

REGION

SCHOOL DISTRICT

Cornwall



Kent



Canaan/Falls Village



Housatonic Valley Regional High School



North Canaan



Salisbury



Sharon



We Are Region One

REGIONAL SCHOOLS SERVICE CENTER (RSSC)

Melony Brady-Shanley, Superintendent



Jeanine Rose, Assistant SUPERINTENDENT

MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT



During the month of January, all Region 1 Schools administered School Climate Surveys. We are proud to report that 1,638 families, staff members, and students participated, providing valuable feedback about their experiences within our schools.

As we move into February, our School Climate Committees will be reviewing the survey data to identify key areas of strength and opportunities for growth. These committees will prepare presentations to share with all stakeholders, ensuring transparency and collaboration in our efforts to enhance our school environments.

During the month of March, all schools will post their reports and share them with their respective stakeholders. Additionally, the data will guide the development of professional learning opportunities for the remainder of 2025 and the 2025-2026 school years.

We appreciate the engagement and commitment of our school community in this process. Your insights are instrumental in fostering a positive and supportive learning environment for all students. We look forward to sharing our findings and



MESSAGE FROM THE ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT

This month I want to highlight the development of our new curriculum website, with full and transparent access to all of our core content curriculum. Rubicon Atlas is a powerful platform that supports curriculum consistency and alignment across all Region One schools.

Families can now easily explore curriculum details by visiting the Region One website and selecting Assistant Superintendent (<https://region1schools.org/assistant-superintendent/>) from the department drop-down menu. Currently, all K-8 ELA/Humanities, reading, and math curricula are available, with Character Strong implementation underway. Science (OpenSciEd) is also in place in the classroom and will soon be fully entered into the platform.



Families will have access to:

- Scope & Sequence of instructional units
- Standards & Learning Targets (if available)
- Essential Questions & Enduring Understandings
- Content, Skills, and Vocabulary

We are committed to ensuring that families and educators have the resources they need to support student learning. I encourage you to explore the webpage and stay engaged in your child's educational journey!

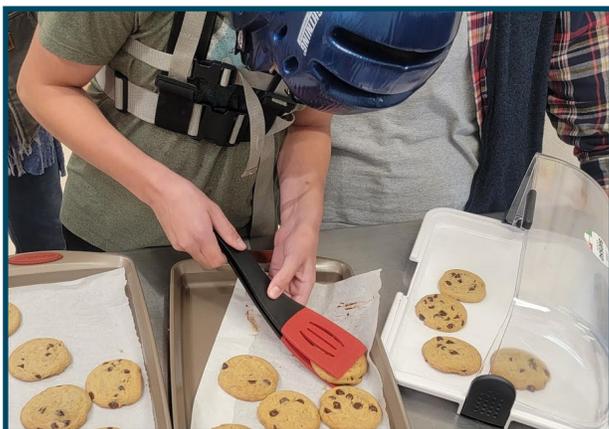
MESSAGE FROM DIRECTOR PUPIL SERVICES

- Rebecca Gaschel-Clark

This year, thanks to a grant from the **21st Century Fund for HVRHS**, the Special Ed department has launched a student-run school store in Housatonic Valley Regional High school (HVRHS).

The **Housy Shack** has become an integral part of our transition program; students in the program are developing essential work readiness skills. They actively manage the store's day-to-day operations including customer service, inventory management, purchasing, & financial tracking.

The store offers snacks, beverages, school supplies, and novelty items. It has been met with great enthusiasm. We are so grateful to faculty members Julie Browning and Heather Strid for making this happen.



<u>Item/s Purchased</u>	<u>Where Purchased</u>	<u>Amount Cost</u>	<u>Remaining</u>
School Store / 21st Centruy Grant			\$ 1,100.00
Snacks, Chips Drinks, Jerky	Costco/Online	\$181.48	\$ 918.52
Whole Grain frozen Cookies, & Flavored Chips	Webstruant Store	\$295.09	\$ 623.43
Cookie Serving Paper, Cookie Serving Bags	Walmart	\$19.44	\$ 603.99
Register tape for register	Amazon	\$36.44	\$ 567.55
Job responsibility posters	Amazon	\$13.80	\$ 553.75

MESSAGE FROM BUSINESS MANAGER

- [Sam Herrick](#)



(860-824-0855 x1303)

Earlier this month, my assistant, [Sara Woloszyn](#), and I took on the challenge of creating a six-minute video to explain the Region 1 School Budget. Topics in the video include the development process; calculations of the six member town allocations; presentation of budget documentation to the community; the region-wide referendum; and an example of how the State of CT monitors the Region 1 budget. The video is on the [Budget page](#) of the Region 1 website.



(860-824-0855 x1307)

Because the budgeting process is a multi-tiered procedure that affects all of us, most importantly Region 1 students, we encourage you to watch it. Please feel free to reach out to us if you have any questions on the Region 1 Budget—sherrick@region1schools.org or swoloszyn@region1schools.org.

