



The Bridge

WALBRIDGE SCHOOL SEMI-ANNUAL NEWSLETTER
FALL 2011

Director's Notes

This fall, Walbridge School's specialized learning program has firmly planted itself in the 21st century with the purchase of several netbooks, as well as online course content for its students. It is well recognized that the interactivity of technology strengthens student engagement in learning. Online course content can be readily updated and it is also compatible with each student's pacing and learning.

As we steadily add new levels of sophistication and individualization through access to online course content, we strengthen our curriculum while improving student learning. This semester we added content for academic courses provided through Apex Learning. These courses can be easily adapted to some of our middle school students' needs in Science and/or Math while providing auto-graded assessments that provide immediate feedback. This enables the program to continuously evaluate and generate reports on student progress.

We have also boosted our Language Arts curriculum with the addition of Reading Horizons online content. This curriculum is compatible with the Orton-Gillingham approach that we have always used at Walbridge School and it is designed for use by all ages. Students progress through a literacy program that self-diagnoses and automatically adjusts learning content to match the student's level. Our teachers have also discovered that it's a great program for good readers as well because it includes spelling, vocabulary, grammar and writing skills.

As our instructional approaches continue to improve and evolve, our goal is to become well-situated as a school that can provide a variety of learning strategies and approaches that match the needs of our students. Our blended learning approach combines online learning with face-to-face learning on an individual, as well as small group, basis. According to the North American Council for Online Learning (NACOL) publication of "Promising Practices in Online Learning", blended learning is likely to emerge as the predominant model of the future.

As Walbridge looks to the future, we will continue to develop this cutting edge blended approach. Our goal is to take full advantage of the benefits of online learning in order to meet the needs of the many kinds of learners we have at our school.

Nancy Donahue,
Director



Students Katie Sullivan and Phil Sorge using the new netbooks in Math class.

Corn Maze FUNdraiser - November 6th

Are you free on Sunday, November 6th? Are you looking for some family fun?

Would you like to join us at the Corn Maze?



Student Demir Ogilvie advertising the Corn Maze to passers by outside Sprecher's Restaurant.

Thanks to the Keep Wisconsin Warm Fund (KWWF), Walbridge has been given the opportunity to raise a ton of money while having fun too! Walbridge will earn 100% of the profits made on ticket and food sales between noon and 4:00pm on Sunday, November 6th. Tickets are just \$6 for adults and \$4 for kids, or receive a group rate discount for groups of 10 or more. This is the largest urban corn maze in the area covering 8.8 acres and by far one of the least expensive...and it's the LAST day of the corn maze before harvest time. Located next to Sprecher's Restaurant in Middleton, on John Q. Hammons Dr, it's very easy to find and there is plenty of parking. Just follow the aroma of homemade apple cider, fresh popcorn, caramel apples, and listen for laughter. Hope to see you there...if you can find us!



Friends of Walbridge, Maddie and Cole Wissinger, enjoying the Corn Maze on October 14th.

Meet Our New Staff

Luck was on our side when Mr. Brian Jordan accepted a teaching assistant position with Walbridge. Brian joined us at the end of last school year as a TA for the High School Transition Program, and he was excited to come back for another term. Brian has a BS in Environmental Studies and Italian from UW-Madison, and is continuing on as a Teaching Assistant at Walbridge, but this year he is wearing a lot of hats. In the mornings, Brian continues to work as a learning coach for the online classes in the high school program. In the afternoons, he teaches cooking and nutrition, as well as Fundamentals of Conversational Spanish, to our older middle school group. Brian is also a jazz musician; playing guitar and composing his own music. He performs for private events and in several restaurants throughout the Madison area...and sometimes for us, too.

