



West Hills Middle School Welcomes New Faculty and Staff Members

There is an old African proverb that states, “It takes a village to raise a child”. A school is like a village in the sense that it takes the collaborate effort of the administration, teachers, counselors and support staff members to create a safe, healthy, positive environment in which the students can be properly educated and trained for their future college and careers. We are extremely fortunate to have an amazing group of teachers and staff here at West Hills. We appreciate all of the time, effort and energy they put into educating, directing, and supporting the students. We would especially like to extend a warm welcome to all of the new administrators, teachers, counselors and support staff who have recently come to West Hills. This issue of the newsletter is for the sole purpose of spotlighting them as a way to help the students and parents to get to know them.

Administration

Stacy Evans – Principal

Prior to coming to West Hills, I was an assistant principal at Herriman High School. I've also worked as the Human Resources Administrator for Secondary Teacher Recruiting, and before that as an assistant principal at Union Middle School and Albion Middle School. Before coming to Utah, I taught high school math for eleven years, worked as a middle school assistant principal, and served as the mathematics and science coordinator.

I enjoy singing and being with my family, and am always learning new things (especially things relating to technology and education).

I'd like parents and students to know how much I love being here at West Hills Middle School. Our students, parents and community members are truly the best I have found anywhere. I'm so happy to have the opportunity to be a part of the work we are doing to provide each student with the supports they need to succeed. It is rewarding to work together with so many great educators, parents, students and community members with the goal of making West Hills the place where all students learn at high levels.



Wyatt Bentley – Assistant Principal

I was an assistant principal at Brighton High School before coming to West Hills Middle School.

Reading, family and Utah football are my top priorities.

I am excited to be working in this community. I have enjoyed getting to know the kids, parents and staff at West Hills Middle.



Caleb Olson - Assistant Principal

I taught at South Jordan Middle School as a Geography and AP Human Geography teacher.

I like biking and cooking. I also love learning things and spend a lot of time reading articles and stories in books, magazines, and online.

I'm excited to be here at West Hills and to work with this great community - and despite what a lot of students think, I am NOT related to Mr. Bentley!

**Faculty****Crystal Ahre - Ceramics and 3D Design**

I taught last year at Riverton High (Graphic Design). I had a long term sub job, (six months) at Hillcrest (Drawing, painting, ib/ap) and Brighton (Ceramics, drawing) High Schools.

I love Art Museums, road trips, and cooking.

My goal is to help every student to be successful. Always ask questions when you have them. Art is the process you go through, not just the final product.

**Alicia Anderson - Dance**

I student taught at West Hills last spring.

I love to sing, play the piano/guitar, act, read, and play with my nieces and nephews.

I love dance! And I love teaching the students here at West Hills!

**Paul Bennett - Math**

I have been teaching math for 17 years. Last year I taught math at Fort Herriman Middle School and I taught all the other years in the Washington County School District in St. George, UT.

I enjoy movies, college sports (football and basketball), the Utah Jazz, and running. I have run two marathons.

I want every student to learn and have success. I am willing to do whatever is best for each student to be successful.

**Charlotte Coakwell – Choir, Guitar and Music Connections**

I student taught at Indian Hills Middle School in Sandy. This is my first year as a teacher.

I love music (no, surprise, huh?)! But I also enjoy travel photography and traveling.

I want the students and parents to know that I really care about what I do. I want them to know that I do my best to help their child succeed. I also apologize for my shortcomings, as these are caused by inexperience.



Christopher Dennett - Science

I started my teaching career at BYU-Idaho as a summer adjunct Biology Professor and Assistant Director for their Natural Science Field Expedition. After that I worked as an educator and animal trainer for The Living Planet Aquarium. Last year I taught at Providence Hall Jr. High: 8th Grade Science, Landscape Design, Wildlife Art, and Weird Science.

Outdoor activities take up most of my time outside of the classroom. I enjoy kiteboarding, rock climbing, canyoneering, snorkeling, camping, geocaching, rockhounding...

I worked my way through college as a river guide and still lead several white water trips during the summer. I play the Native American flute and concertina, and I am trying to learn the guitar. In middle and high school, I worked as a landscaper and still enjoy working in the yard today. I love to teach and I do everything in my power to help students learn. My dream job would be one where I take students around the country exploring the natural wonders of this nation while teaching biology, ecology, zoology, geology, and astronomy. I was married Dec of 2011 and our first child, a girl, was born May 2013 (yes I am still sleep deprived).

**Alexis Dressen - Special Education**

I've worked at several schools as an aid but this is my first year as the real deal teacher.

I enjoy reading, cooking, going on trips and hanging out with my friends.

The town I grew up in has less people than there are students at West Hills.

I served an LDS mission to Sacramento, California where I learned a little bit of sign language.

I graduated from BYU with a BS in Special Education. Go Cougs!

