

EdTalk: September 10, 2021

Dr. David Leach, WVCSD Superintendent of Schools

As a result of the tightening labor market, schools around the country, including Warwick Valley Schools, have been grappling with school bus driver shortages. The shortage is already causing difficulties in transporting students to and from school. Every bus route is covered when all of our current drivers report to work; however, if drivers are unable to work, we may need to adjust pick-up or drop-off times.

If you are interested in becoming a school bus driver, please call our Transportation Office at 845-987-3050.

Our bus drivers complete extensive training before they are permitted to drive students. A background check is performed on each applicant before obtaining a Commercial Driver's License (CDL) permit. Candidates must then pass a physical exam and drug/alcohol test prior to training. The candidate is then trained and must pass a road test from the New York State Department of Motor Vehicles.

We are dedicated to providing safe transportation to and from school for all students. We're still looking into all possibilities to lessen the impact of these challenges on our families.

The following are some of the highlights from our schools in the past week:

Pine Island Elementary School

Many kindergarten students took their first art session. Ms. Sunwha Gil is the new art teacher. She demonstrated that just by knowing how to draw a dot, the students could make beautiful designs and pictures. Using big dots, little dots and all different colored dots, students were able to make beautiful twinkling stars. It was wonderful to see students eagerly and confidently share their pictures with their friends. It was even better when Ms. Gil announced aloud, "You are all artists, pat yourself on the back."

Park Avenue Elementary School

Teachers and staff facilitated our Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) Station Rotation, where students were introduced to our PBIS system. PBIS includes the ROAR (Respect, Outstanding Choices, Acceptance, and Responsibility) attributes. Students traveled to parts of the building, such as the gymnasium, cafeteria, and bathrooms and had discussions about the school's behavioral expectations. This important practice will help students actualize their individual and collective goals for the school year.

Sanfordville Elementary School

The faculty and staff at Sanfordville are grateful to our very generous PTA for providing welcome back cookies on the first day of school and a continental breakfast on the second day.

First-grade classes toured the building with their teachers, finding important spots - such as the guidance offices, nurses office, the main office, and the principal's office, and meeting important people. Fourth-graders were eager to meet with the band and orchestra teachers to confirm their instruments of choice. They are preparing to begin in-person lessons next week.

Warwick Valley Middle School

At the middle school level, we emphasize to our teachers the importance of building relationships with students. Teachers have been facilitating "Getting to Know You" activities, which are a great way for teachers and administrators to better understand who a student is and where their interests lie.

The administrative team held grade-level assemblies to review safety protocols and procedures with students. Students had an opportunity to ask questions and learn about our upcoming events.

Warwick Valley High School

Teachers have been utilizing the outdoor instructional spaces each day since the beginning of the school year. The nice weather has helped get students outside and facilitated healthy mask breaks throughout the school days.

The senior, junior and sophomore classes all met for their class assemblies. Not only did the students get to hear about some exciting upcoming activities from their class advisors, they also received information about class rings, caps and gowns, and other graduation plans. Safety protocols and student expectations were reviewed by the building administrators as well.