



October 6, 2014

Dear Residents:

I recently met with Jason Mellema, Superintendent of Pewamo-Westphalia Schools, and had the pleasure of getting a guided tour of the security, technology and infrastructure renovations that were done at the schools over the past summer. The improvements are quite impressive and will certainly help prepare our already solid school system for continued success into the future. The administration, faculty, Board of Education, and all those involved in the renovations should be commended for doing such a fine job.

I'm sure most have seen the sign as you approach the High School that highlights the accomplishments of the school and its students. There is much listed on the sign to be proud of, but I would encourage you to also go to the school's Web site ([www.pwschools.org](http://www.pwschools.org)) and see all of the great acknowledgements the PW School system has achieved. Academically PW is ranked in the top 5% of all schools in Michigan, receiving a national ranking in the *World Report* top 500 and *Newsweek* top 700 (2<sup>nd</sup> highest in the Lansing area, 26<sup>th</sup> highest in the state). It also had the highest ACT scores in the Lansing area in 2013. In the Arts, the marching band and drama program have received multiple awards. In athletics there have been numerous league, district, regional, and state championships. What a well-rounded school system we have!

In our conversation, Mr. Mellema stressed how special our school system really is. The dedication of the administration, teachers, support staff, students and parents make it this way. He noted that he has worked in other districts and what we have here is quite unique and very special. To quote Mr. Mellema, "It's not like this everywhere." I believe our public schools are in good hands and appreciate the hard work and dedication of all those that make PW such an excellent schools system.

In large part, it is the Westphalia St. Mary and Pewamo St. Joseph schools that start the path of development for the students that make our public school system so excellent. The administration, teachers, and support staff of these excellent schools must be commended as well. Good schools are extremely important to the success of a community and I believe ours to be excellent.

The Westphalia Historical Society sponsored a cemetery walk on September 21<sup>st</sup> where local citizens represented some of our most memorable ancestors. Although the weather was not the best, over 200 people attended the event and it was a great success. Those attending were treated to cider and doughnuts and generously donated nearly \$1,400 to the Society. The generosity of our local citizens is amazing. Thank you to the Historical Society for all their work in putting on such a great event. I understand next year's Cemetery Walk is already in the planning stages! Pictures and more information are available on the Society's Web site [www.westphaliahistory.weebly.com](http://www.westphaliahistory.weebly.com).

Couple of reminders... Halloween hours will once again be 5:30 to 7:30 this year. Please be sure to drive with extreme caution during this time. Election day is November 4<sup>th</sup>, please be sure to exercise your right to vote.

Sincerely,

Dean Kohagen, President  
Village of Westphalia