

REG 1 ON

SCHOOL DISTRICT



We Are Region One

**Seven Schools Working Together to Build
Community, Responsibility, and Relationships,
Come Snow or Come Shine.**

FALLS VILLAGE/CANAAN CORNWALL KENT NORTH CANAAN SALISBURY SHARON

www.region1schools.org

February 2026

REGIONAL SCHOOLS SERVICE CENTER (RSSC)

MELONY BRADY-SHANLEY, SUPERINTENDENT



JEANINE ROSE, ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT

REGION ONE EMBRACES RESTORATIVE PRACTICES

For many of us, school discipline meant a trip to the principal’s office, detention, or suspension—consequences often delivered without conversation, or opportunity to repair the damage.

At Region One, our approach to student behavior looks very different. The traditional discipline models focused on rule-breaking and punishment, frequently removing students from the learning environment without addressing why the behavior occurred or how it affected others. While order was restored, relationships were strained and learning opportunities were lost.

Restorative practices shift the focus from punishment to growth. Instead of asking, “What rule was broken?” we ask, “What happened, who was impacted, and how can we move forward together?” This approach encourages students to take responsibility for their actions while remaining connected to their school community.

The benefits of this shift are wide-reaching. Restorative practices strengthen relationships among students, teachers, and staff by building trust, respect, and communication. They create calmer, more inclusive environments where students feel safe, valued, and heard. Plus, schools experience fewer behavioral disruptions, suspensions and expulsions, and more student engagement.

Students also develop life skills through restorative practices. Guided reflection and dialogue help build empathy, self-awareness, emotional regulation, and problem-solving skills—skills that extend well beyond the classroom. When students understand the impact of their actions and are empowered to make things right, accountability becomes meaningful rather than punitive.

By keeping students in school, strengthening relationships, and teaching constructive ways to address conflict, restorative practices support stronger academic outcomes and more equitable learning environments. This approach reflects a fundamental shift from “discipline as punishment” to “discipline as learning,” ensuring students are supported academically, socially and emotionally.

To that end, Region One is making an investment in its staff by providing targeted training in restorative practices and effective classroom behavior management, with a focus on building and sustaining strong, trusting relationships between students and staff. In early spring, the district will also offer training for Region One families focused on restorative practices, ensuring that families are informed and understand the shift in how behavioral matters are addressed at school.



STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY THROUGH CONNECTION AND VOICE



As we look ahead to summer across a cold Region One, I want to take a moment to reflect on the power of connection—how we build it, how we sustain it, and how it shapes the choices our students make every day. At the heart of this work are restorative practices, which guide us to focus not simply on rules or consequences, but on relationships, belonging, and responsibility to one another.

Restorative practices ask us to pause, listen, and repair harm when it occurs. They remind us that strong communities are built when every individual feels seen, heard, and valued. This philosophy is woven throughout our schools and will be a central feature of our summer programming.

Our Region One Summer Program offers students in incoming 5th-8th grade, a unique opportunity to strengthen relationships across towns and schools. Through ropes courses, cooperative games, outdoor exploration, and team-building experiences held throughout the region, students practice communication, trust, empathy, and problem-solving in meaningful ways. These shared experiences help tighten the sense of community across Region One, reinforcing that we are truly one region—learning and growing together.

In addition to building community through shared experiences, we are also committed to elevating student voice. This past spring, students participated in the Youth Voices Count survey, which provides valuable insight into how young people think, feel, and make decisions. In the coming months, families will see one-page summaries highlighting key findings from this survey. One particularly powerful takeaway stands out: students report that when they make positive choices—especially decisions to avoid unhealthy or risky behaviors—they often do so because of their parents. Even when it may not always feel that way, *students are listening*. Family values, expectations, and conversations matter deeply, and they continue to guide students' decision-making in important ways.

As we look forward to summer, I encourage families to continue engaging in open dialogue, supporting healthy choices, and participating in opportunities that bring our community together. When we center relationships, elevate voices, and work collaboratively, we create the conditions for students to thrive—academically, socially, and emotionally.

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

OPEN OPPORTUNITIES

COMMUNITY MEMBER BRINGS HER MENTORING VISION TO HVRHS

The mission of HVRHS NEXT Women, founded and managed by Abby Auerbach, is to provide an interactive, skills-based, mentorship program for select HVRHS senior-class women. The program includes: skill-building workshops, one-on-one mentorship sessions, informational interviews with professional women, and culminates in the NEXT Women Symposium which is funded by the 21st Century Fund for HVRHS.