Teaching Assistant, Brian Jordan



Art teacher, Jessica Jones

A warm welcome was recently extended to Ms. Jessica Jones who joined our teaching staff as our new Art Teacher. Jessica has a BA in Art History with minors in both History and Art, as well as a BA in Art Education from Edgewood College. In keeping with our school's interest in environmental issues and protection, this semester Ms. Jones and the students are using recycled materials to represent ocean life after learning how much plastic refuse is found in our oceans. In her spare time, Jessica serves on the Board of the WI Arts Education Association and chairs the Membership Committee. We welcome Jessica with open arms, and she has kindly reciprocated our sentiments. Her energy and laughter are contagious, and we are thrilled to have her on our team.

News from the PTO

The PTO is off to a wonderful start for the 2011-2012 year. We kicked off the year with a very successful "Sparkle" clean-up day. Parents, students, family members and staff all spent time on a beautiful Saturday morning to do what most of us put off at home – cleaning! Scrubbing floorboards and walls, cleaning out lights and windows, sanitizing and cleaning classrooms and equipment, touch-up painting, yard work and weeding around the parking lot were just a few of the things accomplished. It was exciting to see the enthusiasm and effort by all who were there!

Although it's only mid-October, the students have already gone on a few field trips supported by the PTO including a recent trip by the entire school to Upham Woods. Events such as these continue to be made possible by the efforts our parents and staff make in contributing to various fundraisers throughout the year.

This year, we continue our participation in some of our very successful fundraisers from the past including the Yankee Candle sale and participation in the SCRIP gift card program. One of our new fundraising endeavors is running the Corn Maze over by Sprecher's Restaurant on the evening of Oct 14th, and from noon - 4pm on November 6th. This was made possible by the generosity of the Keep Wisconsin Warm Fund who manages the corn maze and allowed Walbridge to run the maze on these two separate occasions.

Another new effort is participation in the Boston Store Community Days event where we will be selling coupon books to raise funds for the school. And, a third new fundraiser is participation in a program called Community Change which sells gift cards to local merchants and benefits designated local charities and schools, including Walbridge. The SCRIP program and Community Change program run year-round, so be sure to keep these in mind this holiday season as you may be in need of gift cards to nationwide and local merchants. The PTO is also continuing with the much anticipated annual Harvest Feast in November (hosted by Attic Angel) and a staff appreciation week in December.

On behalf of the PTO, thanks to all of the parents, staff, family members and the many other champions of the Walbridge community. The PTO efforts could not be successful without all of your generous support! If you would like any information about joining us at the Corn Maze, purchasing Scrip cards or Boston Store coupon booklets, the Community Change program, or how else you could share your interests with Walbridge, please contact Michelle Ogilvie at asoilvie@ameritech.net.

Michelle Ogilvie,
PTO Chair



From the Board

Walbridge is a very special place, because of the people who are part of the school community, all focused on delivering a quality education to our students, while holding true to our core values. These seven Core Values warrant revisiting from time-to-time: integrity, empowerment, caring, acceptance, stewardship, excellence, and health. Behind each of these values are multiple Core Behaviors that guide the board, staff, and students.

While these statements were formalized only a little over three years ago, during development of the school's first strategic plan and a much needed update of the by-laws, our primary governing document, they reflect the history of our school as well. Because of their value in shaping our community, I'd like to gradually work through these Values and Behaviors in my newsletter communications. But where to start, when they are all so important? Since this is a great school, how about with the alphabet! Thus, our first two-

A is for Acceptance.

- We recognize the wholeness of every child.
- We recognize the ability of an individual to change.
- We recognize the multifaceted strengths and talents of each person.
- We acknowledge and accept that every individual has weaknesses.

C is for Caring.

- We treat all people with dignity, care, and concern.
- We take time to understand individual children and their needs.
- We demonstrate empathy and respect in all situations.
- We commit to the success of our students.

In honoring these behaviors and values, I have to recognize the truly remarkable group of people involved with this school. Collectively, teachers have over 60 years of experience, with over 40 years working specifically with students challenged by the traditional academic environment. I sincerely appreciate their professionalism, optimism, and commitment to helping Walbridge students succeed.