The Budget video is the second video in the *Region 1 Behind the Scenes* series being produced by Region 1 and Pig Iron Films. Future videos in the series will cover curriculum, HVRHS, and registration. The first video on closings and delays was released this past fall.

Region 1 Middle School and HVRHS Athletics

The winter sports season has been an exciting one for Region One student-athletes, with a series of events highlighting both competition and community support.



Ahead of the highly anticipated Rival Night games against Lakeview, members of the Regional Middle School Basketball program had the opportunity to join the varsity teams on the court for introductions. The evening also featured a meaningful cause, as fans were encouraged to wear pink in support of "Shoot for the Cure," a breast cancer awareness campaign.



Adding to the energy of the season, Housatonic has welcomed back its cheerleading team. Coached by Melissa Colman, the squad has been delivering spirited sideline cheers and tumbling routines during both girls' and boys' varsity basketball games.



Meanwhile, the swim team received a generous gift, as an anonymous donor gifted personalized swim parkas to its athletes, providing both warmth and a boost in team spirit.



Capstone Projects at HVRHS are "passion projects" that allow students to explore an area of interest in greater depth, resulting in a product that demonstrates a richer understanding of a skill, career, or interest. It is presented to the community in their senior year. Now in its third iteration, students have benefited from the inspiration of those who came before them and have developed more ambitious and interesting projects, all of which reflect the skills of our Portrait of a Graduate: communication; problem-solving; self-advocacy; confidence; and global and environmental citizenship. In addition to their Capstone teachers, students work with technical advisors to explore their topic and develop a presentation that reflects their growth. Projects can be portfolios about music production, acting, or art, and can be used to apply to college. One student used the opportunity to explore her interest in religion by attending worship services for four or five religions and sharing her reflections and observations from those services. *(Continued on page 19)*

The **Science of Reading** is a vast, interdisciplinary body of scientifically-based research about reading and issues related to how students learn to read, write, and spell. The Science of Reading has amassed data-based evidence on how proficient readers and writers develop and where others struggle. It helps teachers effectively assess, teach, develop, and utilize individualized intervention plans based upon this evidence.

Region One K-8 schools now use data-driven assessment information and explicit personalized instruction plans to help students develop proficiency. The initial results are very promising.



THE HOUSATONIC VALLEY REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL ACADEMIC BOWL TEAM

Now in its 30th season, recently finished first in Connecticut, first in New England, and 31st in the country out of 400 teams in the national 30-20-10 event. This virtual competition, hosted by the Long Island Quiz Bowl Alliance, challenges students with 240 questions from a wide array of academic subjects. Questions are presented as "triads," with 30 points awarded for a correct answer on the most difficult clue, 20 points for the moderate level, and 10 points for the easiest.

Competing for the team were seniors Daniela Brennan, Leahy Galvin, Sara Huber, Katelin Lopes, Manny Matsudaira, Tess Marks, Lola Moerschell, and Ellie Wolgemuth; sophomores Jonas Johnson and Danny Lesch, and freshman Bridger Rinehart. The Mountaineer squad also finished first in Connecticut in the Knowledge Masters Open held in October. The team is coached by social studies teacher Pete Vermilyea.

CORNWALL CONSOLIDATED SCHOOL



Leanne Maguire, PRINCIPAL

WINTER CONCERTS

- Alicia Simonetti-Shpur

The CCS school concert for K-4th grade was a celebration of unity, and the power of music to bring us together. From the moment the first notes were played, the theme "We Are One" resonated throughout the entire event. The songs, chosen for their uplifting messages, reflected the core belief that music transcends all boundaries and helps us understand and appreciate each other.

The concert theme, "A World of Music," resonated through each song; the students encouraged the audience to envision a harmonious world where everyone stands side by side, creating something beautiful together. Through music, the children painted a picture of a world where differences are celebrated, and music is the common language that connects us.

The concert was a remarkable showcase of the incredible talents and big hearts of our youngest students. They not only displayed their musical abilities but also conveyed a powerful message: that music is more than just sound; it's a bridge. Whether through shared melodies, harmonies, or lyrics, the children proved that music transcends barriers.

"One world, one voice, one world of song. One world, one voice, we all belong. Music is part of everyone." In a world that can sometimes feel divided, the concert was a reminder that when we come together through song, we can connect, unite, and create a world of harmony.

AUDUBON FIELD TRIP

- Kirsten Gray and Shannon Dieck



Last November, 1st and 2nd graders had a field trip to the Sharon Audubon Center, where they immersed themselves in the world of animals and nature. The students learned about animal adaptations, habitats, and behaviors through hands-on experiences with a variety of critters.

From turtles and snakes to birds and even cockroaches, the children had a chance to see and touch a wide range of animals. They discovered how animals are uniquely equipped to survive in their environments, learning about features like special diets and protective behaviors. It was wonderful to see the students so engaged. There's nothing like petting a live cockroach to really drive home the idea of animal adaptations!