NEW MURAL ADDS LIFE TO GYMNASIUM & HONORS ED TYBURSKI



During the summer, local graffiti artist Ben Keller designed and painted a mural honoring Ed Tyburski, a long-time coach, teacher, and athletic director at Housatonic Valley Regional High School. The mural was funded by donations in Coach Tyburski's memory.

NEW CAREER LUNCHEON SERIES HONORS DAVE BAYERSDORFER

This program gives HVRHS students the opportunity to meet community members and alumni from diverse fields during the school day. Our students will learn the skills needed to transform interests into vocations and careers. The intimate lunches help students broaden their perspectives of the paths open to them after graduation. The first guest speaker was local real estate agent Mimi Harson, class of '84.

Dave worked for HVRHS for 33 years as a history teacher, coach, Assistant Principal and Chair of the 21st Century Fund. The program is paid for by the Fund by donations they have received in memory of Dave.



1946-2025

[21st Century Fund is also helping secure funding for ASTE Land Labs.]

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

STEWARD STUDIES & ASPIRATIONS

BUILDING LAND LABS FOR REAL-WORLD RESEARCH & LEARNING



A land lab is an outdoor learning space where students engage in scientific and environmental projects, combining STEM education with real-world ecological and sustainability experiences.

The one under construction at HVRHS is decades in the making. CT Agricultural Science and Technology Education (ASTE) land labs are specialized, hands-on, four-year high school programs preparing students for college and careers in fields like animal science, biotechnology, aquaculture, and natural resources. Located at 19 regional centers across the state, these programs integrate classroom instruction, supervised Agricultural Experiences (SAE), and leadership training via the National FFA Organization.

The ASTE Land lab at HVRHS will include an outdoor classroom pavilion, a natural area for environmental studies, including a rain garden, an apiary, native trees, shrubs, and groundcovers. A farm-to-table area that will include a fruit orchard, berry plantings, and a vegetable garden, as well as a construction area to practice equipment safety and a landscape construction space. It will also include a river monitoring system supported by Trout Unlimited. All the garden construction and plantings will be accomplished by the ASTE students, the staff, and volunteers.

Bruce Bennett, Chairman ASTE Advisory Council, has been spearheading the program.

**REGION ONE THANKS THE COMMUNITY
FOR HELPING STUDENTS FIND THEIR PATH TO THE FUTURE**

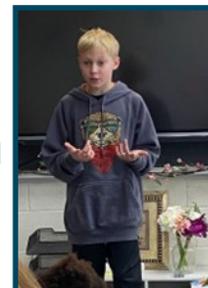
STUDENT ADVISORY COUNCIL IS BACK!

- Danielle Krueger & Kristi Pramuka

After being away for a few years, the Student Advisory Council (SAC) is officially back in action. Bringing this program back is a big step in our effort to make sure students and staff work together so that everyone feels like they belong.



The council, which includes students from grades 5-8, was formed in November after a school election. These young leaders are excited to speak up for their classmates. As Alpha, one of our 6th grade representatives, put it: "I joined to help be the voice of the student and try to shape a better learning environment." Ben, another 6th grade representative, agreed, saying his goal is to "be a leader and be a voice for my class."



The group meets twice a month to come up with ideas to make our school culture even better. Right now, they are busy planning a K-8 "Buddies" Program. The plan is to pair up middle schoolers with younger students for fun activities like reading and crafts. While they are still working out the details, the council is learning a lot about what it takes to organize a big school event by meeting with staff and looking at the logistics.

To make sure school is a positive place for everyone, the reps are focused on really listening to their peers. Sarah, a 7th grade representative, mentioned that she plans to "pay attention to the people around me and make mental notes about what they seem to like." Others, like Jason, a 5th grade representative, are committed to holding regular "meetings with my class to discuss their ideas" so that no one's voice is left out.

By giving these students a seat at the table, we are building a more supportive school for everyone. As Charlotte, a 7th grade representative, summed it up: "Not everyone always feels comfortable speaking up for their wants and needs, and I would be able to advocate for others."



