

Weekly Column: Ed Talk
Superintendent of Schools: Dr. David Leach
August 30, 2023

Welcome to the 2023-2024 academic year! We're thrilled about the upcoming school year and hope you and your children share in the excitement. From my own school days, when sleep seemed impossible the night before school started, to later as a dad watching my kids leave the house, the first day remains a mix of nerves and memories, and after a few long summers, a joy to finally have some quiet in the house!

This summer was busy for our team. Our summer program educated 200 students and our schools are now prepared to welcome 3,750 students in the fall. Activity in our registrar's office was constant throughout the summer months. We have welcomed 85 new students since July 1st. Many of the families of these students told us that they chose Warwick because of the district's strong reputation. The increase in enrollment comes despite a very competitive housing market locally. Let's give them a warm welcome!

Just as past generations shaped Warwick, the present holds a responsibility for the future. In our program, we aim to prepare young people for the future, not relive our past. The journey of each child is unique, and every student will receive an exceptional education in a school community that stands together.

A few years ago, the District began the #TheirFuture campaign, involving the Board of Education, administrators, teachers, students, parents, and the broader community. The collaboration and insights gathered from these diverse stakeholders culminated in the "North Star" vision statement. While you can read the full North Star on our website, the following summary paragraph captures our collective aspirations:

Located near one of the world's most vibrant cities yet surrounded by rural serenity, Warwick Valley Schools aim to prepare our students for their future, ensuring success well beyond high school. National and state standards are benchmarks our students are expected to surpass. The collective wisdom of our community agrees that true learning connects classroom lessons with the world, breaking subject barriers through experiential education. Schools must shift from teaching to student learning, fostering lifelong growth and curiosity. We prepare our students for life after graduation by integrating the Portrait of a Graduate competencies our school community deems critical for our children to demonstrate and master by graduation.

To accomplish the vision outlined above, our children need the commitment of teachers, students, parents, and leaders. To ensure the well-being and success of our children, we dedicate ourselves to these ideals. By aligning with the North Star, Warwick Valley schools pave the way for an empowering educational experience. As we begin the 2023-24 school year, this North Star lights our path, inspiring us to shape an empowering future.

As we navigate the 2023-24 academic year, let's allow our "North Star" to lead the way. With unity in our devotion to students, we shall continue to craft an education that empowers and transforms lives.