

# WALSH PUBLIC SCHOOL

## SCHOOL NEWSLETTER |



**Principal:** Nancy Norton

**Vice Principal:** Amie Salembier-Wright

**Office Coordinators:**

Sandra Vandendriessche

Wendy Siry-Ramirez (Judy Weller on leave)

**Staff:**

Huszczo, J.	JK/SK
Morris, B.	JK/SK FI
Watt, N.	JK/SK FI
House, C.	SK/1
DeSmedt	1FI
Walker, E.	1/2
Chmiel, C	1/2 FI
Bilinsky, A.	2/3
McCallum, B.	3/4
Meulemeester, M.	2/3 FI
Lapierre, H.	3/4 FI
Backus, M.	4/5
Schott, J	4/5 FI
Kuelh, C	5/6
Grozelle, C.	6/7 FI
Jarvis, L.	6/7
Meulemeester, D.	8
Driedger, C.	7/8 FI
Bryson, K.	LRT
Carter, C.	Prep
Hamm, K.	Prep
Van Leeuwen, T	Prep
Swan, J	French
Wuelleman, A	DECE
Gallant, N.	DECE
Hare, K.	EA
Jenereaux, K	EA
Walker, K	EA
Ward, K.	EA
Westlake, D.	EA
Scolon, J.	Paid Supervisor

### January 2026

We are thrilled to welcome everyone back to the 2026 portion of our school year. We hope your break was restful and joyful, and that you are returning ready to learn and grow! A new year is the perfect time to reflect on our Walsh Pledge and recommit ourselves to the values that make our school community strong:

*Today is a new day. It is my day to make great. I am ready to be the best that I can be. I will show respect always, for people, my school, and myself. I will work hard and never give up. I will help make Walsh the best school it can be!*

As we begin this new year, let's use the pledge as a guide for setting meaningful goals -whether it's showing respect in every interaction, working hard to achieve academic success, or finding ways to contribute positively to our school community. Small daily habits, rooted in the pledge, can lead to big achievements over time.

January also brings us to the end of the first academic term. On Friday, January 19th, teachers will take part in a Professional Development Day, reviewing student progress and celebrating accomplishments from the first half of the year. This important reflection helps us plan for the months ahead and ensure every student is supported in reaching their goals.

Families can expect report cards for Grades 1–8 to be sent home on Friday, February 9th. These report cards highlight strengths, growth, and areas to focus on. We encourage families to use them as an opportunity to set new goals with their child—goals that align with the spirit of the Walsh Pledge and help make 2026 a year of success.

Together, let's embrace the new year with energy, respect, and determination, making Walsh the very best school it can be!

Yours in cooperation,  
Ms. N. Norton  
Principal

### WALSH PUBLIC SCHOOL

933 St. John's Road West,

Simcoe N3Y 4K5

519-426-3716

[granderie.ca/schools/walsh](http://granderie.ca/schools/walsh)

## SCHOOL HOURS FOR BALANCED DAY

### **Day Start: 8:55 a.m.**

Instructional Block: 8:55 a.m. to 10:55 a.m.

Outdoor Recess: 10:55 a.m.

Nutritional Break: 11:15 a.m.

Instructional Block: 11:35 a.m. to 1:15 p.m.

Outdoor Recess: 1:15 p.m.

Nutritional Break: 1:55p.m.

Instructional Block: 1:55p.m. to 3:15 p.m.

### **Day End: 3:15p.m.**

- ◊ All family members and visitors to the school will not be permitted to enter the school unless you have a scheduled appointment. Please call **519-426-3716** to make an appointment. All doors to the school will remain locked.
- ◊ Students who arrive late to school must buzz the office to be let into the school and stop by the office to be signed in.
- ◊ A parent/guardian who requires a student to leave the school before dismissal time must call the school ahead of time, and we ask that you do this early in the day so we can communicate with students without interrupting instructional time.
- ◊ If you get the answering machine, please leave a message stating your name and who you are picking up, the departure time. . All students must be picked up at the office door and signed out from the office. This policy is in place to ensure the safety of all of our students.