PLAY-BASED LEARNING: K-1

- Kirsten Gray & Candy Carlson

Our Kindergarten and 1st grade students are doing exciting work in the Play-Based Learning Room (PBL), where play and academics come together in meaningful and engaging ways. This space encourages creativity, collaboration, and curiosity while supporting the social, emotional, and academic development of our youngest learners.

In the PBL, students are given the opportunity to explore, imagine, and problem-solve through hands-on experiences that reflect real-life scenarios and literacy themes. Through cooperative play, students practice social skills such as sharing, turn-taking, and working together. These interactions help build independence, confidence, and a strong sense of community.

We are also integrating our Benchmark Advanced ELA curriculum into these play-based experiences. Through dramatic play, puppetry, storytelling centers, and interactive activities, students explore stories, characters, and new vocabulary. Students retell stories, act out events, and use newly learned words during conversations with peers. These experiences strengthen oral language and comprehension skills while helping students develop confidence in communicating both socially and academically. We guide these experiences by asking open-ended questions, modeling language, and connecting play scenarios to literacy objectives.

Play and ELA instruction work together to support students as they build skills such as phonemic awareness, vocabulary, and narrative understanding. These experiences also encourage students to express their ideas, actively listen actively, and take risks in a joyful setting. By blending purposeful play with high-quality instruction, we are helping students develop a strong foundation for lifelong learning while fostering a love of reading, learning, and collaboration!



AQUARIUMS AS STUDENT RECENTERING STATIONS

- Joseph Markow

Most of our classrooms have a reset area to assist students to self-manage behavior and emotions. The area has fidgets, a timer and other props to help re-center one's thoughts and feelings. However, in the science room, I've found an aquarium acts as a natural reset area around which students can redirect their attention, not only to an internal center, but onto scientific observations, too. Sixth graders take a strong interest in the fish—guppies, danios and algae eater in our tank; they even discovered the 3 newly born, and practically microscopic, guppies.

The fish are a casual conversation topic between the teacher and students and are a focal point when helping a student through a tough situation. First, they redirect the student's attention by engaging in a conversation about the fish, and then about the challenges the student is facing. The aquarium also builds a community sense as we gather to observe. Some students have taken an interest in sketching or contributing to the Aquarium Journal. There is a sense of care and responsibility when feeding the fish or cleaning the algae off the glass with a magnetic brush. The presence of life in the classroom reminds us of the world beyond our classroom, and our place in that world as we care for each other, and for ourselves.

3RD GRADE EXPLORES TREVOR ZOO

- Brittany Barrett and Megan Tlasky



Third-grade students from Kent Center School recently brought learning to life with their annual trip to the Trevor Zoo in Millbrook, New York. The visit connected directly to their science standards and their English Language Arts unit on Animal Adaptations, where students learned how animals survive in different environments.

At the zoo, students observed a variety of animals, including a lynx, red wolves, arctic fox, emus, and bearded dragons. Some of these connected directly to animals they had studied in class, while others introduced students to new and interesting adaptations. They also participated in an engaging presentation led by zoo staff, where they learned about several animals and explored how different adaptations

help species survive in their environments. Seeing these animals in person helped students make meaningful connections between reading, writing, and real-world science. The trip remains a favorite third-grade tradition, inspiring curiosity and a deeper appreciation for wildlife.

