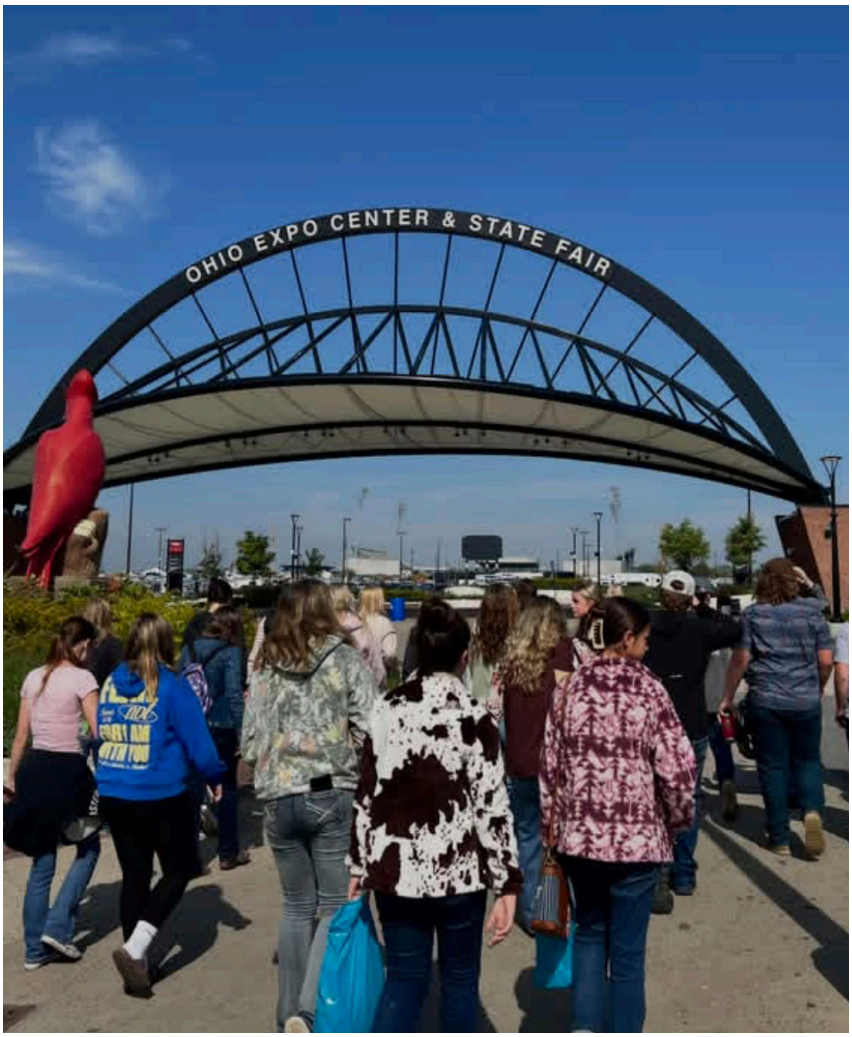
High school FFA members were also in charge of teaching the fourth graders about animals. Mr. Joseph, a teacher at Westfall High School, provided sheep for the event.

“I loved seeing the middle school and high school AG students taking a leadership role and teaching the fourth graders from Westfall and Teays Valley about their projects,” Mr. Joseph said.

Events like Ag Day prove that agriculture is about much more than just farming. The two-day event wrapped up with hundreds of local fourth graders gaining hands-on exposure to key aspects of the agriculture industry.

FFA Travels to Quarter Horse Congress

By Aubrey Bickenheuser



On October 12, members of the Westfall FFA chapter traveled to the 2026 Quarter Horse Congress for a day of learning, exploration, and fun.

The annual event featured a variety of stores and boutiques selling items such as clothing, horse tack, trucks, trailers, and campers. Students also had the opportunity to watch horse shows across three different arenas.

Students were paired with a buddy and given time to explore the grounds. Some spent the day shopping, while others enjoyed riding a mechanical bull and watching the competitions. Students also visited the new Ohio Showcase building, where they learned about Ohio agriculture and participated in activities such as playing pool.

Westfall FFA secretary Brooke Elster shared her favorite part of the trip, stating, "My favorite thing I did at Congress would be spending time to learn about the different types of horse shows, and I enjoyed spending time with my friends, shopping, and getting to experience that side of agriculture."

A total of 30 students attended the Quarter Horse Congress, spending the school day learning about horses and supporting the equine community. Students had the opportunity to experience a variety of horse shows, including hunter jumpers, halter stallions, and bitty western trail.

Westfall FFA historian Laina Welch also shared her thoughts on the experience, stating, "My favorite thing to do at Congress was getting to spend the day outside of school with my friends and shop. I also really enjoyed watching the horse shows."

The trip provided students with an opportunity to explore different aspects of the equine industry, learn more about agriculture, and spend time with fellow FFA members.

Boys Golf Finishes Top 10 in State Tourney

By Kane Carpenter

Westfall High School's boys golf team has completed a wonderful season this year. Brendan Biegler, a senior golfer, even called it "one of the greatest seasons in our program's history."

However, Westfall's spectacular performance isn't exclusive to this year.

"We finished the SVC season undefeated 56-0, winning our fourth straight conference championship and completing our third consecutive undefeated season," explained Biegler.

The 2026 season also put some new records in the books for Westfall.

"Along the way, we set a new nine-hole school record with a 141 and an 18-hole school record with a 298," Biegler said.