I love teaching and I love my students!

**Danny Drew - Careers & Technical Education (CTE)/Intro and Keyboarding**

Before coming to West Hills, I taught one year at San Juan High School, five years at Wasatch Mountain Junior High School (Heber), and four years South Park Academy (Utah State Prison, Canyons School District).

I love sports, music, and sports.

I love typing, teaching, and kids! I hope all 7th graders are able to learn, experience, and see that this school year!

**Amanda Fawcett – English and Language Arts**

I previously worked in Guadalupe Schools teaching English to immigrant and refugee adults.

I enjoy reading, writing children's stories, and theatre.

I love working here and appreciate everyone who has helped and supported me here.



Shantel Flanary - Social Studies and Physical Education

This is my first year teaching!

I love playing, watching, everything sports and the outdoors!

I come from a family of 12. I played soccer at Utah State University. I enjoyed some of my time student teaching in New Zealand :)

**Scott Glade – Special Education**

I worked for 8 years at Elk Ridge Middle School and 30 years in the Confectionery Business. I have a B.A. In French/English from the University of Utah. I have three lovely granddaughters: ages 1, 3 and 4; two kids; and one wife of 43 years and 11 months as of October 30.

**Chris Jolley - Science**

This is my first year teaching. I graduated with a Biology Degree from Dixie State University. I love sports, staying active and fit, being in the outdoors, and spending time with friends and family.

I appreciate all the support I've been given ever since I've arrived here. I love West Hills and all my students. I enjoy teaching science and I am trying to have a positive influence and make my mark here as someone the students can look up to.

**Matthew Jones - Math**

I previously taught at Quail Run Primary School (now Canyon Grove Academy)

First and foremost I love music. I listen, write, record, and perform when I can. I also run half-marathons. Reading is one of my hobbies too. I'm currently reading Brandon Sanderson's latest book: Steelheart. The newest Michael Vey book is next.

I love teaching at this school. Everyone is so friendly.

**Kent Larson - English and Language Arts**

I worked at Fort Herriman Middle School for seven years.

I enjoy movies, music, and all things nerdy. I enjoy writing and have self-published an e-book on Amazon titled All Things Being Equal. I am still writing. I play piano and sing regularly in a community choir for Christmas (Sounds of the Season).

I was born with Spinabifida and have partial paralysis in my legs or lack of strength. I use the wheelchair for better mobility and a cane around home. I've been married twenty-eight years and have four children: two sets of twins. The older set are a man and woman of twenty-six and both A.J. and Erin are married. The younger set are boys, not identical, and are supposedly adults of twenty-one. Sean is married and Steven is in a committed relationship. I love teaching because I love the students and the subject matter, pretty much in that order.



**Tiffany Lloyd - Science**

This is my first year at West Hills. (Technically. I've done many teaching on the side jobs so it feels like I've taught longer)

My favorite things are: reading, video games (Final Fantasy, Kingdom Hearts, Just Dance), sewing, crocheting, photography, science (of course), and making photo books online.

I love science and I believe everyone can succeed and enjoy science. I've made it my mission to allow every student the opportunity to enjoy and excel in science.

**Rosanna Juarez Palomar – Careers & Technical Education (CTE)/Applied Technology**

I used to work in Title 1 schools in Fort Worth Texas and Dallas Texas. I loved working in these schools because I felt like I was more than a teacher. Instruction was more than just a lesson planned on how to learn to use computers; it was about behavior, morals, doing the right thing, and mentoring the kids. These kids come from very hard backgrounds and stories; parents in jail, kids exposed to lots of abuse, drugs, alcohol, some kids living with grandparents because their biological parents abandoned them. My third year as teacher I decided to teach Middle School level at which time I fell in love with my new career. Working with teenagers can be a real challenge, but once it is conquered, the rewards are just fascinating. Once again my kiddos had rough lifestyles and were rebellious against the system they live in. I was able to connect with them at a deeper level than my elementary kids. Texas is way different than here: it is more of a teacher involvement than a parent involvement. I had to visit my students at home (if I wished to) and so I did. I found out situations that made me tear up: bright kids that cannot see a better future due to the environment in which they live. Parents needed our support rather than the other way around like it is here. This last job made me realize how much I loved working with teenagers.

My hobby is to play the guitar and sing. I also like to be involved in church and do a lot of outreach activities with them.

What I want students and parents to know is that I love what I do. I am excited and happy to be here at West Hills. It is definitely different than the environments I am used to and it is taking me a little time to adjust, but I think I'm getting there. I like this community, and if there is anything I can do to help in any way, please don't hesitate to let me know. Also... I love chocolate! hahaha! Thanks for making my days at West Hills a joyful blessing.

**Jeffrey Patterson - Science**

I was a student at BYU. I worked there as a TA for a professor in Bioethics.

