

Weekly Column: EdTalk
Superintendent of Schools: Dr. David Leach
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One of the more popular programs in the Warwick Valley Central School District is the Partners in Education (PIE) program. School district students are eligible for the PIE. The PIE ideology supports bridging the gap between home, school, and community. This program provides educators with a helpful support system and parents with a window into their child's learning environment.

PIE is a multi-age classroom grouping that facilitates non-competitive, collaborative social interaction, and supports children along their development continuum, while also providing valuable opportunities to be mentors and mentees. PIE classrooms connect home, school, and community through teaching and learning. They are places where teachers, students, and parents collaborate as partners with district leadership's full support.

The four pillars of the PIE program are:

- Multi-age class groupings
- Integrated curriculum
- Outdoor learning
- Parent/family involvement

Our elementary PIE classrooms are located at Sanfordville Elementary, and our fifth and sixth graders attend the Middle School and it is called the MAC Program (multi-age classrooms). At the 1/2 and 3/4 grade levels, the program requires a two-year commitment. PIE Kindergarten students must commit to the entire school year.

The program now serves 160 students in two kindergarten classes, three first- and second-grade classes, and three third- and fourth-grade classes. We are also in our third year of implementing the Math Expression Series resource, specifically geared toward multi-age classrooms.

A PIE Community group meets monthly and works collaboratively with PIE teachers and administration to plan, support, and enhance lessons and activities. Classroom updates and upcoming projects are discussed by teachers with their families. Our PIE Fall Fest is Wednesday, October 25. The Fall Fest is a PIE family event where students dress in Halloween costumes, sing songs, read poems, and participate in other activities. They collect and eat treats and snacks at the Peace Wall on campus.

To learn more about this program, visit our district website at warwickvalleyschools.com/instruction-curriculum/academics/partners-in-education-pie-at-wvcisd

Here are some highlights from our schools this week:

Park Avenue Elementary School

During STEM, students in grades 2, 3, and 4 have been designing, creating, and testing pumpkin boats. Teams were given the criteria to design a boat that floats on water and holds as many plastic pumpkins as possible. They were constrained only by the materials they were given to use for this work (i.e. foil, popsicle sticks, straws, tape). Students used the engineering design process as guidance. They had many successful boat designs that held the maximum number of 12 pumpkins!

We celebrated National Fire Prevention Week. The Warwick Fire Department came to school and talked to the children about fire safety. They showed the children how to STOP! DROP! And ROLL! They also taught them the difference between a toy and a tool. They differentiated toys like stuffed animals or mini fire trucks vs. lighters and matches. Thank you Warwick Fire Department!

Sanfordville Elementary School

When life gives you apples, make...applesauce! Ms. Nyland's class did just that as they wrapped up their Apple Unit. She integrated apple sauce making into Writers Workshop as students learned how to use transition words in their writing. The students collaborated to plan and work together, used cooking tools, and followed a recipe to prepare applesauce. The students were excited to taste the applesauce when it was cooked!

Fourth grade students collaborated to show their creativity as they designed flower models and explained to their partners the process of pollination and fertilization. This was part of their Plant Unit. Students had a presentation about beekeeping by band teacher Mr. Muehlbauer. Students learned all about honey bees, pollination, and the steps bees go through to make honey. This fascinating presentation fits perfectly into their plant science unit. This certainly helped students grow as community citizens as they made real world connections to their learning.

The Warwick Fire Department visited Sanfordville students. Firefighters continued Safety Week last week. The students learned more about fire safety and saw the fire trucks up close and even used the fire hose! Some of the classes even saw how quickly our first responders react when responding to an emergency situation during their presentation. Thank you again to all of our firefighters for an awesome presentation and for always keeping us safe!

Warwick Valley Middle School

Our fifth grade Home and Careers students in Ms. Fox's class have been working on their introduction to the sewing unit. Students were working on developing their practical skills in sewing techniques. Students practiced sewing a "running stitch" by hand to create their Warwick Stuffies project.

In Ms. Mistler's sixth grade ELA class, students have been working on sentence types. Groups of four or five students analyzed simple sentences, compound sentences, and complex sentences. Students understood why it was critical to include different types of sentences in their writing.

Ms. Cronk's seventh grade Math Honors class has learned how to solve multi-step equations. In class, students completed an error analysis problem. Every student worked above and beyond by identifying where the error was in the previously completed problem and fixing it

We posted an article about the Student Senate at the middle school on our website this week. This program serves as a platform for student leaders to voice their ideas and concerns. This promotes a vibrant and inclusive school community. Elected by the student body, the Senate organizes events like Pink Out Day and charity drives for the community. It aims to develop skills in collaboration, communication, and ethical global citizenship among its members. This year's leadership includes eighth-graders Denis McAteer, Olivia Conklin, Lily Kalil, and Jadalynn Acosta. They aspire to make a positive impact on the school and encourage greater student involvement in clubs and activities.

Warwick Valley High School

Warwick Valley High School's National Honor Society students recently gathered for a transformative meeting focused on dissecting effective leadership. Divided into small groups, they embarked on a collective journey to define strong leader qualities.

Following the group discussion, students shared their insights, revealing both striking similarities and intriguing disparities in their definitions of leadership. The notice-and-wonder activity encouraged them to reflect on their peers' perspectives, fostering a deeper understanding of leadership's multifaceted nature.

Through this workshop, Warwick Valley High School NHS students recognized that leadership is not a one-size-fits-all concept. Instead it embodies a spectrum of qualities and approaches. Their willingness to explore diverse leadership styles and embrace a broad range of attributes demonstrates a profound understanding of leadership dynamics.

This week, we posted an article on our website about our in-house cosmetology program. The program at Warwick Valley High School is part of the district's commitment to fostering the qualities outlined in the Portrait of a Graduate. The program emphasizes collaboration, communication, and problem-solving skills. Through hands-on experience at Wildcuts Salon, a student-staffed facility open to the public, students gain cosmetology skills but also develop valuable life skills. The program offers diverse career pathways and allows students to accumulate work-based learning hours towards state licensing. Overall, it boosts student engagement and morale.

