

WVCSD EdTalk: May 17, 2023
Dr. David Leach, Superintendent of Schools

The graduating students of Warwick Valley Central School District have consistently been encouraged to reject mediocrity and pursue greatness. It is essential that we transcend mere adequacy and strive for excellence in all areas of our lives. Drawing from Jim Collins' influential book, "Good to Great: Why Some Companies Make the Leap... and Others Don't," I have stressed the importance of avoiding complacency and setting our aspirations high. Here are some quotes from Collins' book that I believe will prove useful to our graduating students:

1. "Greatness is not a function of circumstance. Greatness, it turns out, is largely a matter of conscious choice and discipline."
2. "Good is the enemy of great. And that is one of the key reasons why we have so little that becomes great."
3. "Those who build great organizations make sure they have the right people on the bus and the right people in the key seats before they figure out where to drive the bus."
4. "When you combine a culture of discipline with an ethic of entrepreneurship, you get the magical alchemy of great performance."
5. "The moment you feel the need to tightly manage someone, you've made a hiring mistake. The best people don't need to be managed. Guided, taught, led--yes. But not tightly managed."

Our graduates can make a positive impact on the world by embracing these principles and striving for personal excellence.

Here are some highlights from our schools this week:

Park Avenue Elementary School

Park Avenue Elementary School's Student Council, led by Ms. Canfield and Ms. Buliung, organized a coin drive to support Alex's Lemonade Stand and their fight against childhood cancer. Through student donations and downtown events, they raised over \$3000. Council Specials Representative Alexandra Vetell highlighted the simplicity of contributing to the cause, stating, "One reason that I think you should donate to Alex's Lemonade Stand is because it's a simple way to help raise funds to cure childhood cancer." Kindergarten Representative Charlotte Montenaro emphasized the importance of every child deserving a good life and urged others to donate. The school expressed gratitude to everyone who contributed to their stand.

At Park Avenue Elementary, as spring arrives, chicks begin to hatch in Ms. Canfield's kindergarten class and Ms. Berghahn's first-grade class. With the assistance of Park Ave parent Kristina Baumann, who owns and operates Fury Brook Farm, the children witnessed the hatching process firsthand. Kindergarteners explored nonfiction texts, read books about chicks and chickens, and watched informative videos. They had the opportunity to see three chicks hatch and interact with them after 24 hours. In first grade, students studied various life cycles and planted seeds, while Ms. Kristina furthered their learning by exploring the life cycle of chickens. The students monitored temperature and humidity in the incubator and witnessed the birth of their first chick. Both classes expressed gratitude to Ms. Kristina for this enriching learning experience.

Sanfordville Elementary School

Sanfordville Elementary School's PIE 1/2 students enjoyed a fun and educational day at Turtle Back Zoo, aligning with their curriculum on animals, food, life cycles, and habitats. Second graders will also be visiting the zoo soon. The trip provided a valuable opportunity for wildlife education and conservation, fostering an understanding and appreciation of the interdependence of all living things.

At Sanfordville Elementary, Mr. Muehlbauer and Mrs. Blaikner introduced musical instruments to the third-grade class, featuring demonstrations by fourth-grade musicians. The students will be preparing to decide if they would like to play an instrument in fourth grade and which instrument they prefer. The fourth-grade musicians were praised for their performance and dedication.

On National Nurses Day, May 10, Sanfordville Elementary recognized their School Nurse, Ms. Creslyn Driscoll, with cards, posters, plants, and gifts as a token of appreciation for her dedicated service.

Warwick Valley Middle School

Warwick Valley Middle School's Multi-Age Class (MAC) team focuses on developing critical thinking skills through problem-solving and collaboration, aligning with the district's goal of nurturing the Portrait of a Graduate. MAC classes have been studying microsystems, particularly atoms, molecules, and water molecules. They recently engaged in an engineering task called "Go With the Flow," bridging microsystems and macrosystems. Students worked in pairs to engineer a multi-tiered water system, aiming to achieve a seamless flow from top to bottom. They collaborated, planned their models, and utilized troubleshooting and problem-solving skills to make improvements during the design phase. After completion, the models were tested, and teams were awarded points based on the levels their beads traveled. Final scores were calculated using points spent on supplies and earned points.

Warwick Valley High School

Warwick Valley High School's Meistersingers had the opportunity to perform at Dorney Park as part of the Music In The Parks program, where vocal and instrumental ensembles from the US and Canada showcase their talents to experienced judges. In June, the band and orchestra will also perform. The program not only provides valuable feedback from master teachers but also represents the school's music program on a national stage. After their performances, students enjoyed the rides and games at the park, creating a fun and educational way to conclude the school year.