ENRICHMENT WITH MRS. MOORE

- Michelle Mott



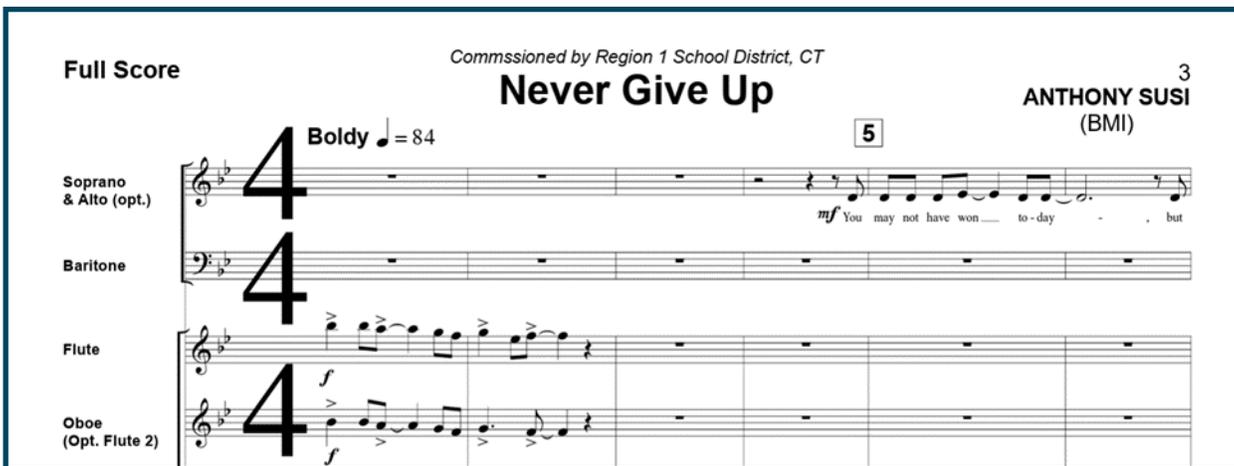
Our students are engaging in enriching small-group experiences that bring Language Arts learning to life. Through collaborative discussions, hands-on activities, and targeted instruction, students are making meaningful connections across reading, writing, speaking, and listening. These enrichment groups encourage curiosity, deepen comprehension, and allow students to explore texts and ideas in ways that extend beyond the core curriculum—building both confidence and a love of learning.

REGIONAL SELECT BAND AND CHORUS COMMISSION NEW MUSIC!

- David Poirier

When student musicians around the country receive new pieces of sheet music from their music teachers, frequently under the title of the piece is some sort of dedication along the lines of “Dedicated to the 8th Grade Symphonic Band at Lewis and Clark Middle School in Walla Walla, Washington.” This year, Region One Select Band and Chorus commissioned a piece to be written specifically for our ensembles!

The process began at the National Association for Music Education Eastern Division Conference in Hartford last April. The author of this article was chatting with Tony Susi, a retired Connecticut band director who has become a well-established composer. To date, he has published 68 pieces for band, jazz band, orchestra and chorus that are performed throughout the country, at all age levels. Mr. Susi agreed to compose a piece to be used as a finale for the Region One Concerts in February. In collaboration with the students, he decided to go with the theme of perseverance and entitled the piece “**Never Give Up**”.



A portion of the conductor's score of Mr. Susi's "Never Give Up" with dedication to Region One above the title.

In addition to tailoring the piece to our musical strengths and weaknesses, he also volunteered to do a video conference with our students. This conference took place on Wednesday, January 21st, at a rehearsal. It was an opportunity for the students and teachers to get an inside look at the composing process, get real insight on how to approach the performance of the piece from the composer himself, and of course, ask questions!

The students submitted an extensive list of questions to Mr. Susi, which he answered thoroughly in the video conference. He also described his musical journey from his childhood, to his career as a music teacher in Manchester and Coventry, and now full-time composer.

The students and teachers are looking forward to performing the “world premier” of the new piece in their concerts during the week of February 9th.



Right: Students watching composer, Mr. Susi, on screen.

FROM EMPATHY TO ACTION

Strengthening Our Restorative Culture at Lee H. Kellogg:

At Lee H. Kellogg School, we believe that academic excellence is inseparable from the emotional well-being and social connection of our students. As Kellogg's new principal, I have been inspired by how our students and staff have embraced the implementation of Restorative Practices. Following successful programs in the fall—where our Falcons learned to be leaders through programs like Sweethearts & Heroes—we are deepening our commitment to this framework to ensure that empathy and compassion become a permanent part of our daily school life.

Building a Culture of Belonging:

Restorative Practices is more than a strategy for resolving conflict; it is a way of "being" together. By shifting our focus toward restorative culture, we are empowering students to become confident self-advocates and responsible problem solvers. By elevating this work to a core strategic goal, we are ensuring that the social-emotional health of our students remains at the forefront of our school's mission.

Rather than relying solely on traditional discipline, we are teaching students how to:

- **Repair Harm:** Use communication to understand the impact of their actions on others.
- **Build Community:** Participate in proactive circles that foster a sense of belonging for every learner.
- **Lead with Integrity:** Step into leadership roles where they model active listening and inclusion.



