January-February 2026

ECHO



Winter Weather Nearly Cancels 2026

School Delays and Closings



By Mason Barnes

In late January, Westfall High School experienced major closures, with a strong winter storm closing school for the entire week and forcing delays afterward.

Mr. Fife, Westfall's superintendent stated, "When making the decision to delay or cancel school, I closely monitor weather forecasts, consult with our Transportation Director, and personally assess road conditions throughout the district."

Because Westfall Local School District spans many rural roadways, the district takes black ice and drifting snow, especially, into consideration.

Ohio law requires schools to be in session for a minimum number of hours. So far, Westfall is on track to meet that minimum even with the closings. As Mr. Fife explained in an email sent out to the Westfall community during the closings, "Currently, no additional instructional time has been scheduled."

If that changes, however, Westfall High School will add calamity days from June 1-3, based on the hours missed. At the time of this writing, the school has no plans to add extra days to the calendar

Mr. Fife also highlighted how well our bus drivers have handled the difficult weather.

"Our transportation team has done an outstanding job navigating the challenging winter conditions," he said.

Westfall eSports



By Mason Barnes

The Westfall High School eSports team is wrapping up its season in March. Mr. Schoonover and Mr. Greenlee currently coach the team and prepare them for competition. Two juniors on the team,Landon Yang and Gabriel Watkins, gave their thoughts on the current winter eSports season.

When asked about who the best player on the team was, Landon stated, “I wouldn’t necessarily say that there is an MVP of the team, as everyone on the team contributes a great amount to our success.”

Gabe succinctly countered Landon’s view, however, stating, “Landon Yang would be the MVP.”

Furthermore, Gabe stated that “Mario Kart and Fortnite would be Westfall’s strong suit.”

Thankfully, there are eight rounds of both Fortnite and Mario Kart throughout the season.

Westfall’s eSports team has improved noticeably from last season.

“This year, I feel that our team has grown significantly, especially with the new skills of the freshmen,” Landon explained.

Both Landon and Gabe emphasized the importance of teamwork and cooperation improving throughout the 2026 season.

Teacher Feature: Mr. Whitaker



By Sean Williams

At Westfall High School, math teacher Mr. Evan Whitaker has quickly become a favorite among students. He currently holds a bachelor's degree in mathematics and 7-12 Education, and he's already planning to pursue his master's degree in the next few years, which is proof he practices the same dedication he encourages his students to use.

When describing what teaching feels like, Mr. Whitaker uses a comparison most teachers can relate to: "It's like driving a car full of unpredictable passengers toward a shared destination."
Every day brings new challenges and new personalities, and even as a younger teacher, he is able to adjust and adapt to it. He believes success comes from never stopping trying. He says that his favorite part about teaching is the "a-ha" moment a student has when everything seems to click

Outside of school, Mr. Whitaker has a life full of unique hobbies. He enjoys spending time with his fiancée, and he's a huge fan of gaming and anime. He's also the captain of the Columbus Tyrants, an armored combat team. His favorite video game series is The Legend of Zelda, and he's completed more than 80 playthroughs across the franchise.

Whether he's breaking down a tough concept or talking about his latest Zelda run, Mr. Whitaker brings authenticity and passion to everything he does, and his students feel the impact every day.

Senior Spotlight: Steven Bingham



By Sean Williams

Balancing school, work, and future ambition is not an easy task, but Westfall senior Steven Bingham is doing just that.

Currently working part-time at Kroger, where he has been employed for over a year, Steven has already learned the values of discipline, responsibility, and saving money, skills that align with his long term goals.

After graduating high school, Steven plans to enlist in the United States Marine Corps, where he will work as an aircraft mechanic in the aviation field. While becoming a pilot is his ultimate dream, he understands that success requires patience and preparation. Working on aircraft will allow him to gain hands-on experience while taking the necessary steps toward earning a bachelor's degree, a requirement for becoming a military pilot.

