

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Jack Baldermann** <jbaldermann@cusd201.org>

Date: Wed, Apr 29, 2020 at 2:42 PM

Subject: Test 2

To: Westmont High School Recipients <recipients@cusd201.parentlink.net>

Dear Westmont High School Parents and Students:

We miss seeing you and hope you are staying healthy and safe.

We have outstanding news during difficult times.

With the two oldest and longest running national high school rankings just being released W.H.S. has achieved tremendous success and remarkable results. Before offering the details, here is a brief summary.

- Westmont is the most improved regular Illinois high school in both national rankings
- Westmont is in the top 1% in the nation on the Challenge Index and top 3% in the nation on the U.S. News and World Report rankings
- No school like Westmont ranks higher in either national ranking. The schools that rank above Westmont are selective enrollment schools, academies, magnet schools, charter schools and wealthy schools (the average percentage of students living in economic poverty in these schools is less than 10% compared to Westmont at 32%).
- All of the success on the national rankings, the back to back Exemplary ratings from the I.S.B.E., 10 out of 10 rating from Great Schools and the DuFour Award as the best Professional Learning Community in the United States. Our team has achieved incredible results.

Westmont High School is the most improved regular high school in Illinois on both national rankings. In addition to being the most improved, Westmont is also one of the highest achieving high schools in Illinois and the nation. What we have achieved together is quite amazing and unprecedented. Here are the details.

The **Jay Mathews / Washington Post Challenge Index** developed by famous author and researcher Jay Mathews and his team is the longest running national ranking in the country (it was formerly known as the Newsweek rankings). Westmont is ranked number 1 of all regular high schools in Illinois and ranked number 150 in the nation. 22,000 high schools are eligible and only 300 will be recognized. These results speak for themselves. The link is listed below.

The Jay Mathews Challenge Index is the oldest high school ranking system in the country, beginning in 1998 in both Newsweek and The Washington Post.

jaymathewschallengeindex.com

The **U.S. News and World Report High School** rankings are the second oldest in the nation. Since 2012, Westmont is the most improved regular high school in Illinois in this ranking and one of the top 3 most improved regular high schools in the United States. You can find the rankings and all the data if you search – U.S. News and World Report High School Rankings – Illinois. Here are some important highlights and details.

Westmont is ranked 29 overall out of 811 high schools in this ranking. We are the most improved in Illinois of the regular high schools by far. We are number 18 in the state for regular schools, and ranked 9th using U.S. News and World Report's College Readiness score. Every school ranked ahead of us is either a selective enrollment school or an economically wealthy school. There is no school like Westmont in the top 40.

The U.S. News and Worlds Report uses six (6) different data points to develop their rankings. It is called the Best High Schools Methodology and it is attached to this email. The list is dominated by charter schools and wealthy schools because the criteria favors schools with little to no students living in economic poverty. That is in part why Westmont's ranking is so exceptional.

Here are a few powerful examples.

Westmont High School has the highest graduation rate of any of the regular high schools in Illinois in this ranking.

Westmont is ranked 29 and Lisle (the school most like WHS in the top 60) is ranked 54 and they had a very good year. Westmont's College Readiness score is 60.1 and Lisle's is 39.9.

Westmont's College Readiness score (60.1) is almost the same as Hinsdale Central's score of 60.9. This is remarkable. Westmont has more than 5 times the number of students living in economic poverty, yet a higher graduation rate, a higher ranking in the Challenge Index and nearly the same U.S. News and World Report College Readiness score. On the SAT Westmont's scores are excellent but not as high as Hinsdale Central. There is a mountain of research that demonstrates the bias present against low income and underrepresented students on the SAT. A careful examination of many data points clearly shows that Westmont is one of the most overachieving high schools in the nation.

Westmont is ranked higher in both national rankings than high quality local schools like Downers Grove North, Lyons Township, Hinsdale South, Barrington, York, Naperville Central, Naperville North, Oak Park River Forest, Riverside Brookfield, Carl Sandburg, Buffalo Grove, Wheaton North, Maine South, Glenbard South and many others. Westmont's percentage of students living in economic poverty is higher than any of these schools.

I could write a book on all the accomplishments and the amazing work that has been done by our teachers, students and school community. Westmont High School is the most improved regular high school in Illinois, one of the top performing in the state and nation and one of the most overachieving schools in America. You are a part of this success, and I hope you take joy and pride in what we have worked for as a team. It is extraordinary and worthy of celebration.

Jack Baldermann

Principal – Westmont High School