This sense of belonging is fostered through intentional community building:

- **Daily Morning Meetings:** Every day begins with students and teachers gathered in community circles. These daily morning meetings are dedicated to community building, giving every student a voice and a consistent space to feel seen and heard before the academic day begins.
- **Whole-School Traditions:** This November, we celebrated our annual whole-school Thanksgiving meal. This tradition brings every student and staff member together, emphasizing that we are a single Kellogg family. The day was highlighted by our K-2 students, who delighted the school with their own creative LHK version of the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade.
- **Outdoor Leadership:** We have also continued our meaningful partnership with outdoor educator Ed Thorney. Ed is working closely with our sixth and seventh-grade classes, utilizing the outdoors to build the essential leadership skills and community bonds that define our older students as they move toward middle school graduation.

Professional Growth and Expert Partnership: To support this goal, our faculty and staff have been deeply engaged in professional learning. We are fortunate to be partnering with renowned experts in the field, including Fran Amara and Judy Palmer of EdAdvance, as well as Carolyn Corrado of Doing the Work. Their guidance is helping our educators master the tools of restorative communication, allowing us to move beyond traditional discipline toward a model that prioritizes healing and mutual understanding.

LHK Gives Back: Compassion in Action: Our commitment to empathy extends beyond our school walls. We believe that being a caring world citizen starts with serving our neighbors. This winter, our students have demonstrated incredible heart through several community initiatives.

The Giving Tree: During December, our Student Council oversaw a school-wide drive, donating essential winter items to help keep our neighbors warm.

Senior Center Partnership: Our eighth graders travel to the Falls Village Senior Center once a month. These visits are a highlight for both generations, as students engage in fun activities and meaningful conversations with our community's seniors.

Philanthropy: The Kellogg community has also come together to raise funds for the Spirit of Shea Foundation and the Connecticut Children's Hospital, proving that even a small school can make a massive impact.

Impacting Our School Climate

Since deepening our commitment to these practices, we have seen a tangible shift in our school climate. We are seeing:

- **Increased Student Agency:** Students are increasingly taking the lead in resolving peer-to-peer disagreements without immediate adult intervention.
- **Stronger Teacher-Student Bonds:** By moving away from purely punitive measures, we've created an environment where students feel safe taking academic risks.
- **Community Partnership:** We recognize that these skills don't stop at the school doors. We are partnering with our families to ensure that the language of "making it right" is echoed at home, creating a seamless support system for our children.



Partnering for Success

Our goal is for every student at Kellogg to feel seen, heard, and valued. As we move through the winter, we remain committed to partnering with our families and the broader community. We believe that by working together, we ensure every student reaches their full potential.

MIDDLE SCHOOL ATHLETICS & ACTIVITIES



ANNE MACNEIL, DIRECTOR



The Regional Middle School Winter Program engaged more than 70 students through basketball and Art Garage offerings. Basketball participants were evaluated and divided into Blue and Gold teams. The Blue teams competed in the middle school league, which included a postseason tournament, with the Girls team finishing fourth and the Boys team earning a second-place finish. Gold teams participated in an intramural program focused on skill development and sportsmanship.



In addition to the middle school programming, the high school hosted a three-day basketball preseason clinic, giving students the chance to learn from high school coaches and players while sharpening their fundamental skills.



In addition, 20 students are enrolled in **artgarage**, where they explore creative projects in a collaborative, hands-on setting.



NORTH CANAAN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

BETH JOHNSON, PRINCIPAL



ALLISON CURTISS, ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL

BUILDING COMMUNITY DURING THE HOLIDAYS

- Denise Sorrell



This holiday season, the NCES community demonstrated the true spirit of giving through a heartfelt initiative to support residents at Geer Nursing and Rehabilitation. NCES staff generously donated funds to purchase holiday gifts tailored to the residents' wishes. Once the donations were collected, a small group of teachers went shopping using a thoughtfully prepared list of items the Geer residents would truly enjoy.

The spirit of generosity continued back at school. The NCES Student Council carefully wrapped each gift, while eighth-grade students created handmade cards for every present. In addition, our community groups brought students of all ages together for a special activity focused on making holiday cards, reinforcing connection, kindness, and collaboration across grade levels.

When the wrapping was complete and the cards were collected, the Student Council proudly delivered the gifts to Geer, sharing smiles, gratitude, and holiday warmth. This experience highlighted the importance of strong community partnerships and showed how working together through shared kindness can make a meaningful difference.