## **Reminder: Student Pick-Ups**

If you need to pick up your child before the end of the school day, please notify the school office no later than **1:30 p.m.** This gives us time to coordinate with classrooms without disrupting learning.

The school day ends at **3:15 p.m.** To minimize interruptions, we ask that students leaving for appointments either be picked up before 3:00 p.m. or wait until dismissal.

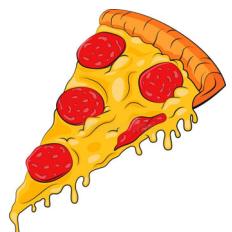
Students being picked up will be escorted across the field and should be met at the parent parking lot closest to Turkey Point Road. Thank you for your cooperation in helping us keep the school day running smoothly!

## **HOT LUNCHES**

- ⇒ Monday's - Panzerottis from The Catherwood and the Kiln - \$6.00 each
- ⇒ Wednesday's – Pitas from Pita Pit - \$6.00 each
- ⇒ Friday's – Pizza from The Catherwood and the Kiln - \$3.00 per slice

January Hot Lunches will be due on January 15th. **No late orders will be accepted.**

Please contact the office at 519.426.3716 if you need assistance with schoolcashonline.



# SAVE THE DATE

January 5	First Day of classes for 2026
January 19	PD Day—No School for Students
January 28 & 29	Mobiles Trades half-day Workshop for Grade 8 students
January 30	Carnival (Weather dependent)
February 2	Ground Hog Day
February 6	Deadline for French Immersion Registration for 2026-2027
February 9	Term 1 Report Cards Home
February 13	Pancake Lunch for Students—hosted by School Council
February 16	Family Day—No School
March 16-20	March Break—No School

## Kindergarten Registration is Now Open:

Registration is now open either online or in-person. For online registrations there is a two-step process:

### Step 1

Parents/caregivers can register students online on Grand Erie's website under [Programs & Services](#)

Parents/caregivers may request and have a fillable PDF Registration Form sent to them and, then once complete, send it back to the school. If you would like a paper copy please contact the school at 519.426.3716

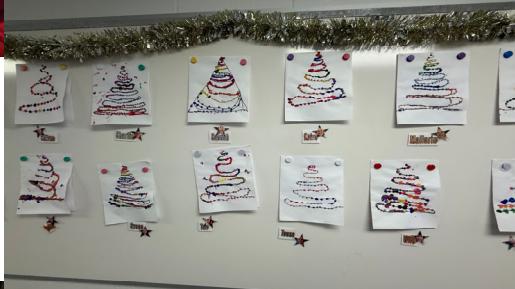
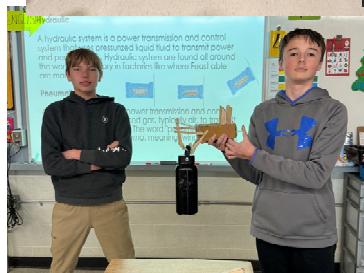
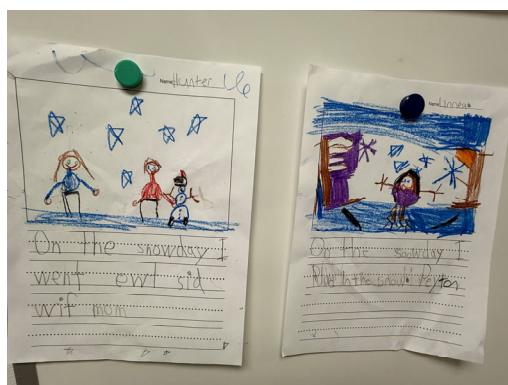
### Step 2 – Enrolment Registration Verification

Parents/caregivers will be contacted by the school to confirm their registration documentation and attend a new to Kindergarten Orientation in the Spring.