This engaging trip provided students with a deeper understanding and appreciation of wildlife. It was a memorable and educational experience that aligned with some of our own classroom learning about plants and animals and their habitats. It was so exciting to see the students making their own connections to what they had already learned. Touching and interacting with these animals made the lessons come to life in a whole new way. It was a day full of discovery that helped reinforce students' appreciation for the fascinating world of nature. The trip provided a real-world opportunity to observe and interact with animals connected to what they were studying in class.

OCEAN OF POSSIBILITIES

- Susana Martinez-Bauer

Our CCS artists (K-8) have done an amazing job creating an incredible Ocean Animal (Day & Night) theme collaboration for their Winter Art Show. Each grade was assigned a specific sea creature, and they used their artistic skills and applied various techniques to beautifully represent these creatures.

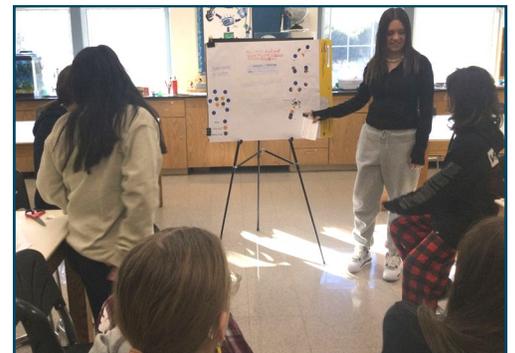
The show was viewed in daylight to admire the attention to detail in each work of art as well as the incredible artist's statements that were written by our middle schoolers. Then, we had a "Night" viewing with the help of blacklights so that students, staff, and families could see the attention to detail and design that our artists added with glow in the dark and fluorescent paints and markers. We had creative and colorful fish, crabs, electric eels, starfish, octopi, jellyfish, sea turtles, seahorses and large-scale shark sculptures that helped create a wonderful and unified Ocean of Possibilities. Many families enjoyed the artwork so much that they viewed the show more than once. These works of art are currently displayed throughout our school so that we can admire what a wonderful collaboration our students made.



A COMMUNITY OF LEARNERS

- Joe Markow

This year's theme, "We are One," speaks to our science students to honor each other as members of a community of learners whose success is dependent on each other. Through talk circles and the sharing of ideas, students generate creative solutions to problems, a bank of observations and evidence to back their individual claims and build their own ideas off the seeds of ideas presented by their peers. For this to succeed, a teacher must help students find the balance between competition and collaboration; individual achievement and teamwork; and self-driven motivation versus contribution to a society. One of the ways we teach this is through conversation norms which provide the foundation with which we can build our community of learners.



RESPECTFUL: Our classroom is a safe space to share. We provide each other with support and encouragement. We share our time to talk. We do this by giving others time to think and share. We critique the ideas we are working with but not the people we are working with.

EQUITABLE: Everyone's participation and ideas are valuable. We monitor our own time spent talking. We encourage others' voices who we have not heard from yet. We recognize and value that people think, share, and represent their ideas in different ways.

COMMITTED TO OUR COMMUNITY: We learn together. We come prepared to work toward a common goal. We share our thinking to help us all learn. We listen carefully and ask questions to help us understand everyone's ideas. We speak clearly and loud enough so everyone can hear.

MOVING OUR SCIENCE THINKING FORWARD: We work together to figure things out. We use and build on others' ideas. We use evidence to support our ideas, ask for evidence from others, and suggest ways to get additional evidence. We are open to changing our minds. We challenge ourselves to think in new ways.

RESPONSIBLE CITIZENSHIP

- Amanda Forbes

First grade students have been learning about communities and what it means to be a responsible citizen. Responsible citizens are honest; show respect for their community; are stewards of the Earth and help to keep it safe and clean; and work to help others. Being a Responsible Citizen further illustrated the importance of following rules and making good decisions that may impact the community, including the responsibility of voting.

We read stories that helped deepen the students understanding of this topic. In *Hello, Community Garden*, community members transformed a vacant lot into a garden where the neighborhood could share its fruits - and vegetables! We also visited Kent's community garden located behind our school.

Students learned about historical people who made important contributions to society. Sequoyah, who created the Cherokee alphabet so their folklore could be passed on in writing. Frederick Douglass, who began the Civil Rights movement in the late 1800's. Helen Keller, whose perseverance opened a new world for the deaf and blind. And Cesar Chavez, who created a union for farm workers that changed the face of the American workforce. These heroes inspire us and help us examine how we can be more responsible citizens.

Kent's Resident Troopers, Vicky Donohoe and Stephanie Cortes, visited our class and introduced us to Trey the therapy dog. Trey taught students that mental health is an integral part of a thriving community, and that connections made between humans and animals can have a positive impact in every aspect of community life.



ANIMAL ADAPTATIONS AT TREVOR ZOO

- Brittany Barrett and Biz Bernard



In a hands-on learning experience that brought their classroom studies to life, third-graders visited the Trevor Zoo in Millbrook, NY. This annual trip is designed to complement the students' science curriculum and their English Language Arts (ELA) unit on Animal Adaptations. Leading up to the visit, students explored how various animals have adapted to survive in their environments. From reading and writing about the thick fur of arctic animals to studying the swift movements of predators, the unit provided a foundation of knowledge about the remarkable ways animals thrive in their habitats.

