

WVCSD EdTalk: January 28, 2022

Dr. David Leach, Superintendent of Schools

In today's world, technology is almost everywhere. Thanks to the internet, people have unprecedented educational, entertainment, and social opportunities. However, students who explore, connect and learn online face new risks.

When students are in school or using school-issued computers, the district's technology department limits their access to certain online content. This approach protects children, but as they mature, they must learn to discern fact from fiction and identify reliable sources to find and consume quality digital content.

Educators are committed to monitoring and teaching responsible internet use. Lessons learned at home can support school staff efforts during the day. The faculty see technology and the internet as one of their teaching tools. They also know the importance of managing screen time in school. We also strongly urge parents and guardians to teach their children online safety rules. The Warwick Valley Central School District has always included internet safety in its curriculum and continues to do so. To help students become responsible digital citizens, schools must educate faculty, staff, parents, and guardians about online safety.

Please visit our website to see a new page dedicated to internet safety.

To learn more about the internet's risks and benefits, as well as how to develop strong internet safety practices outside of school, [please visit this page on our website](#).

Here are some highlights from our schools this week:

Pine Island Elementary School

Officer Kat, Pine Island Elementary's new school resource officer, is now walking the school's halls every day, all day. She can be seen directing traffic during morning arrival and afternoon dismissal. She is also walking amongst the students on the playground and in the cafeteria. Officer Kat has visited many classrooms, introducing herself to the children and trying to learn all the students' names. When asked why she wanted to be an SRO, Officer Kat said, "I enjoy being with the students, and I am usually their first contact with a police officer. I want that contact to be friendly and positive."

Park Avenue Elementary School

Students in grades K to 4 have started their second STEM unit of the year. These units directly connect with what classroom teachers are doing during science. Units can last about three months and have cross-curricular connections wherever possible. Students learn to be collaborators, communicators, creators, and critical thinkers in engaging-but-demanding units. For example, second-grade students are currently improving a play dough process as chemical engineers. Students will use what they are

learning about matter to improve a low-quality play dough process that is sticky, runny, and grainy. In groups, students will enhance the process to make high-quality play dough.

Sanfordville Elementary School

Christine Esserman's first-grade students were very proud to share their how-to books with Principal Johnna Maraia. Four of the students asked to visit her to read their books to her. Each of them had written their how-to books on how to have PAWS Behavior (Polite actions, Accountable actions, Wise choices, and Safety first actions). Their books all included six steps, including what to do first, second, next, next, then, and finally. Mrs. Maraia was very impressed with their ideas, writing, and reading skills. She even asked Mrs. Esserman if she could have a copy of each book to use in her office with other students who may be struggling with demonstrating PAWS Behavior.

Casey Besimer's students love to code! The coding courses in STEM teach the foundational concepts of programming using drag and drop blocks rather than a text language such as JavaScript or Python. Blocks are an easier way to get started. The third- and fourth-grade students have been learning to write code for characters to make them move and interact with one another. Our first- and second-grade students are starting with the basics of how coding works and how to connect the blocks for the codes to work. They are doing this by using familiar characters such as Angry Birds, Scrat the Squirrel from Ice Age, and BB8, the droid from Star Wars.

Warwick Valley Middle School

In seventh grade, our students are required to take health. The health curriculum focuses on educating our students on ways to live a healthy lifestyle. One topic the class focuses on is cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR). Students are exposed to the basic principles of CPR and have the opportunity to practice the skills on CPR models. While practicing hands-only CPR, they reviewed a five-step process to go through when encountering a person in need: Check the scene for safety. Check the person for responsiveness. Call 911. Check the airway. Begin compressions. It is a component of the class that students look forward to learning.

The Middle School has been working closely with the Warwick Valley Prevention Coalition to provide our students and families with tools to maintain a healthy lifestyle. We teamed up with the coalition and the Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Council of Orange County and STOP-DWI to hold a virtual "Hidden Mischief" event. During this event, the Prevention Specialist Team discussed how drugs and alcohol could be concealed and how the drug culture has changed over the years. Parents who participated could virtually search a teenager's bedroom to find paraphernalia hidden in public view. It was highly educational, and we look forward to our next event.

Warwick Valley High School

Warwick Valley High School offers full-year and semester-long courses as part of its vast course options available to students. As we close out the first semester of school, courses typically end with a project

rather than a final exam. Students present their research that draws connections to real-world applications from the content they learned in class.

Students in Raymond Mark's robotics and engineering class have studied different concepts using a VEX Clawbot and the VEX VR virtual platform. Students have been crafting their programming skills for robots in physical and virtual settings. Additionally, the students learned how to incorporate different sensors into their robots, including a sonar sensor, a light sensor, and a bump sensor. Students complete a short research paper on a real-life application that incorporates some of the technology studied in class for the final project in the class. In addition to the report, students present their research to the class.