**For French Immersion,** Families can register for three points of entry JK, SK and Grade 1, The **deadline for new registration to French Immersion is Friday February 6, 2026**

To learn more about the French Immersion Program visit: [French Language](#) : [www.granderie.ca/programs-services/french-language-programs](http://www.granderie.ca/programs-services/french-language-programs)

# Around The School in December



## Get Moving Walsh!

Healthy children make healthy schools—and at Walsh, we're excited to continue promoting active living in 2026! Our **morning fitness clubs for Grades 4–8** are back, giving students a fun and energetic start to their day. We encourage all students to find ways to stay active, whether through organized activities or simple daily habits.

Families can support healthy movement at home too—it doesn't have to be complicated! Something as easy as a family walk after dinner can build strong routines and set the tone for a healthy new year.

**Why Walkable Communities Matter** Building and supporting communities that encourage walking benefits everyone—our health, our environment, and even our local economy.

- **Health:** Walking lowers the risk of obesity, diabetes, and heart disease. Walkable communities make it easier for everyone to stay active.
- **Environment:** Choosing to walk instead of driving short distances helps keep our air and water clean.
- **Traffic & Safety:** More walkers mean less congestion. Roads become safer, and maintenance costs go down.
- **Community:** Walking helps people feel connected to their neighborhoods. When more people are out walking and cycling, streets are safer and communities feel stronger.
- **Economy:** Healthy people reduce healthcare costs. Compact, well-designed communities make it easier to access jobs, schools, and services.

As we begin 2026, let's embrace **new habits that align with our Walsh Pledge**—working hard, showing respect, and never giving up. Staying active is one way we can all contribute to making Walsh the best school it can be!

Adapted from the *Grand Erie Public Health Unit website*.



## Making Time for Math – Focus on Spatial Reasoning

"Children's and parents' understanding in mathematics improves when they are able to make connections between school mathematics and real world mathematics." (Adams, Waters, Chapple, & Onslow, 2002, p. ii)

This year, we're highlighting **spatial reasoning**—the ability to visualize, compare, and understand shapes, spaces, and patterns. You can help your child strengthen these skills in everyday activities:

- **Play "I Spy" with shapes** in playgrounds, gardens, or city streets.
- **Estimate distances** by counting footsteps between trees or fence posts.
- **Look for patterns** in nature, gardens, or building designs.
- **Explore perimeter and area** by talking about rooms, yards, or sidewalks.
- **Sort and classify objects** (rocks, leaves, or toys) by size, shape, or texture.

Simple activities like these build strong connections between math and the real world, while making learning fun and meaningful.

## Student Arrival and Parking Lot

As the winter approaches and we experience more parents dropping their child(ren) off we remind parents that the parking lot is closed for drop off during Bus Times.

Students are NOT to be dropped off before 8:30am, and are to go directly to the outside yard and not enter through the school. Supervision of student before 8:55 am occurs outside on the yard. If you are dropping your child off to school please have them go to their respective outdoor areas. \*If students are participating in a team or club or tutoring that occurs before school starts, they may enter early through the front doors as their coach is providing supervision.

Bus students who are dismissed to the outside at the end of the day are asked not to go beyond the soccer field. Only students who are being picked up should approach the parent parking lot, and we ask parents who are picking their child up not to cross the field —this helps us ensure the safety of all students.

## Sports & Clubs Updates

### Volleyball: Celebrating a Season of Teamwork and Triumph!

Volleyball is more than just a game—it's about teamwork, perseverance, and sportsmanship. This season, our players showed what it truly means to support one another, play with integrity, and grow together both on and off the court. Every serve, set, and spike reflected the dedication and spirit of our athletes.

We are proud to share the highlights of our successful volleyball season:

- A huge thank you to Mr. V and Ms. McKay for their leadership in coaching the Intermediate Girls Team.
- Appreciation goes to Mr. Meulemeester for guiding the Intermediate Boys Team all the way to CAGE competition.
- And a special congratulations to Mme Schott and Mme Grozelle, whose dedication led our Junior Co-Ed Team to victory as CAGE champions—finishing 1st place across the entire board!