The Trevor Zoo trip gave students an exciting opportunity to see these adaptations firsthand. Students explored exhibits of a lynx, red wolves, an arctic fox, emus, bearded dragons, and more.

The Zoo is known for its commitment to conservation and education, providing an ideal setting for the students to deepen their understanding of animal adaptations. Zoo educators share fascinating insights about the animals' behaviors and habitats.

An 8th Grade Literary Journey

- Betsy Morrow



During weekly library classes, eighth graders have examined *Goldilocks and the Three Bears*. Students first read two modern versions of Goldilocks; then they read *A Chair for Baby Bear* by Kaye Umansky. Next, the students explored the original, *The Story of the Three Bears*, written and illustrated in 1831 by Eleanor Mure. Finally, students read eight fractured versions of Goldilocks.

A fractured fairy tale is a retelling of a popular tale but with changes to the characters or setting to make the reader laugh. Most students selected Mo Willems', *Goldilocks and the Three Dinosaurs*, as their favorite. Several students selected Jan Brett's, *The Three Snow Bears*, as their favorite. The remaining students selected Marilyn Tolhurst's, *Somebody and the Three Blairs*, or Diane Stanley's, *Goldie: and the Three Bears*. Students selected their favorites and confidently supported their choices.

Throughout the unit, students participated in class discussions, reflected on the differences between the modern and original versions, and defended their opinions about their favorite fractured versions. Class discussions revolved around how the students interpreted the tale through the lens of being teenagers rather than young elementary school students. This literary journey gave students an understanding of how stories evolve and how literature connects to us as we grow and change.

KCS Create-A-Thon

- Cindy Willson

During parent/teacher conferences in October, the Kent Center School Student Council raised money for Cactus Cancer by selling cacti and asking the KCS community to participate in a 26-Day Create-A-Thon. The student council asked parents to support our classrooms by making a pledge. Participating in our own Create-A-Thon allowed KCS to help strengthen the young adult cancer community by raising awareness and crucial funds for Cactus Cancer's creative coping programs. Cactus Cancer is an organization that provides a safe space where young adults facing cancer can connect, cope and foster meaningful relationships with one another in an online community.



Their mission is to end isolation for young adults dealing with the disease. Some of the activities that different classrooms participated in were playing a 'happy' song at the start of each school day, doodling, spreading kindness, meditation, and the list goes on. In Grade 4, students created 26 paintings on canvas. The paintings were given to Morning Star, a residential care home, to spread some holiday cheer. The students loved the opportunity to display their artistic talents and bring some happiness to others.

KINDERGARTENERS NAME TOWN SNOWPLOWS

- Stacy Calo

Lee H. Kellogg School's kindergartners took on an exciting challenge to name the town's four snowplows. Spearheaded by their teacher, Miss Nichols, and supported by First Selectman Dave Barger, the project offered a hands-on learning experience that engaged students while fostering local connections; reinforcing the notion that we are all one community.

The young learners dove into their task by studying snowplows through books and discussions, discovering their importance in keeping the community safe during winter storms. They also applied their geometry skills by creating models of their own snowplows. The grand finale was a democratic process where the students voted on names for the vehicles. The winning names—Snowy the Snowplow, The Ice Demolisher, The Blizzard Buster, and The Snow Breaker—captured the students' creativity and enthusiasm.

As a special surprise, members of the Falls Village Town Roads Crew visited the school with their snowplows, giving the children a chance to see their named machines up close. The visit allowed students to connect their learning to the real world and appreciate the vital work of local heroes who ensure the roads are safe during winter weather.



WINTER CAROLING

- Christine Dascanio



The holiday season at Lee H. Kellogg School was marked by a cherished tradition as the entire school ventured around Falls Village to spread holiday cheer through caroling. On the day before the long winter break, students and staff gathered to bring smiles to the community by visiting local businesses and homes of their classmates. It was a delightful sight to see neighbors come outside to listen, and the students eagerly stopped to sing festive songs, creating joyful memories for everyone involved.

Among the highlights of the day were the visits to some of Kellogg's traditional caroling stops, including Jacob's Garage and the Hunt Library. These familiar places welcomed the students with warmth and gratitude, reflecting the strong sense of community in Falls Village.

NORTH CANAAN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

BETH JOHNSON, PRINCIPAL



ALLISON CURTISS, Assistant PRINCIPAL

WINTER OLYMPICS

- Sarah Ponkos

The excitement is palpable the day before winter break as students anticipate the long holiday vacation. This is especially true for NCES Middle school students, who are waiting for the Winter Olympics to begin; a NCES tradition since 2022. Students participate in games and activities competing for bragging rights and the coveted Winter Olympics Trophy. They hustle to wrap packages as fast as possible, create beautiful and festive snowmen, and answer trivia questions based on holiday movies. A festive way to kick-off the holiday break.