I like reading and writing. I also enjoy listening to music and podcasts.

I like to have fun and work hard. I'll do anything I can to help a student succeed as long as they put in the effort.



Caroline Patton - Special Education and Math

I was at ElkRidge Middle for a while. I then went to Russia to teach English for a year and now I am back!

Interests... Hmm... Right now I enjoy reading on my time off... I know, boring, right? I really enjoy what I am doing and hope to keep improving at my job. :)

**Bobbi Schultz - English and Language Arts**

I graduated from UVU and spent my first year at Spanish Fork High School. I moved to Surprise, AZ and taught 7th grade Language Arts there for three years.

This is my first year in Jordan School District: the support and enthusiasm have certainly been contagious!

I love to organize and garden! I have three daughters and six grandchildren. I am currently working on my Master's Degree in Education, Instruction and Design and hope to be done next August!

**Mark Sidwell – Physical Education**

I was at Woods Cross High School before coming to West Hills.

I love all sports especially basketball. Golf, tennis, football are among my favorites as well. I also enjoy working out. I played college and professional basketball.

I would like parents and students to know that I am excited to be here and that it is a great school and community.

**Cynthia Waite - English and Language Arts**

I taught at Salem Junior High last year.

I love reading, acting and singing.

I would like the parents and students to know that I'm here to help all students succeed and I will do my best to make that happen.

**Arielle Wenerstrom - English and Language Arts**

I previously taught 7th Grade English at Hunter Jr. High in West Valley City.

My absolute favorite thing in the world is reading. I also enjoy cooking and scrapbooking.

I love teaching!





Counseling Center

Dantzel Ballentine – Counselor

I worked at Plymouth High School in Plymouth, North Carolina for two years before moving to Utah.

I enjoy hiking, reading, relaxing, traveling.

I'm excited to be at West Hills and have enjoyed getting to know the students. It's a wonderful school and I have been very impressed with the students, parents, and community here.



Vicki Button - Registrar in the Counseling Center

I worked at Elk Ridge Middle School in the Attendance Office for almost six years before transferring to West Hills. My youngest son is in 7th grade here.

My hobbies include: scrapbooking (when time allows), photography, and traveling (when \$ allows)

My fourth child is a long haired daschund named Sky.



Jessica Feller - School Counselor

I was an intern at Valley Jr. High in Granite School District before coming to West Hills.

I love to go running, bake and cook, and read.

I'm so excited to be at West Hills. It's been so fun to get to know and work with your students. They have such great potential and I can't wait to see all the amazing things they will do.



Support Staff

Chris Allred – Special Ed Records

I am new to Jordan School District (I did work at Heartland Elementary about 17 years ago!). I also have another job with Jetblue - I work at the airport checking travelers in and boarding the airplane.

I like to travel (hence the Jetblue job!). I also like to garden and do yard work and cook and bake. I enjoy yoga and Pilates as well.



**Connie Erickson – Administrative Assistant**

I have spent the last 25 years in the following elementary schools: Sprucewood, Midvale, Jordan Ridge, Southland and Fox Hollow. I opened Fox Hollow and loved every minute of it.

I love to spend time with my family. I am the mom of four kids, step mom of four kids and grandma to seven! A thing I really enjoy is what I call junkin - I love to take something old and make it new and useful. A perfect day would include a ride in the mountains, stopping at an old abandoned building and snooping and eating at a small ma and pa diner!



I love being at school. I have always felt that you find what you are looking for. I want to surround myself with happy people. I can ALWAYS find someone happy at school!

Julie Frandsen – Hall Monitor

Previously, I worked at Joel P Jensen.

I like to go camping.

I will always be there for the kids and their safety is my top priority. I love what I do knowing that I care for the kids here at West Hills.

**Christine Fullbright – LEAP (Enrichment) Program**

I love spending time with my family, camping, traveling, and reading.

I enjoy working at the school - everyone has been so nice and friendly, both staff and students. I am enjoying doing the LEAP program.

**Alishia Huefner - Office Assistant**

I was a stay-at-home mom for 22 years before taking this job. I love volunteering at my kids' schools and being involved in PTA. My most favorite thing to do is go hiking, and when I'm not hiking I love to read and work in my garden - that's where I get my dirt manicure. All of my kids have attended West Hills and they have turned out fabulous because West Hills is a great school!



**Cindy Jensen – Breakfast Lady**

Before coming to West Hills, I worked in television. I worked for FOX 13, NBC and CBS Channel 2 for about 15 years. I loved working in TV. It was an exciting fast-paced job. Now I enjoy the slower pace of the kitchen. Seeing the kids at West Hills brightens my days. I had 2 girls, one passed away at a very young age. I have a great daughter who is 25. I am still waiting for grandkids. My husband and I have been married for 27 years. We love to travel as much as we can. We went to Hawaii earlier this year and are planning our next cruise for hopefully later this year. I grew up in Florida and went to school there including college. I served an LDS mission in San Jose California. I also enjoy watching TV and doing crafts. I have three pets: 2 dogs- named Jake and Jack and 1 cat- named Willy. They are my little buddies.