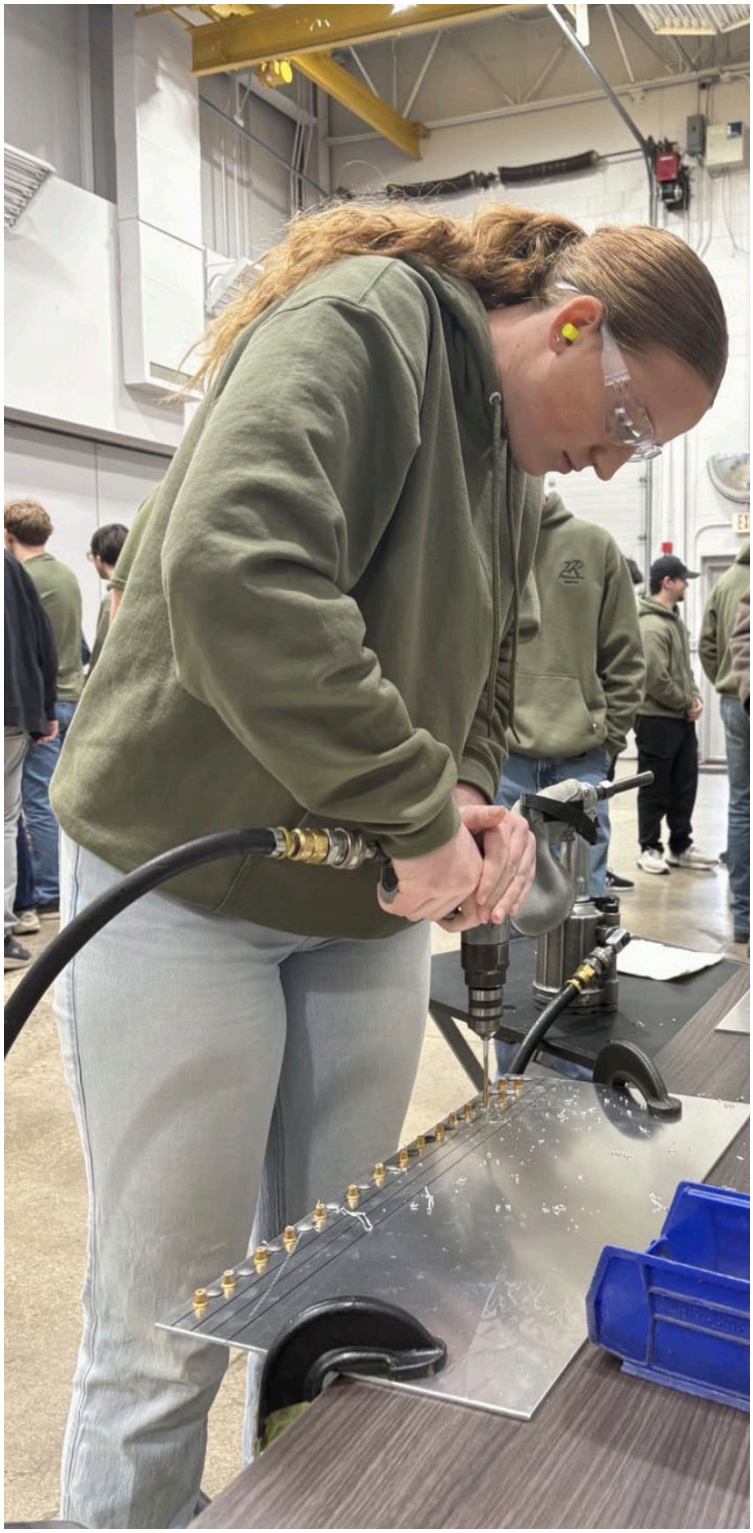
"I care most about being able to make a comfortable living," Steven explains. "Being a pilot is the goal, but I want to make smart choices along the way."

Outside of work and school, much of his time is dedicated to physical training and Marine Corps drilling. He also enjoys weightlifting, pushing himself both physically and mentally. This commitment reflects the discipline needed for military life and future aviation training.

In his free time, Steven enjoys playing video games, a hobby he has had since childhood. He is also passionate about motorcycles and is saving money from his job to buy another one in the future.

With a strong work ethic, clear goals, and a dedication to self improvement, Steven is steadily building a foundation for success, both on the ground and eventually in the air.

Senior Spotlight: Adrian Moehl



By Mason Barnes

Senior class president Adrian Moehl currently attends Pickaway-Ross career center, describing it as a great place to tour lots of colleges, job sites, and places of interest. She states that her lab instructor has given her key advice to begin her journey to be an engineer.

Regarding her academic and athletic career, she states, "I balance athletics and school by staying organized when it comes to scheduling and schoolwork. The biggest thing for me is to remember when assignments are due and staying ahead in busy weeks."

Adrian's advice for underclassmen is to "join lots of clubs or go to a lot of sporting events. I would also tell them to work hard and finish assignments in class in order to have fun outside of school."

One of her teachers, Mr. Kinnison, stated that "Adrian has earned 14 certifications through Pickaway-Ross career center, including FANUC Robotics Operation and Programming, Lean Six Sigma Green Belt, and Variable Frequency Drive Systems."

Adrian's certifications have placed her well ahead of many secondary-level students. Mr. Kinnison's program, RAMTEC (Robotics and Advanced Manufacturing Technology Education Collaborative), prepares students for the workforce by implementing "industry-aligned training, hands-on technical experience, leadership development, and real-world workforce exposure."

RAMTEC hosts field experiences at manufacturing for students to observe real world production environments. Additionally, Adrian has demonstrated leadership through her experiences at SkillsUSA, where she competed at the state level displaying mechanical knowledge and professionalism.

Mr Kinnison stated, "Her accomplishments represent approximately $20,000 worth of professional training and credentialing, demonstrating both her commitment and her technical capability."