



December 2, 2002

Dear WPS Community,



Westwood Public Schools will celebrate Inclusive Schools Week the week of December 5th. This year's theme is "Unity Within Our Community". Each level of the school system will mark the week with different events. While official weeks recognizing individual groups can

unintentionally lead to amplifying stigma around difference, Westwood Public Schools continues to work hard to truly become an inclusive community. That work is taking root and it is because of this genuine shift in Westwood's approach that it has become impossible to capture all of the special events happening next week in one letter. There will be dozens of events large and small, formal and informal happening next week *to spotlight what is really ongoing progress and work* by staff, students and the larger Westwood community. Below is just a sampling:

At Preschool/Elementary:

- All students in Westwood Integrated Preschool and all five Elementary Schools will be reading *The Invisible Boy* by Trudy Ludwig, a thought provoking book about inclusiveness, friendship, kindness, and the significance of making sure no child is ever made to feel invisible.
- The Hanlon and Sheehan PTOs invite **all elementary parents and caregivers** to a discussion of *The Invisible Boy* on Monday, December 5th at 7:00 pm in the Hanlon cafeteria. See the flier below for more information.
- Young Audiences of Massachusetts will also be visiting each elementary school and putting on a performance titled: *Improv for Inclusion: Acceptance and Support*. Young Audiences has been working for over 60 years in Massachusetts providing arts programming to public schools. The mission of Young Audiences of Massachusetts is to "educate, inspire, and empower youth through the arts. We believe that arts are an essential component of both formal education and youth development and that all students, regardless of backgrounds, talents, and abilities, deserve access to the rich educational opportunities inherent to arts learning."

At Thurston Middle School:

- Advisories at each grade level will be working on spreading awareness about Inclusivity via activities throughout Inclusive Schools Week.
- The Unity Group is sponsoring a student-designed bulletin board in the cafeteria with the theme of “How does food bring us together?” featuring student stories of how food unites across differences of all kinds.
- With student input, flags representing all geographic regions across the globe will be debuting in the cafeteria to honor the ways in which our school community is inclusive of students from a wide array of geographic, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds.
- Multiple clubs will be participating in the week’s activities to honor Inclusive Schools Week by designing activities around the theme of inclusiveness.
- Weekly Kudos awards criteria will be modified on Friday, December 9th to recognize those students who embody the value of being inclusive toward peers.

At WHS:

- The Student Council, National Honor Society, American Sign Language Club, LTaRACE, GSA, Supporting Black and Latino Students Allies Club, and Friendship Club will partner with the Visual Arts and Student Services departments to offer opportunities throughout the week to unite our community and engage in conversations about identity, inclusivity, and connection:
 - Throughout the week, StuCo, NHS, and the Visual Arts department invite all students and staff to craft individual contributions to a mosaic in the Auditorium lobby.
 - LTaRACE invites all high school students and staff to a multicultural food festival on Thursday, December 8th at 2:15 in the Cafeteria. Recognizing that so many different cultures have holidays between October and February, LaTaRACE is hosting an exchange of food and fun for the whole community.
 - Clubs and classrooms will share information and resources to promote inclusive dialogue during morning announcements and lunch blocks, as well as on posters throughout the building.
 - S-block offerings throughout the week, such as a student-led American Sign Language workshop and a winter craft activity with the Friendship Club, will center on community connections.

The Westwood School Community continues to acknowledge and celebrate the progress that our schools have made in providing a supportive and quality education to an increasingly diverse student population. We thank the greater Westwood community for your continued support today and throughout the school year!



INCLUSIVE SCHOOLS WEEK: CONVERSATIONS FOR CAREGIVERS

**Monday, December 5th, 2022 at 7pm
Hanlon Elementary School Cafeteria
790 Gay Street**

Hanlon and Sheehan's PTOs invite all Westwood elementary school parents, guardians, and caregivers for a structured discussion about *The Invisible Boy*, the book title that your children will be reading for Inclusive Schools Week. We will explore the main ideas and more nuanced and underlying themes. Together we will brainstorm strategies for talking about these themes with children and considering how these books reflect your child's experiences and/or can teach your child about experiences other students might be having.

**We look forward to this opportunity to learn together
and grow as a community.**

