

This article is the third in a series that presents findings from the Warwick Valley Central School District's latest enrollment study. This week, I will provide an overview of the housing market in Warwick and enrollment in non-public schools. This information is important for understanding trends and conditions within the community, and can assist with decision making for the school district. By staying educated about the housing market and non-public school enrollment, the district can better understand the needs and preferences of its constituents and make informed plans.

In Q3 2022, the US housing market saw a decline in activity due to affordability challenges and economic uncertainty. According to the New York State Association of Realtors (NYSAR), closed sales in New York State were down 10.9% compared to the same period in the prior year, while the median sale price increased to \$400,000, a 5% year over year increase. The number of homes for sale fell 14.4% and inventory is expected to remain low due to rising mortgage rates. In Orange County, Q3 2022 saw a 15.2% year over year decline in completed home sales, but a 9.9% increase in the median sale price due to a tight supply of available inventory.

Despite high home prices, the homeownership rate increased to 65.8% in Q2 2022, compared to the 10-year low of 62.9% in 2016. The rate was highest among those aged 65-plus at 79.3%, followed by 75.1% for those aged 55-64, 70.6% for those aged 45-54, and 61.9% for those aged 35-44. The lowest rate was among those under 35 at 39.1%, though this group saw the largest increase of any group between Q1 2020 and Q2 2022, rising 1.8 percentage points. However, rising interest rates and continued price increases are expected to hinder further growth in the share of first-time home buyers.

In 2021, the housing turnover rate in Warwick reached a high of 472 units sold, an increase of 18% from the previous year. The median sale price also reached a high of \$441,000, a 10% increase from 2020. This data, shown in this table, reveals a trend of increasing housing sales and prices in Warwick from a low point in 2011, when only 161 (\$307,000) units were sold.

Year	Number Sold	Median Price
2011	161	\$307,000
2012	181	\$296,500
2013	195	\$303,000
2014	213	\$320,000

2015	244	\$309,500
2016	303	\$340,000
2017	323	\$317,000
2018	343	\$360,000
2019	345	\$356,500
2020	400	\$400,000
2021	472	\$441,100

Source: New York State Office of Real Property Services

In our district, 80% of housing units were owner-occupied and 20% were renter-occupied in 2020. This is compared to Orange County, where about 68% of housing units were owner-occupied and 32% were renter-occupied.

In the 2020-21 school year, there were approximately 5.3 million K-12 students, or 10.3% of all school-age children, attending private schools in the United States. While private school enrollment in New York has been declining, it has increased significantly in Orange and Rockland counties. Between the 2011-12 and 2021-22 school years, the percentage of school-age children attending private schools in Orange County rose from 17.2% to 24.0%, and from around 35% to 46% in Rockland County. This growth is attributed to the expansion of Yeshiva schools in the Hasidic and Orthodox communities in these areas.

In 2021, 150 students (4% of the total) who reside in the Warwick Valley Central School District attended non-public schools, down from 376 (7.9% of the total) in 2007.

Here are some highlights from our schools this week:

Park Avenue Elementary School

Over the last few weeks, members of Park Avenue’s Lego League Jr. team have been meeting and collaborating together for this season’s Lego Explore Challenge, called “Superpowered.” Teams were asked to explore how energy is collected, stored, and consumed. So far, our team has devised and designed a plan for the collection of energy using a wind turbine. The students’ plan also strives to build a facility to store that energy that will then be used to power a carousel. In addition, the team has started learning and practicing ways to motorize and program their model. Lastly, in order to learn how to work together more effectively and enjoyably, they engaged in a variety of team-building Lego challenges.

Second-grade students are working on neurological drawings in art class. Loosely and commonly known as doodling, creating neurological art is an actual technique, which consists of drawing

freeform lines or ‘neuro lines.’ These types of drawings allow your brain and overall cognitive activity to relax, allowing one to connect with their body. Students are taught to allow their hands to start to wander and roam about the paper. Once they have their drawings established, they take black glue and trace over the pencil lines, which takes patience and a steady hand. Once dried everyone will experiment with adding watercolors and design patterns to enhance the neurological drawings.

Sanfordville Elementary School

Students are growing as “ethical and global citizens” as they learned about and discussed the impact Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. had on our society. Some classes read the book “Young Martin Luther King, Jr.” by Joanne Mattern and listened to parts of Dr. King’s “I Have a Dream” speech. Some classes brainstormed and spoke and wrote about what their dreams for the world would be. They posted the ideas on colorful strips below clouds outside their classrooms for everyone to see their dreams to make the world a kinder, more accepting place. Other classes researched Dr. King and listened to the story, “I am Martin Luther King, Jr.” by Brad Meltzer, and then wrote their own pledges about kindness and making people feel included. The students shared their pledges with their classmates and participated in a meaningful conversation about kindness.

Teachers Casey Besimer, Danielle Cancel and Lauren Whittemore, along with a team of teachers, high school student volunteers and PTA volunteers, worked together to plan and organize this year’s STEM Fair. The students were challenged to create a STEM project that uses the “Engineering Design Process” to solve a real-world problem. This process included: the Ask, the Imagine, the Plan, the Create, and the Improve steps to solving problems. More than 70 student projects lined the hallways of Sanfordville. The teacher judges picked the top 20 projects to be displayed at the District STEM Fair in the spring.

Warwick Valley Middle School

The Orange County Music Educators Association (OCMEA) supports music programs throughout the county and encourages the appreciation of live music performances. OCMEA sponsors the annual All-County Festival for outstanding musicians at all grade levels who audition to be a part of the prestigious event. This year we had six students in our fifth and sixth grade band and 10 students in our fifth and sixth grade orchestra make the All-County ensembles!

Auditions consist of a series of memorized scales, a level-appropriate solo selected by OCMEA, and a sight reading piece. Students are graded in posture, form, intonation, musicianship, and accuracy. Students who earn top scores are selected for the All-County Band or Orchestra. Students have the opportunity to learn and perform exciting new music under a guest conductor, and to meet students their age from other districts who have similar interests. It is a great learning experience while also being a lot of fun!

We are so incredibly proud of their hard work, dedication and desire to put in the hard work necessary to achieve this prestigious accomplishment.

Warwick Valley High School

The WVHS Robotics Team took part in their first competition and finished the day as semifinalists! The FIRST Tech Challenge took place at Peekskill High School, where the WVHS team faced 21 other schools from Orange, Rockland, and Westchester counties. Competitors had to design, build, program, and operate robots. They were also interviewed by a panel of judges on the engineering principles used to make their robot. The Robotics Team, advised by Andrew Warren, is: Thomas Kanz (senior), Odhran Hicks and Chloe Jarrous (juniors), Riley Roberti and Abigail Foust (sophomores), and Mason Scarano, Owen Machingo, and Christopher DeFranco (freshmen). Students spent about six to eight hours a week building, designing, programming, and practicing to prepare for the competition. They are looking forward to spending the offseason learning more and preparing for next year. The Robotics Team meets after school in the technology room and is open to all interested students.