The success continued into the postseason where the Mustangs finished second in the sectional tournament, with three of the team's golfers making it into the top 10. This feat earned them a trip to the Division II State Championship at Firestone Country Club, where the team ultimately finished seventh out of "roughly 200 programs across the state," according to Biegler.

We must shine a special spotlight on the seniors of the 2026 boys golf team. They were the foundation of the team and played a major role in the success this year.

"This season was especially meaningful for our seniors, who finished their high school careers as four-time SVC champions and helped build a winning standard for Westfall golf," Biegler said.

Girls Soccer Completes Historic Season

By Riley Rigsby

The girls soccer team at Westfall High School made history this year by playing in the district championship game for the first time ever.

After finishing the season 11-5, the team beat McClain High School 2-0 in the district semifinals, leading to their matchup against a difficult, undefeated Wheelersburg's squad in the district championship game. The Mustangs fell to Wheelersburg.

Still, the season is nothing less than a success, especially considering the obstacles the team overcame. Coach George acknowledges that the girls had a lot of bumps in the road regarding minor injuries, but they never once let that slow them down.

"Injuries affected the team quite a bit, but the team stepped up, played out of position, regrouped, and fought harder," he stated.

Through all the ups and downs, the Lady Mustangs fought hard to pave the way for tournament play. Younger players stepped up and filled in big shoes, including freshman Addison Wallace.

"Making it this far in tournaments my freshman year has been special, especially since I've been able to contribute, and I'm excited to see what next season brings," said Wallace.

Losing the group of seniors the Mustangs have now will definitely impact the team next season. Although they're losing a lot of talent, the returning players believe they can give themselves and Westfall High School another successful season.

"We are all really proud of this season being the best soccer team at Westfall," explains Izzy Pringle, a junior. "However, we're losing some of our best players going into next season. We hope that we will be able to fill the gaps and be almost as good as we were this year."

Boys Soccer Overcomes Injuries for Stellar Season

By Kane Carpenter

Although the Westfall boys soccer team fell short of a winning record, it still put together a memorable season, overcoming several obstacles and injuries to have one of the most successful seasons in school history.

The Mustangs finished the season with an 8-9-1 record, but early-season injuries challenged the crew early on. The team lost starting goalie Gabriel Cox toward the beginning of the season, which "forced the squad to dig deep into their depth and resilience."

This early loss swung them into an early losing streak, but the boys did not waver in determination.

"Shaking off that early turbulence, Westfall found its footing and clawed back to a neutral 5-5-1 mark by midseason," Cox explained.

After reaching the balanced record, the boys continued the season with high energy, striving towards the winning record that Westfall Boys Soccer has never achieved. Late season victories against teams like Zane Trace, New Lexington, and McClain pushed "the team program toward the brink of a historic winning season," Cox said.

The team's season ended with a 3-0 sectional tournament loss to South Point.

Although the season ended sooner than the boys hoped, they left the field with positive energy, knowing that there would soon be improvement in the future.

"The lessons from this season act as a powerful blueprint and competitive foundation for the future of Westfall Boys Soccer," Cox said.

Teacher Feature: Mr. Schrecengost

By Lu Coon

After Mr. Bartholomew left at the end of last year, everyone has been pretty angsty to see who replaced him in the ISR room here at Westfall. Well, meet Gary Schrecengost, who has already had an effect on students. You may see him in the hall from time to time with a bright smile and easy-going personality.

After serving as a Grove City police officer with his high rank of sergeant, he retired after 26 years. He then worked at Southwestern City Schools, and after that, he worked with special ed students all over Grove City.

Mr. Schrecengost accepted his Westfall job this year, but he caught wind of the school when he moved to Mount Sterling in June 2020.

"Everyone is friendly, professional, and goes out of their way to help you have a good day," he said.

Being in charge of the ISR kids and the "bad" kids, Mr. Schrecengost turns to his policing background mixed with an educational background for insight on what these students are dealing with.

When asked what he would like each student to know, Gary said, "I've been where you're at. I'll never judge you or look down on you for decisions/choices you make. I'm here to help you succeed. I've had a lot of life experiences both good/bad and can help you navigate through difficult times."

When not at Westfall, Gary is likely at home working on his property and spending time with his six- and three-year-old grandsons. When the weather is bad, you can catch him inside reading non-fiction books.

Senior Spotlight: Ellie Heath

By Riley Rigsby

Ellie Heath is one of Westfall's top ranked seniors, participating in many college courses and extracurriculars.

Ellie has been active in CCP for the last three years successfully, trying to prepare herself for her future.

"I think participating in CCP has helped me get used to the workload college brings and the environment," said Heath.

In terms of education, Ellie plans to attend Ohio University's main campus to study elementary education.

"I feel like main campus is the right fit for me because it feels homey, they have a good education program, and I already know some people that go to school there," said Heath.

Ellie is active in the Allied Health program offered through Pickaway Ross, and she has been a member since the beginning of her junior year. Although she isn't pursuing a career in the medical field, she feels as if the program has been a good learning experience.

"Allied Health has taught me many lifestyle and healthcare skills that I wouldn't know on my own," said Heath.

Ellie has a great group of friends and that's something that's very important to her. A lot of her closest friends are also active in the Allied Health program, and Ellie looks forward to class with them every day.

One of Ellie's favorite teachers she's had throughout high school happens to be her Allied Health teacher, Mrs. Tipton. "She's always understanding of everyone, and she has the sweetest personality," said Heath.

Ellie advises younger students at Westfall to "go to as many events like sports games that you can, when you look back those will be some of the best memories."