Our administrative staff certainly has multifaceted talents. Running a private non-profit school is unlike the public realm. Here, budgets are not dictated, families have choices, and business acumen and human compassion cannot be compartmentalized.

Board members volunteer their talents and time to be passionate ambassadors for the school. Some are existing parents, juggling careers with the very real needs of their child or children. Two additions this past year, Mike Paschke and Anne Gergen, provide outside board members genuine insight into what our parents hope for their children. Other board members bring a shared passion for the mission and much needed skill sets. Lisette Kahlil is our newest member, and has worked to further clarify and prioritize our marketing and development efforts. Thanks to these and all the other board members, present and past.

Last, but not least, our parents. We have an active PTO; continually working to support our staff in delivering a safe, fun, and focused learning environment. The officers of this group marshal untold organizational skills and energy into planning school fundraisers and student events, but everyone pitches in!

Welcome back, and thanks, everyone!

Lisa Sorge, Board Chair and Grateful Parent



High School Transition Program Update

The High School Transition Program at Walbridge continues to evolve as we offer two options to high school students this year. We are continuing with the transition program partnership with public schools through Middleton's 21st Century eSchool. Last year's program was a tremendous success as the students were able to complete all of their online courses with A's and B's. In addition to the coaching program for public school students, we are also offering our own 9th grade program using the Apex Learning online curricula. Both of these options offer increased flexibility in pacing, while providing students with coaching and support for strengthening skills, while developing learning strategies.

Please contact the school if you would like more information about the blended learning opportunities we offer to high school students. We also have options for Home School programs too!



Teaching Assistant, Brian Jordan, coaching two high school students in online coursework.

A Sincere Thank You...

They think globally and act locally...and support Walbridge too! Saris Cycling Group has graciously donated a wave bike rack to Walbridge. Our teachers and staff have found peace of mind knowing their bikes are safely secured on school grounds. The rack is exactly what we needed and it also serves as a reminder to us about our commitment to a greener Earth. Please visit their website at www.saris.com for more information.



Students Phil Sorge and Thomas Vallon
...two of our most dedicated bikers.

Thanks to the generosity of the American Girl company, our students have a complete collection of their books that have been written about the popular doll collection. Each doll has a series of historically accurate books written specifically about her that represents a special place and time in American History. Students can check books out for their own reading enjoyment and the staff has incorporated the stories into their History/Social Studies curriculum. Visit their website at www.americangirl.com to learn more.



Students Maggie Brooks, Maya Edgoose and Sophie Brooks... "professional" American Girl Doll collectors

Walbridge School 2011-2012 Wish List

We are working hard to spend Walbridge dollars (your tuition money and donations) wisely. We have been touched by the generosity of our parents and community and would like to offer a few other ways for you to get involved. Perhaps you have some "used-but-usable" items, or perhaps you are just in a position to help out, so here is our "Wish List" to let you know where we could use your help. If you can help or have suggestions on how Walbridge can obtain any of the following items, please contact SueAnne Boyum at 608-833-1338 or email her at info@walbridgeschool.com.

- Mobile netbook docking station (https://www.schooloutfitters.com/catalog/product_info/pfam_id/PFAM9030/products_id/PRO22664)
- Weighted Compression Vests for sensory integration (www.therapysoppe.com, several available on eBay, can also be homemade)
- Smart Board with mounted projector and blue tooth connection (Please discuss purchase with staff.)
- 3 GPS units (Garmin eTrex Venture HC GPS, available on amazon.com)
- 2 Flip cameras (60 minute recording time availability) with tripods
- Art supplies: Elements and Principals of Design posters - CP6061 (Crystal Productions: www.crystalproductions.com)
- 4-drawer, legal size, beige file cabinets with locks
- Dick Blick art materials: www.dickblick.com
 - Crayola Model Magic Classpack Value Pack - B33230-1006
 - Sculpey UltraLight—B33274-1040 (12 pkgs)
 - Scratch-Art Clear-Scratch Film—B13524-1030 (2 pkgs)
 - Amaco ArtEmboss Soft Metal Sheets—B60518-2050 (2 pkgs)
- 3 large bean bags (bean bag chairs)
- Small orange traffic cones
- Video camera with tripod
- Apple laptop computer
- iPod with blue tooth

