

Weekly Column: EdTalk
Superintendent of Schools: Dr. David Leach
October 4, 2023

Warwick comes out for Homecoming like no other community. Whether we are on the field or court, in the stands or on the sidelines, in classrooms or along the parade route, we're all Wildcats!

This week, alumni are coming to visit and reconnect with friends. Teachers engage with students and their families. Seniors and underclassmen flash school pride. Even the elementary and middle schools participate.

To understand everything about Homecoming and all that it means to the students of Warwick and the community, please take a look at this production by our high school's Warwick Valley Television crew from last year's parade at <https://youtu.be/9y8vBVgCTJE>. Great work!

We appreciate our community. Without them and their donations of everything from cars and trucks, to flowers, to flatbeds to funding, this remarkable event would not be possible – and be so successful – every year. They show their school spirit, love for our students, and pride in the purple and gold.

At noon on Saturday, the Homecoming parade will roll down Main Street, complete with student-made floats. The floats – including those representing different classes and sports teams – have been planned for weeks and built this week in the Transportation Garage. They are excited to share their creations with you.

After Saturday's parade, the big football game against Wallkill will begin at 1:30 p.m. at the newly restored Warwick Valley High School C. Ashley Morgan Field. It will include pregame and half-time ceremonies.

A princess and prince will be chosen from the freshman, sophomore and junior classes along with a senior class queen and king. A coronation of the Homecoming Court will take place at the annual pep rally on Friday. Concluding Homecoming, is the traditional Homecoming Dance, which will be held in the high school gymnasium Saturday night from 6:30 to 9:30 p.m.

Homecoming festivities take place all five days of Spirit Week. This year's Spirit Week theme is Disney, with theme days where students dress up to match the theme:

Monday, Oct. 2: Ohana Day (dress in Hawaiian clothes).

Tuesday, Oct. 3: Epic Tuesday (dress as your favorite Marvel, Star Wars or sci-fi Disney character).

Wednesday, Oct. 4: Sleeping Beauty vs. Cinderella (casual vs. formal dress attire).

Thursday, Oct. 5: Walt Disney Day (dress as your favorite Disney character).

Friday, Oct. 6: Tangled Colors (dress in purple and gold).

Lastly, I would like to share how research continually shows how a student's school spirit reflects in their academic achievements. Yes, more often than not, those with school spirit are high achievers in school. Another great reason to have school spirit!

And we certainly have it here in Warwick.

See you at the parade and game. Go Wildcats!

Here are some highlights from our schools this week:

Park Avenue Elementary School

On September 28th our Student Council held its annual board elections. Each student was asked to stand up, introduce themselves, and explain why they would make an ideal candidate. Club Advisors Amy Buliung and Theresa Canfield shared, “As students listened to each other, we observed the room and noticed the students were so respectful and genuinely wanted to hear what each person had to say. As each student finished speaking the whole room clapped and cheered for them. It was so wonderful to see and we want to share that with everyone.”

Congratulations to the following students: President Sabina Fasano, Vice President Isaac Spicehandler, Media Coordinator James Chavez Carey, Secretary Aaron Scalo, Treasurer Maeve McVeigh, Historian Reese Roecker, PTA Rep Maddie Maybeck, Fourth Grade Rep Lochlann Mezzetti, Third Grade Rep Claire Stough, Second Grade Rep Madeleine McDermott, First Grade Rep Sofia D’Agnese, Kindergarten Rep Camden Frederick, and Specials Rep Elizabeth Crispino.

The Park Avenue Student Council jumped right into its service-oriented mission by supporting the school during each Back to School Night. Members sacrificed their time each evening to escort visiting parents to the gym for the initial “Welcome Meeting” and to the respective classrooms. Thank you to our Student Council!

We are excited to announce Park Avenue's new school newspaper club, The Paw Print. Students will highlight learning that takes place in our classrooms, different school-wide events, and community news. The club is open to third and fourth grade students and meets before school on Thursdays. Students with a passion and interest in writing and reporting are encouraged to apply. Some of the different jobs include reporter, editor, photographer, columnist, typist, and many more. Those interested in applying should complete and return the application to their teacher by Friday, October 13. Space is limited to 12 students. Thank you to Club Advisors Krystie Gilmore and Ashley McPherson for taking on this responsibility and creating a wonderful opportunity for our students!

Sanfordville Elementary School

Lorna Nyland's class is learning about apples and predictions. They predicted whether the whole apple, half of an apple, quarter of an apple, and the apple seeds would sink or float in a bucket of water. Students circled their predictions, then placed the apples and seeds in the water and found out what actually happened to each one. This class of innovators talked about how the seeds surprised us when they sank to the bottom and all the other apple pieces floated in the water.

In Casey Besimer’s STEM class, second grade students from Maureen Nelsen’s class collaborated to build a deserted island using LEGO bricks. They represented sand, grass, trees, and rocks. When disasters hit, students needed to brainstorm ideas to improve their design. They needed to focus on needs such as

food, protection, and rescue. They collaborated by communicating ideas and sharing responsibilities for the build.

Thank you to the Sanfordville PTA for the purchase and installation of our two newly installed adjustable basketball hoops! The hoops can be lowered to a level where our newer basketball players may be met with many buckets, while at the same time they can be raised to provide our more experienced basketball players with the opportunity to continually challenge themselves and improve upon their basketball skills during recess. We are sure that they will get much use throughout the school year!

Warwick Valley Middle School

Middle school is a pivotal time in a student's life, marked by newfound independence and personal growth. At our middle school, the Student Senate plays a significant role in fostering this growth, allowing students to actively engage in the decision-making process that shapes their school experience. Recently, we witnessed an exciting and democratic event – the Student Senate elections. The candidates possess the characteristics of a Portrait of a Graduate.

Every year, students in our middle school can participate in the democratic process by running for a position on the Student Senate. This process is designed to mirror real-world elections and instill civic responsibility in our students.

The recent elections were no exception. Candidates presented their ideas and platforms to their peers through speeches and via recorded videos shown in all of our classrooms. The students were eager to hear what each candidate had to offer and what they planned to bring to the Senate.

Campaign week was filled with enthusiasm and creative campaigning. The candidates displayed their artistic flair by designing colorful posters, delivering persuasive speeches, and engaging in meaningful conversations with their fellow students. It was evident that the candidates had thought deeply about how they could contribute to our school community. They had a passion for making a positive impact

After four days of open voting via Google Forms 769 responses were recorded and our winners were announced.

President – Denis McAteer

Vice President – Olivia Conklin

Secretary – Lily Kalil

Treasurer – Jadalynn Acosta

Warwick Valley High School

Warwick Valley High School's Club Fair was a bustling and vibrant event that brought the student body together to explore our extracurricular activities. With an impressive 45 clubs on display, it was a testament to our commitment to fostering well-rounded individuals and providing a platform for students to pursue their passions and interests beyond the classroom.

The club fair took place in our gymnasium, which was transformed into a colorful and energetic showcase of student-driven initiatives. Each club had its own booth adorned with posters, flyers, and enthusiastic members eager to share their club's mission and activities with their peers.

Walking through the fair, it was clear that there was something for everyone. Regardless of your interests, students could find something to peak their interest. Beyond the fun and camaraderie, participation in these clubs often translates into valuable life skills, leadership opportunities, and a sense of belonging. The club fair was a testament to our dedication to nurturing our students' talents and passions, preparing them for a bright and promising future.