

WVCSD EdTalk: October 12, 2022

Dr. David Leach, Superintendent of Schools

In each week's Superintendent's Spotlight and Superintendent's Artist of the Week profiles, I honor and recognize students from the Warwick Valley Central School District who are performing exemplary work. These articles highlight their remarkable academic, artistic, athletic, civic, and social achievements.

It has been my pleasure for the past six years to shine a light on Warwick students who achieve their goals, take on tough projects, win awards, create exceptional pieces of art, perform random acts of kindness, and are helpers and role models to their peers. Our 3,000-plus students give me a lot to be proud of day to day, and the Superintendent's Spotlight and Superintendent's Artist of the Week are a great place for the district to tell everyone about some of the things that make our students so special.

This year, we've already recognized WVHS student Lionel Wolfe, who was chosen for the 2022 National Association for Music Education All-National Mixed Choir, which places him among the top performing high school musicians in the entire US. Paxton Honerkamp is a junior who's already explored his interest in politics by participating in Student Advisory Councils for state senators, as well as interning for state Senator Peter Harekham.

Last year, our Spotlight shone on National Merit Scholarship students, middle school entrepreneurs on Etsy, a third grader who designed a car for Hot Wheels, high school singers who performed at Radio City Music Hall, and a first grader who corresponded with President Biden. Every time I read a new profile, I am amazed by how much our students care, think outside the box, and share their ideas.

I hope you will take a few minutes to check out the Superintendent's Spotlight and Superintendent's Artist of the Week profiles that we have archived on our website, www.warwickvalleyschools.com. You can also find them on our social media platforms and in the local newspapers. There will be many more added throughout this school year!

I also highlight student accomplishments during my weekly radio show on WTbQ Radio, called "Your Schools." You can tune in every Monday at 12:05 p.m.

Here are some highlights from our schools this week:

Park Avenue Elementary School

The third grade and kindergarten classes have begun their "Kinder-buddies" program, which pairs a third grade class with a kindergarten class to meet once or twice a month to collaborate on different activities and read alouds. Emma La Rosa's third graders met with Theresa Canfield's

kindergarteners, and the third graders chose age-appropriate, entertaining read-alouds. Students paired up with their buddies and learned about one another before the third graders read their preselected picture books. Diane Kilbride's students will be working with Lorie Ingber's, and Ashley McPherson's class has been paired with Sarah Cordisco's.

All kindergarten classes – approximately 100 students – walked to the Albert Wisner Public Library, accompanied by parent chaperones, teachers, and our media specialist, Scott Sibilla. Students joined library staff in the Community Room and learned about library resources and their cost: FREE! Students listened to a read aloud, participated in a writers' workshop, learned rhythm and dance in a short music program, toured the children's library, and got to pick out their very own book to take home with them. Prior to the visit, students submitted their applications for their very first library card. Cards will be sent directly to their home address once processed.

Sanfordville Elementary School

As part of School Safety Week, Sanfordville's School Safety Team worked with teachers and staff to prepare lessons to review and practice emergency plans, protocols, and drills. Each day during the week, teachers discussed emergency procedures with students. Teachers received detailed instructions on how to present information to students. The week ended with a formal lockdown drill with the assistance of school resource officers. Students were reassured that the goal is always to keep them safe while at school.

A large crowd gathered at the school for the Sanfordville PTA-sponsored Touch-A-Truck Event. Students and families loved touring the trucks and vehicles, as well as meeting the first responders and essential workers. Thank you to the Warwick Fire Department, Pine Island Fire Department, Warwick Police Department, Warwick EMT, Warwick DPW, Warwick Valley Auto Body, New York State Police units, and the Orange County Sheriff's Department and SWAT Unit.

Families enjoyed watching the demonstration by the State Police drones, the Sheriff's Department K-9 Unit, and the State Police Mounted Unit. Families visited the Sheriff's Department Kids Safe ID Cards table to register their children in the database and receive an ID card with their pictures. Students even had the chance to ride on some electric toy trucks, jeeps, and cars thanks to "Cruisin Kids!" A job well done by our high school criminal justice students for their security supervision. Thank you to Supervisor Michael P. Sweeton and Mayor Michael J. Newhard for attending the event. We thank the PTA and all of our volunteers.

To wrap-up the week, our PTA sponsored a heroes' luncheon for local first responders and essential workers. Police officers, firefighters, EMTs, doctors, nurses, and sanitation workers joined our students during their lunch periods. Our students asked wonderfully thoughtful questions. We thank all first responders for visiting Sanfordville and for their dedication to keeping us all safe!

Warwick Valley Middle School

Tara Parvati's seventh-grade social studies classes recently created group projects about the US. Students were tasked with color-coding the geographic regions on maps, and constructing corresponding map keys. Then students each chose to research a specific region's geography, climate, political, and physical boundaries, as well as various landmarks and settlements. Students crafted their research in the form of a three-paragraph paper. Studying these regions helps us explore and understand space and place. It is an important concept for understanding why certain areas function the way they do.

Warwick Valley High School

Warwick Valley High School hosted a voter registration drive in collaboration with presenters from the League of Women Voters. The group is a nonpartisan political organization that encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government. The presenters stressed the importance of voting and civic engagement and encouraged students to register to vote or pre-register to vote. A person who is at least 16 and who is otherwise qualified to register to vote may pre-register to vote and will then be automatically registered to vote upon reaching the age of eligibility. Students in government and U.S. history classes were encouraged to go online and register during class, and a registration drive was held during lunch for students who were eligible to pre-register or register but were not enrolled in the classes that the speakers visited.