Students were asked to share their experiences in these festive games.

Lexi Petkovich, Grade 8: "This was my 3rd and final time to participate in the Winter Olympics. Ever since 6th grade, I look forward to this day every year. Some of the events in this tradition include a wrapping contest, holiday trivia, present toss, snowman building challenge, and many other fun activities. The competitive aspect of the games keeps students thrilled and entertained for hours. My favorite part of the Olympics is that teachers are not allowed to help the students which forces students to work together and promotes teamwork in the best way possible."

Henry Perotti, Grade 7: "Every year before winter break, our school hosts the Winter Olympics, a series of exciting challenges where the 5th, 6th, 7th, and 8th grades face off in an enthusiastic competition. The games are all about teamwork, strategy, and pushing yourself to do your best. As a group, you'll tackle tasks like answering trivia questions, wrapping boxes, building snowmen, and other fun activities. The faster and better your team completes each challenge, the more points your grade earns. The grade with the highest score at the end of the day claims victory, a handmade trophy for one lucky class and, of course, the best prize, bragging rights."

Finley Lemon, Grade 6: "The Winter Olympics was a fun chance for middle schoolers to have fun, learn good sportsmanship, and be competitive. We did a lot of exciting and fun things. To start we built snowmen with supplies our groups brought from home. For the base people used cardboard boxes, foam balls, and pillows. We did present wrapping where two grades would be timed and judged on decoration and how well they were wrapped. The last thing we did was Christmas movie trivia, which is based on questions about popular or original Christmas movies."

NATURE'S CLASSROOM

- Renee Fleming



This past October 6th grade students embarked on an unforgettable adventure to Nature's Classroom. The students were buzzing with excitement as they anticipated the unique experiences that awaited them. Over the course of the week, they participated in a variety of hands-on, team-building activities that brought learning to life. One highlight was TNL (Thursday Night Live), where they worked together to create hilarious and creative skits to perform for the group. They also designed and launched rockets powered by pressurized water, filling the air with laughter and cheers as their creations soared. Science came alive through activities like a shark dissection, where students explored body systems, and bridge-building challenges that tested their engineering skills. They even faced the ultimate test of creativity and care as they worked to protect their "egg" babies from environmental dangers. The students embraced the outdoors during a night hike, learning how nocturnal animals hunt and survive in the dark, and capped it all off with a classic campfire sing-along, complete with gooey s'mores. By the end of the week, the 6th graders were exhilarated, exhausted, and full of memories they will treasure forever.

REGION 1 ART STUDENTS FUND

- Linda Peppe, Scholarship Chair

The Arts Fund for Region 1 has been in existence since 1992. At that time, a group of likeminded individuals joined forces to create a non-profit fund with the mission of enhancing and supporting Region 1 students in their pursuit of arts experiences. It brings diverse programming to students, and creates bridges between schools, artists, teachers, and our community.

Each year, the Arts Fund underwrites the Fourth Grade Arts Day for all the fourth-grade students in Region 1; the students meet for a day of workshops, main stage performances, and unique artistic experiences. In addition, The Fund supports a third-grade field trip to Music Mountain where students are entertained by musicians who perform a variety of music from jazz to classical. In addition, the Susan Fillman Memorial Scholarship for the Arts which provides money for K-12th grade students to pursue their love of the arts during the summer months.



The Arts Fund also offers grants for artistic programming; students in grades 1-4 were able to attend a live performance of *My Father's Dragon* this fall at the Mahaiwe Performing Arts Center thanks to a grant from The Arts Fund. The Fund supported the purchase of art supplies for Art Therapy in Region 1 schools as well as supporting a Performing Arts Camp for Region 1 students at the Sharon Playhouse. To donate or apply for a grant to study art during the summer, visit berkshiretaconic.org. Applications are due May 1, 2025.

WHAT DOES AN INTERVENTIONIST DO?

- Erin Mathews

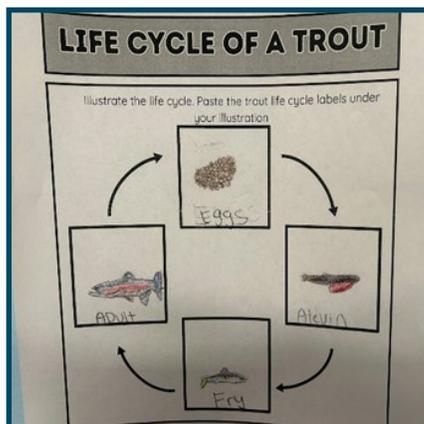
I am so pleased to join SCS as a middle school interventionist. This is my 24th year teaching, and I am excited to share my passion for using data to increase student achievement.

You may have heard intervention talked about in terms of tiers. Tiered intervention is designed to provide varying levels of support to students based on their individual needs. The first tier consists of universal interventions that benefit all students, such as high-quality classroom instruction and effective curricular resources. As students' progress through the tiers, the interventions become more targeted and intensive, focusing on those who require additional support. For example, Tier 2 may involve small group interventions for students who are struggling, while Tier 3 provides individualized support for students with significant challenges.