This season was a shining example of how commitment and collaboration can lead to extraordinary achievements.



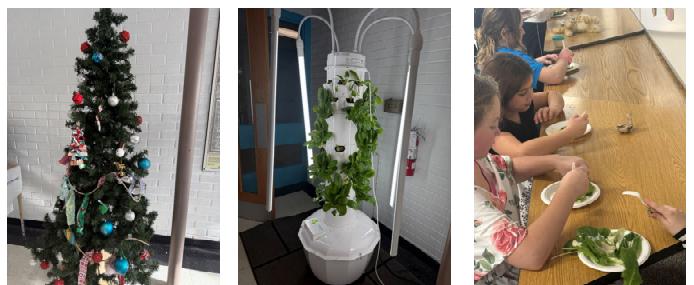
**Ringette Club:** This year we started a Ringette Club at Walsh! Students jumped right in, embracing the fast-paced, team-focused sport with enthusiasm. Ringette is all about skating hard, passing smart, and working together, and our players showed incredible growth in skill, teamwork, and sportsmanship!

We are especially grateful to the **Tillsonburg Ringette Club** for their generous donation of ringette gear to Walsh. Their support made it possible for more students to participate, learn, and enjoy the game, ensuring that everyone had the chance to get involved.



**Eco Club Update:** The Eco Club has had a vibrant season of growth and creativity! Students have been busy harvesting fresh greens from our **garden tower** to enjoy in their **Salad Club**, learning firsthand about healthy eating and sustainable growing practices.

Beyond the garden, the club also embraced the spirit of recycling and reusing. In a burst of creativity, students designed beautiful **ornaments from recycled materials**, showing how everyday items can be transformed into something new and meaningful.



**Swifty Club:** The Swifty Club at Walsh is a welcoming space where students come together to celebrate Taylor Swift's music while spreading positivity, kindness, and creativity. Inspired by her values of empowerment and community, we encourage self-expression, friendship, and making a difference both inside and outside the classroom!





## Snow Days & School Closures

Weather conditions may require that transportation services be cancelled in specific zones.

When transportation is cancelled before the day starts, the decision will be posted by 6:30 a.m. where possible.

For the purpose of inclement weather decisions, Grand Erie is divided into four zones.

### Walsh is in Norfolk County (Zone 1)

The cancelled zone(s) will be posted on Grand Erie website, communicated through social media and shared with local media. School names will not be announced. The weather may cause more than one zone to be affected

## Reminders & Guidelines for Cold Weather

Winter can be a wonderful time for play. Participating in winter sports will help keep the whole family healthy, but injuries can spoil the fun.

Here's how to keep kids safe during winter play.

### Clothing for outdoor play:

All winter activities require warm, dry clothing. To prevent frostbite, students should be dressed in warm clothes, including:

- a hat (warm, close-fitting, and covering ear lobes; not a 'fashion' hat or baseball cap),
- mittens (gloves do not keep hands warm as effectively as mittens),
- loose layers (an absorbent synthetic fabric next to skin, a warmer middle layer, and a water resistant/repellent outer layer),
- socks A single pair of socks, either wool or a wool blend (with silk or polypropylene) is better than cotton which offers no insulation when wet. Avoid extra thick socks as they can cause cold feet by restricting blood flow and air circulation around the toes.
- boots Be sure boots are dry and not too tight.

Students should get out of wet clothes and shoes as quickly as possible as they are the biggest factors in frostbite.

Jackets should be zipped up. To avoid strangulation during play, use tube-shaped neck warmers instead of scarves. If scarves must be used, tuck them into jackets. Remove drawstrings on hoods and jackets because they are also a safety hazard; better yet, buy clothes without drawstrings.