In addition to the support we receive through our Wish List, Walbridge also relies on donations raised in our Annual Campaign. Within the next month, you will receive our annual appeals letter outlining the many ways your contributions help sustain the school and also how we could use additional support. Thank you in advance for considering a monetary donation to support our students.

Great BBQ + Amazing Music + Family Fun = Gig with a Pig

If you were one of the many who attended our annual dinner event, then you can share with us our sentiments of a wonderful night. Once again, our annual dinner event proved to be an evening full of great food and entertainment, as well as a successful raffle, and silent and live auctions. Thanks to musicians Dave Allen and Brian Jordan, our guests were entertained while savoring Chuck Brooks' mastered pork roast recipe and bidding on a room full of donations from area businesses and Walbridge families. Thanks again to the personal donations and area businesses who helped make our "Gig" a true success.

- | | | | |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------|
| • Bagels Forever | • KEVA Sports Center | • Pedro's Mexican Restaurante | • VOM FASS |
| • Benvenuto's Italian Grill | • Kicks Unlimited | • Pizza Brutta | • Waunatech Computers |
| • Chili's Grill & Bar | • Liquor Town | • Rejuvenation Spa | • Willy Street Co-op |
| • Chocolate Shoppe Ice Cream | • Madison Children's Museum | • Road America | • ...and many area artists |
| • Cilantro Bar and Grill | • Madison Symphony Orchestra | • Schwoegler Lanes | |
| • Circus World Museum | • Madtown Twisters | • Sonic Drive-In | |
| • Dick's Sporting Goods | • Melting Pot | • Sport Clips | |
| • Duncan Edwards Hair Design | • Michael's Frozen Custard | • SwimWest Swim School | |
| • Elements Massage | • Milwaukee Brewers | • Ten Pin Bowling Alley | |
| • Farm & Fleet of Verona | • Nakoma Golf Club | • The Little Gym | |
| • Fleet Feet Sports | • Nevada Bob's Golf Shoppe | • Tyrol Basin | |
| • Great Wolf Lodge | • Noah's Ark Waterpark | • Ultrazone Laser Tag | |
| • Hawks Landing | • Orange Tree Imports | • Vitense Golfland | |



Send Us Your Alumni Updates! info@walbridgeschool.com

Or mail this form to Walbridge School, 7035 Old Sauk Road, Madison, WI 53717

Full Name _____ Maiden Name _____ Class of _____

Address _____ Phone _____

City, State, Zip _____ Email _____

Post High School Education _____

Employer/Occupation _____

Marital Status _____ Spouse's Name _____

Children _____

Volunteer Service _____

Special Accomplishments or Awards _____

Information you'd like to share (please include dates of graduations, marriages, births, relocations, etc): _____

WALBRIDGE SCHOOL

7035 Old Sauk Road
Madison, WI 53717
Phone: 608-833-1338

Education that works!

We're on the web!

www.walbridgeschool.com

Check out:

Valuable Resources

Success Stories

SCRIP Cards

Going **Green** at Walbridge

Thanks to everyone who replied to our request asking for your email address! We were able to save over 150 copies and a ton of money by sending you this newsletter in electronic format. We are still collecting addresses from the Walbridge Community in an effort to become more environmentally friendly. We save all sorts of paper, not to mention printing costs and postage, if we send our newsletters and other mailings via email. It's really easy! Just send us an email at info@walbridgeschool.com and we will add you to our database for future mailings. Rest assured that we will never sell or trade your email address. Thank you for helping us do our part in becoming more responsible with our planet.

Walbridge School
7305 Old Sauk Road
Madison, WI 53717