The purpose of tiered intervention is to ensure that all students have access to the necessary resources to succeed academically and emotionally; therefore, it is imperative that groups are carefully formed, and goals are identified. To do this, we use data teams to collaborate and assess student progress to determine appropriate interventions for students needing them. I use progress monitoring to ensure that students make necessary gains and adjust plans as needed. Ultimately, the goal of intervention is to close achievement gaps and support the development of each student.

WHAT'S NEW IN FIFTH GRADE?

- Jennifer Mitchell and Jenni Hill



Trout in the Classroom: This year, the fifth grade at Salisbury Central is participating in the *Trout in the Classroom* program. This program allows a hands-on experience for students to learn about the ecology and biology of our area. After preparing the tank, we anxiously awaited our Brown Trout eggs' arrival. After winter break, they arrived! They are in their basket which is attached to the tank until they start to grow. We have learned about the trout's life cycle and are eagerly awaiting their growth so they can swim freely in the tank. In the spring, we will release them to Factory Pond in Lakeville.

Skiing at Mohawk: Fifth grade began the SCS ski program at Mohawk Mountain on January 7th. This 5-week program allows students to learn how to ski or snowboard with a one-hour lesson from a Mohawk instructor. After the lesson, they then have time to practice what they learned while skiing with their friends and chaperones. We have had so much fun already. There is nothing like being in the great outdoors while learning new skills with friends!



STUDENT LEADERSHIP GROUP

- Raydin Neary and Jen Segalla



Our 7th and 8th grade student leadership group has been making a tremendous impact on our school and community this year. Their dedication, creativity, and hard work have contributed to a variety of initiatives and events that benefit students of all ages. The group launched a new program in the elementary school to recognize and celebrate star students, promoting our STAR (Portrait of a Graduate) attributes among younger students.

Student Leadership donated funds for The Wild Robot field trip and supported the PTO by volunteering at the Fall Festival and helping with the Scholastic Book Fair.

Also, the group's initiatives included donating \$500 in books to the Bookmobile promoting literacy and putting books into the hands of children, raising funds for new middle school recess equipment, painting staff parking spaces and organizing a candy collection for the annual "reverse trick-or-treat" event in Lakeville. They also planned and hosted the Family Snow Ball, a festive event that brought families together, and contributed \$250 to the Faculty Holiday Party to give back to the hard-working staff.

Looking ahead, the student leadership group is excited to partner with the PTO to assist at JumpFest and will run a silent auction during our March Student Led Conferences. We're proud of their hard work and the positive impact they're making in our school and community!

STEAM WEEK

- Kat Bucceri, Sarah Freund and Taylor Hurley

November 12th marked the start of an exciting STEAM Week at SCS, where students eagerly participated in activities celebrating science, technology, engineering, art, and mathematics. One highlight was a school-wide game of STEAMO, challenging classes to work together and solve grade-level math equations. Students also practiced their estimation skills with interactive jars and created a bulletin board on symmetry in nature, blending artistic and mathematical creativity.

The week concluded with the Connecticut Science Center, who delivered engaging demonstrations on the science of bubbles and the power of extreme air. STEAM Week was a wonderful celebration of curiosity, creativity, and collaboration.



Bridges & Brownies Family Math Night: As part of STEAM Week, SCS hosted the first *Bridges & Brownies Family Math Night* with the goal of building community, fostering a sense of belonging by cultivating a positive math identity, practicing math skills through workplace games, and having fun while enjoying a brownie. 172 students, parents, and community members RSVP'd to the event, which was well attended and enjoyed by all.

The event began with a brief presentation to familiarize families with the *Bridges* and *Illustrative* programs implemented at SCS and throughout Region 1, followed by time for families to experience firsthand how workplace games allow students to have hands-on practice with math skills.

WE ARE ONE, REGION ONE!

The months may be getting colder, but our students' hearts are filled with warmth. There have been so many activities at Sharon Center School that have brought our primary and middle school students together to further build our bonds. They have learned about traditions, their community, different cultures, and always having fun along the way.



Our Kindergarten class hosted a Friendsgiving where they ate the same dinner as the characters in "A Charlie Brown Thanksgiving", discussed what they all did with their families and designed their own tablecloth.



First and second grade enjoyed a wonderful presentation from the Connecticut museum of culture and history. The students learned about their community and what their role in the community is which aligns with the Benchmark curriculum being studied.



The students tried out different jobs done in the communities today and long ago. They loved using all of the different contemporary and historical objects. They also designed their own town and what their community needs on a giant floor map.



Our EK, fourth and fifth grade students enjoyed making holiday cards for our local firehouse. This is a project that our school does yearly and it was so much fun doing them all together. They drew pictures together and had so much fun collaborating on such an important project.



Middle school students were very busy this Winter and learned about contact forces in Science and had to design, build, test and revise a prototype cell phone case using the parameters of this STEM challenge. Some students tried creating themed and attractive cases that others would want to use.