### Safe weather for outdoor play:

1. Students must play indoors if the temperature falls below -20C, regardless of the wind chill factor.
2. Students must play indoors, regardless of the temperature, if the following occurs: The wind chill factor is reported as -20 C or greater (This is the temperature at which exposed skin freezes in a few minutes) *Adopted from guidelines published by The Hospital for Sick*



## **Student Absences / Safe Arrival Application**

**Parents are asked to use the Safe Arrival app to report their child's absence**

All students who arrive late or who leave early for appointments must sign in or out at school office. Parents picking up their children may not enter the school. Please understand that during school hours, there may be times where no one is immediately available to answer the door. If you are arriving late, please do not leave your children unattended, and please be patient.

### **Student Absences / Safe Arrival Application:**

At Walsh, one of our greatest priorities is ensuring that all our students arrive safely at school each and every day.

To enhance our existing absence-checking procedure, we are introducing **a new**, more efficient student absence reporting system called **SafeArrival**. This new system will reduce the time it takes to verify student attendance, make it easy for you to report your child's absence and easy for staff to respond to unexplained student absences.

With **SafeArrival**, you are asked to report your child's absence in advance using any of these 3 convenient methods:

- 1) Using your mobile device, download and install the **SchoolMessenger app** from the Apple App Store or the Google Play Store (or from the links at <https://go.schoolmessenger.com>). The first time you use the app, select **Sign Up** to create your account. Select **Attendance** then **Report an Absence**.
- 2) Use the SafeArrival website, <https://go.schoolmessenger.com>. The first time you use the website, select **Sign Up** to create your account. Select **Attendance** then **Report an Absence**.
- 3) Call the toll-free number **1-833-557-9420** to report an absence using the automated phone system.

These options are available 24 hours/day, 7 days a week. Future absences can be reported at any time.

In addition, we will use the **SchoolMessenger Communicate** automated notification system to contact parents whose child is absent when the absence was not reported in advance. The automated notification system will attempt to contact parents at multiple contact points until a reason is submitted for the absence. If our system is unable to reach the designated contacts, office staff will follow up.

If you report your child's absence in advance using the **SafeArrival** toll-free number, website or mobile app, you will NOT receive these notifications.

Starting **immediately** please report absences in advance using **SafeArrival instead of sending notes or calling/emailing the school**.

Staff will begin using the **SafeArrival** notifications to let you know if your student is absent (when you haven't reported the absence in advance).

If you have children attending other schools, please continue to report absences using the existing procedures for those schools.



## **School Council:**

At Walsh, we know that parent engagement is a key driver of student success. Research consistently shows that when parents are actively involved in their child's education, students are more motivated, achieve higher grades, develop stronger social skills, and are more likely to pursue further education.

Great schools become even better when families and educators work together. Whether it's attending school events, joining committees, or simply staying connected with your child's learning, your involvement matters.

We invite all parents and guardians to join us at our next School Council Meeting on:  
**Monday, January 12 at 5:30 p.m.** It's a great opportunity to share ideas, ask questions, and help shape the future of our school.

For more information, please contact our School Council Chair, Leanne Rapley, at:  
[leanne\\_rapley@hotmail.com](mailto:leanne_rapley@hotmail.com)

Let's continue building a strong, supportive school community — together!



**Volunteering at Walsh** Volunteers must provide the original copy of a Police Record Check that includes a Vulnerable Sector Search subject to availability, completed within the previous six (6) months and acceptable to the Board, prior to commencement of duties. Police Record Checks will remain valid for a three year period from the date they are received by the school. Police Check forms are available online at <https://www.opp.ca/index.php?id=147&lng=en>

The school office can provide you with a letter stating that you are applying for a police check to meet the requirements for volunteering at Walsh, so there will be no cost to you.

## **Walsh is a Nut-Aware School**

A friendly reminder to all families that Walsh Public School is a nut-aware environment. We appreciate your continued cooperation in helping us keep all students safe.

Please ensure that your child(ren) do not bring any nuts or nut products to school, including:

- Peanut butter / WowButter (or any substitutes)
- Peanut oil
- Nutella
- Baked goods containing nuts
- Foods cooked in peanut oil (e.g., some home-style potato chips)

Even trace amounts can pose serious risks to students with allergies.



Thank you for helping us maintain a safe and inclusive environment for all!