WeRISE NEWSLETTER

Back to School: It Takes a Village

As a new school year begins, we celebrate the excitement of fresh opportunities while recognizing that not every student starts from the same place. A true sense of belonging means more than being present in the classroom—it means feeling safe, respected, valued, and empowered to learn.

Creating schools where every student belongs requires all of us. Families, educators, students, and community members each play an important role in advancing educational equity and ensuring that every young person has access to the support and opportunities they need to thrive.

This school year, we renew our commitment to building learning environments where every student is welcomed, every family is heard, and every community has the opportunity to succeed. Together, we can help ensure that every student not only has a seat in the classroom but also a genuine sense of belonging.

Join our Board

We have board member openings and would love to have our community members or volunteers consider joining our team. If you have interest in joining our board, email us at **weriseforgw@gmail.com** to meet with some of our current board members.

Westerville MLK Fouse & Alston Awards

Every day, individuals in our community work to build a more inclusive, compassionate, and connected Westerville. The Fouse and Alston Awards recognize students and community members who exemplify characteristics of Dr. King in their personal and professional lives. Know someone who deserves recognition? Nominate them at: https://www.leadershipwesterville.com/awards.html

Nominations close on November 5, 2026.

OSJA & Westerville City Schools Seek Male Mentors

One hour. One Monday. One consistent connection can make a difference.

Otterbein University's **Office of Social Justice & Advocacy (OSJA)** is proud to partner with **Westerville City Schools** on a middle school mentoring initiative focused on building meaningful, consistent connections between students and positive male role models in our community.

We are currently seeking **male mentors ages 18 and older** who can commit to **one Monday per month from 11:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m.**

We especially encourage young male mentors who are in college, beginning their careers, entering the workforce, or navigating the early stages of adulthood can offer a perspective that feels especially relatable to middle school students. At the same time, **men of all adult ages are welcome and encouraged to serve**, as students benefit from a variety of experiences, perspectives, and positive role models.

Fall 2026 Mentoring Dates

- **Monday, October 12**
- **Monday, November 9**
- **Monday, December 14**

Interested in Mentoring? Complete the **Westerville City Schools Male Mentoring Interest Survey** here: **SIGN UP TO BECOME A MENTOR**

Westerville Queer Collective

Westerville Queer Collective (WQC) Website

Food Pantry – Donate to or use the food pantry inside Java Central in Uptown Westerville.

Finding Support - Visit the WQC Resource Guide or call the Trevor Project hotline +18887346197 if you need help.