In Humanities, students are making connections between recent protests in Iran, the Afghan War, Arab Spring, and the Egyptian Revolution. In addition, the students are participating in book clubs to develop their understanding of how we can learn about culture through story. Students read with peers, the teacher, and with streaming audio from various resources.

In Math, the students now have access to a new and exciting tool called Reflex Math. It is an online, game-based program that helps students build and recall math facts fast and with a little fun. In STEM, the children created parade floats, learned how to code a parade route, and also completed blueprints for tiny homes to construct.

Sharon Center students have been engaging in activities with our CharacterStrong traits of gratitude, empathy, and perseverance. They have written letters of thanks to faculty and staff members, comforted their peers when they have had hard days, and persevered through schedule changes from weather. We are so proud of our students!

HOUSATONIC VALLEY REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL

IAN STREVER, PRINCIPAL

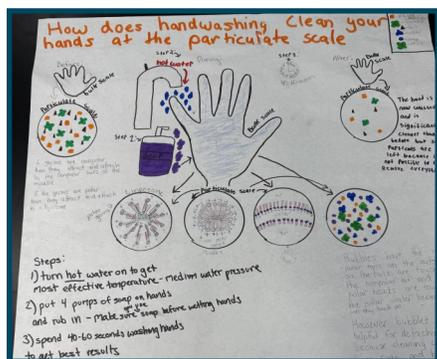
REGION
SCHOOL DISTRICT

STEVEN SCHIBI, Assistant PRINCIPAL

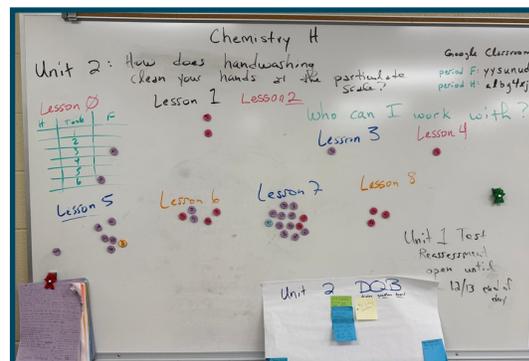
AG SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY Out-of-District/State Applications due May 1st.
CONTACT Sara Jack at sjack@hvrhs.org for information and applications.

THE SCIENCE OF HANDWASHING

- Kurt Johnson



Honors Chemistry studied a very relevant topic for this time of year: handwashing. Students worked together to develop a question that captured their "wonders" about the topic. They wanted to understand how handwashing works. Their question, "How does handwashing clean your hands at

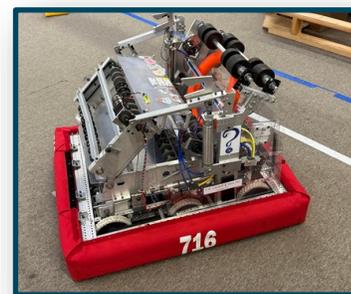


the particulate level?," drove them to study the impact of several variables on the effectiveness of handwashing practices, and microscopes allowed them to examine the results of various practices. Students acquired and applied the vocabulary of science to communicate their understanding of everything they had learned. The tracking board allowed them to work independently at different parts of the unit, and it facilitated flexible, self-selected groupings.

Spotlight on 716 Robotics: The Who's CTEKS

- Michael Ellington

716 Robotics, also known as The Who's CTEKS, has been inspiring students since its inception in 2001. Founded by two dedicated Housatonic Valley Regional High School (HVRHS) teachers, David Lyndsay and Dr. Thomas Schindler, the team has proudly competed for 25 years, often earning the opportunity to participate in District and even World Championships.

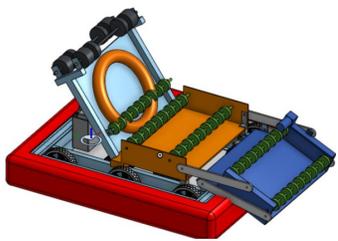


The impact of 716 Robotics extends far beyond competition. Many alumni have been awarded prestigious robotics and science scholarships, with numerous graduates pursuing successful careers in engineering. Some have even founded their own companies. For those who ventured into non-engineering fields, the skills learned in robotics—such as teamwork, problem-solving, and time management—have proven invaluable in their professional lives.

While the program is demanding, it is equally rewarding, offering students a unique chance to develop critical skills and foster a passion for innovation. However, the team's continued success relies on community support. There is a pressing need for mentors, both with and without STEM expertise, to guide and inspire the next generation of innovators. Additionally, donations are greatly appreciated to help cover the significant costs associated with running the program.

716 Robotics is more than just a team; it's a pathway to opportunity and growth. Join us in supporting this incredible program as we continue to shape future leaders and innovators.

