



INCLUSIVE SCHOOLS WEEK

DECEMBER 4 TO 8, 2023

December 4, 2023

Dear Westwood Families and Caregivers,

Inclusive Schools Week™ is an annual event sponsored by the Inclusive Schools Network (ISN) and Stetson & Associates, Inc., which is held each year during the first full week in December.

Since its inception in 2001, Inclusive Schools Week has celebrated the progress that schools have made in providing a supportive and quality education to an increasingly diverse student population, including students who are marginalized due to disability, gender, socio-economic status, cultural heritage, language preference, and other factors.

The Week also provides an important opportunity for educators, students, and parents to discuss what else needs to be done in order to ensure that their schools continue to improve their ability to successfully educate all children. Inclusive Schools Week allows us all to take a moment to applaud the progress we've made toward building more inclusive school communities while pledging to continue our work toward becoming a more inclusive society. *This year's theme is: [Draw Me In!](#)* For more information visit Inclusive Schools <https://inclusiveschools.org/inclusive-schools-week>.

From Our Schools:

At Preschool/Elementary:

- As far back as the days of cave drawings, art has been a way for humans to express themselves. Many children begin to communicate through the language of art. This year, Inclusive Schools Weeks focuses on the theme "[Draw Me In](#)". Students participate in art activities that provide a pathway to self-discovery, and sharing art opens doors to understanding and respecting different ways of thinking.
- Students will be creating a [Color Mosaic](#) which is a larger artwork on our walls made up of each student's individual pieces to represent unity, community, kindness, and inclusivity.

At Thurston Middle School:

- Advisories at each grade level will be working on spreading awareness about Inclusivity via activities throughout Inclusive Schools Week.
 - Grade 6 is working on a project "Individually Unique Together Complete" and working the Color Mosaic ideas into this project for Inclusive Schools week, including message and theme.
 - Grade 7 has included the Color Mosaic in their slides and will discuss how all voices are heard and all advisory members are represented
 - Grade 8 has been working on a themed project that represents and includes everyone discuss how all voices are heard and all advisory members are represented and teams discuss inclusive schools week.

At WHS:

- Student Council, Friendship Club, Let's Talk About Race, Culture, and Ethnicity Club, American Sign Language Club, Gender and Sexuality Alliance, Unified Basketball, and Varsity Basketball 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:
 - Clubs and classrooms will share information and resources to promote inclusive dialogue during afternoon announcements, 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 Tai Chi workshop facilitated by WHS staff, will provide students diverse opportunities for personal expression, connection, and shared understanding.
 - We are honored to welcome Special Olympics to our second-annual Unified Basketball game during S-block on 12/6/23. The competing teams will be composed of Unified Athletes and Varsity Athletes. At the conclusion of the game, WHS will be presented with a Unified Champion National Banner, an honor not only for our participating Unified Athletes, but for our entire school community.

- High school Visual Arts students and preschool students will collaborate to make and share art together.

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. The [School Engagement Committee](#) will be hosting a [Conversations With Caregivers Panel](#). Thank you to our Equity Leaders (including the Epic team), Deans, SEL Director, and Principals for continuing to ensure that all students are seen in our classrooms.

Lateefah Franck
Director of Equity, Integration,
& Community Partnerships

Susan Maselli
Director of Student Services