**Mirisha Manzano – School Officer**

I worked in the WJPD patrol division before this assignment at West Hills. I was there for five years before coming here.

I love spending time with my family, going to movies, watching cartoons, working in the yard and reading. In my spare time I also apply eyelash extensions for friends and family.

I would like the students and parents at West Hills Middle School to know that I am dedicated to assisting in providing a safe learning environment. I love children and believe in the potential of every child. I believe that my unique background can be used as a tool to assist children on their educational and personal path.

**Tawni Porter – Nutrition Worker**

I was a 6 Hour Nutrition Worker at West Jordan High School for three years and before that, I was a 4 Hour Nutrition Worker at Hayden Peak Elementary for four years. I worked at West Hills, for one week, over seven years ago when I first started working for Nutrition Services.

I love golfing, swimming, weight lifting, scuba diving, biking, singing, customer service, volunteering for large events like Festivals and Anime Banzai. I am attending the Culinary Institute at SLCC.

My kids have attended West Hills since 2003: my last one is in ninth grade -- I thank the teachers for their years of service and I think West Hills is the best!

**Denise Purser – Nutrition Manager**

I came from Rose Creek Elementary. I love classical music, as well as other good music. I have seven children and two grandchildren.

**Jani Springer – Cashier**

I was a full-time mom before coming to work at West Hills. My favorite things are camping, reading and family time.

An interesting fact about me is I am happily married for 16 years with 4 beautiful children.



**Grant Wade – Night Custodian**

I worked at Riverton High School before coming to West Hills.

I love to go camping, hiking with my family, especially in the Uintah mountains, and writing. I have published a novel, "Night and Fog," a sci-fi e-book that takes place in---you guessed it---the Uintah mountains. Before the dawning of time I was a communications major at BYU.

**Michele Wales – Kitchen Worker**

I was a full-time grandmother previously to working at West Hills.

I like to bake and watch good movies. An interesting fact about me is I am a natural redhead.

**Cameri Weight – Kitchen Worker**

I was a full-time mom before coming to West Hills.

I like to do crafts and go hiking.

An interesting fact about me is I come from a family of 11 children: I am the youngest and most beautiful.

**Lori Weintz - Copy Center**

I worked in the Autistic Cluster and the Computer Lab at Southland Elementary and taught the Meet the Master Art Program at Fox Hollow Elementary before coming to West Hills to run the Copy Center.

I like to sing, read, travel, and make cookies!

Having had three children attend West Hills already, it is fun to be here at the same time as my youngest daughter, Charlotte, who is in 7th Grade. I'm happy to be part of the West Hills support team!

**To Be Spotlighted in Future Newsletter**

- **Melissa Habermeyer – Math**
- **Shaila Keck – Geography**
- **Katie O'Dell – Math**
- **Rebecca Rowley – Math**
- **Janet Sanders – Social Studies**
- **Marianna Toro – Spanish**
- **Terri Austin – Counseling Center**
- **Jennifer Jones – Special Education Aide**
- **Aimee Potts – Special Education Aide**



If any of the new teachers or staff members did not get spotlighted in this newsletter and would like to be spotlighted in the next newsletter, please e-mail me at tcsarzalejo@hotmail.com

ATTENTION ALL 8th Grade Students

8th Graders: College and Career Ready!

Why plan for college now? Is 8th grade too soon? NO! We want students to be prepared for our increasingly competitive world and don't want them to miss out on the many opportunities available to them in their high school career. Coming up soon, we have 8th grade student meetings to Plan for College and Career Readiness (PCCR). We are so excited to meet with parents and students one on one to go over their 4 year plan, graduation requirements and EXPLORE test results. Planning is very important to prepare, not only for high school, but for life in the real world as well. Colleges AND employers want high school graduates that have marketable skills. These skills come through taking and passing rigorous courses in high school, being involved in extra-curricular activities in and out of school, and gaining experience in their field through study and/or internships.



The 4 year plan that the counselor will go over with parents and students is a resource for your student to graduate from high school ready to be successful in College and/or a Career. It outlines the classes required to graduate as well as the classes that will lead to your student's desired path after high school. Make sure you review this plan on a regular basis with your student. Check to see if they are on track to graduate and if they have the classes they need for their desired course of study. If you want to make changes or have questions about their 4 year plan, don't hesitate to talk to your student's school counselor. We want to help your student keep their eye on the goal and make sure their 4 year plan is an accurate reflection of their goals for after high school.

West Hills Middle School Counseling Department
Ms. Walker, Ms. Feller, and Ms. Ballentine