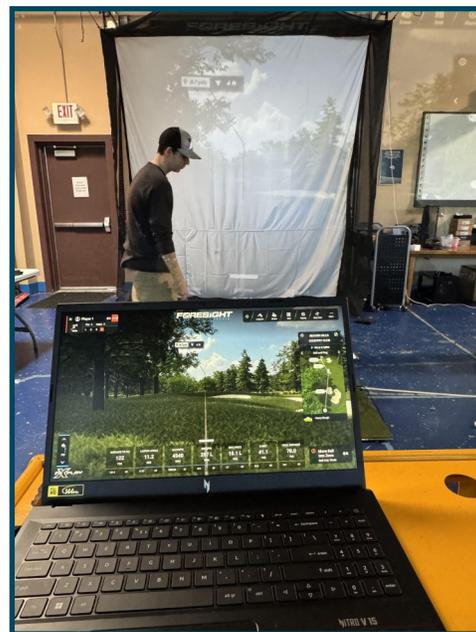
CAPSTONE PROJECTS (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5)



Jassim Mohydin: My project's goal was to learn how to use CAD (Computer Aided Design) in the field of robotics with the high school robotics program. Using the CAD software, Onshape, I was able to reverse engineer last year's robot through the use of online learning tools and Youtube. After learning how to use the program and feeling much more confident in my CAD skills, I was able to apply the new knowledge to this year's robotics competition to help me prototype the new designs for a new challenge.

Jake Bosio: For my capstone project, I installed a Golfing Simulator in the STC. There were many issues or problems that I faced and had to persevere. First, I had to write a grant application to the Athletic Fund for the money to buy the equipment. After ordering the simulator the issues really started. Once the boxes came in, I discovered the company did not send crucial parts to get the sim up and running.

After many emails and phone calls, they finally sent the part we needed one week before it had to be fully installed. So, myself and other teachers that assisted me, swiftly put the simulator up, only to realize the screen was too short so we had to extend that with sewing. Then, on top of that, I needed a launch key to access the software to use the sim itself, which I sadly couldn't get until after my presentation. Now, after the presentation, I have all the things I needed for the sim, and there is a golf simulator at Housatonic!



Diana Portillo: My project is called the Friendship Bracelet Game Exchange and basically while I was first brainstorming a project, I wanted to do something I was passionate about while also involving the values we cherish here at HVRHS. I have always been big on sports, whether it's playing or watching them, and over my high school career I have gotten to get close with Anne MacNeil, the athletic director; she has always been big on sportsmanship and just spreading positivity among all. From her I learned to recognize the efforts of players who demonstrate exceptional qualities whether that was on a field, track, or basketball court and I wanted to encourage others to recognize and celebrate these values in each other as well. So, I came up with this project which allowed me to combine my love for sports with my creativity and desire to make a difference.

After many conversations and research, the bracelet project took shape. After each game, a player from the opposing team demonstrating outstanding sportsmanship, teamwork, or skill was selected as the player of the game and got the opportunity to pick a Player of the Game Bracelet. The recipient then had to pass the rest of the bracelets to a peer from another team who showed similar qualities, at their next game who also was able to pick a bracelet and pass the others along fostering a chain-of-positivity. Each bracelet had a tag explaining my capstone project on the front and a QR code on the back linking to a google form to log the journey and impact of the bracelets.



THE IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNITY

Below are a few examples of how community members influence the lives of those in Region 1.

GIFTS THAT KEEP GIVING. Ever wonder how the **21ST CENTURY FUND FOR HVRHS** can help so many students fulfill their dreams? It's in part because of grateful community members like Tim Hawley, HVRHS Class of 1971. For ten year's Tim has been thinking about how to thank and acknowledge the people who helped him believe in himself and build the foundation he needed to succeed. He settled on a generous contribution to **THE 21ST CENTURY FUND** (21stcenturyfund.net) that will support several grants in honor of the "outstanding faculty, staff and students, past and present at HVRHS and the culture of support they provide to those who attend the school."

HOLIDAY CHEER. In December, teachers, students, NCES alumni, and parents came together to volunteer at the Douglas Library for the Annual Gingerbread House Decorating activity. The event brought together 21 eager children who were guided by students from 11th, 8th, and 7th grades; parents; and teachers Mrs. Selino, Mrs. Peppe, and Mrs. Erikson. These volunteers shared their artistic ideas, offering guidance and support as the children worked on their sweet masterpieces. The activity, sponsored by the Canaan Foundation, provides an opportunity for students, families, and alumni to connect and embody the spirit of the holiday season.



IS YOUR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT LOOKING FOR AN UNFORGETTABLE CULTURAL EXPERIENCE?

The local AFS Chapter is seeking students interested in study abroad and the Chapter has significant scholarship money available. Please see Ms. Bate in the HVRHS Library or contact her at jbate@hvrhs.org. If interested in hosting a foreign exchange student, please contact Ms. Bate, too.

Visit Region 1 School Websites for more information

[Cornwall Consolidated School](#)

[Kent Center School](#)

[Lee H Kellogg Elementary School](#)

[North Canaan Elementary School](#)

[Salisbury Central School](#)

[Sharon Center School](#)

[Housatonic Valley Regional High School](#)