SALISBURY CENTRAL SCHOOL

STEPHANIE MAGYAR, PRINCIPAL



JOHN CONKLIN, ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL

ALL SCHOOL ASSEMBLIES

- Stephanie Magyar & Julianne O'Connell

All-school assemblies are one way that we work to build a foundation for restorative practice work here at SCS. Assemblies create shared understanding, shared language, and a shared sense of community across both buildings. Restorative practices rely on relationships, trust, and consistent values that assemblies provide.

This year we have met as a full community in the auditorium monthly. We began the year with a "Welcome Back" assembly for students where we introduced new staff and procedures. That was followed by a fun-filled costume parade in October that families were invited to attend. In November, we honored the veterans. It is an opportunity to express our gratitude - a time to pause and recognize the courage, sacrifice and dedication of those who have served to protect our freedoms. At this event we listen, reflect, learn and show our deepest respect and appreciation to all veterans- those in our families and our community. At our Winter Showcase assembly, students were able to show off their musical talents and perform for their peers and families. Our annual Yeti assembly has quickly become a Salisbury Central tradition to celebrate the beginning of winter break. Still to come, we will be gathering to celebrate Lunar New Year, for a Coffeehouse preview, a Talent Show and a Closing Day assembly. At all of our assemblies we remind students of STAR quality expectations and celebrate their demonstration of STAR attributes.



MEET KEVIN PAPACS, NEW PE & HEALTH TEACHER

This year, Health has been added to our Physical Education curriculum to further support student wellness. Students in grades K–3 have learned about the different food groups and what healthy eating looks like. In Physical Education class, they are developing motor skills, social skills, fitness, and an understanding of how their bodies move.



Students in grades 4–8 are learning how healthy eating and regular physical activity contribute to physical, mental, social, and academic success. They participated in the PACER test, a Connecticut fitness assessment that measures cardiovascular endurance. Students in grades 6–8 also created their own warm-up activities focused on improving flexibility, core strength, upper-body strength, or a combination of these skills. Students have completed units in cooperative games, soccer, fitness, and basketball, promoting teamwork and lifelong healthy habits.

MUSIC OVERVIEW

- Jen Moros and Rob Nellson

CMEA Northern Region Adjudication Festival: On Saturday, November 22nd, 15 middle school band & chorus students participated in the CMEA Northern Region Adjudication Festival with over 30 other schools in West Hartford, CT. Our students prepared all fall with their music teachers to present their prepared solo, scales, and performed sight reading in front of adjudicators. They received comments and scores based on their individual performances. This is quite an undertaking for our middle school students!



Evelyn Adkins, Kellan Lockton, Jackson Magyar, Noah Tencer (chorus) and Annabelle Bunce (band) were selected to participate in the Northern Region Middle School Mixed Chorus and Band based on their performance and scores at the Adjudication Festival. This festival will take place March 6 & 7 with a performance at Central Connecticut State University.

CMEA Elementary Honors Festival: We have nominated four students for the CMEA Elementary Honors Festival taking place at the University of Bridgeport on February 27, 2026. Eloise Vaughn, Elsie Carr, Laurel Sperry and Sofia Lucas were all selected by the committee and will receive formal invitations shortly.

Regional Band & Chorus: Every Wednesday, members of the SCS Music Program head to HVRHS after school to participate in the Region 1 Band and Region 1 Chorus. All music teachers come together to create this experience. This year, we have a special honor. Region 1 commissioned a piece of music called “Never Give Up” by Anthony Susi. This song - written for band & chorus - was written specifically for Region 1 and is a world premier! SCS has 11 band members and 16 Chorus members attending.

SAVE THE DATES!

Regional Band & Chorus concert HVRHS at 7:00pm on February 11th

Middle School Chorus “Coffee House” Performance, February 26, 5:30pm at The White Hart Inn.

Thanks to this great community restaurant and inn for partnering with us! **Note: Tickets required**

RESTORATIVE PRACTICES IN ACTION

In grades EK-4, teachers are intentionally creating a positive, supportive learning environment by using restorative practices in their classrooms. These practices focus on building strong relationships, fostering respect, and helping students learn from their experiences in meaningful ways.



Teachers regularly use community circles and classroom discussions to give students a voice, strengthen connections, and encourage empathy. By modeling active listening, mutual respect, and compassion, teachers are helping students develop important social-emotional skills such as communication, self-awareness, and conflict resolution. These practices contribute to classrooms where students feel safe, valued, and supported.

This winter, our middle school has continued to focus on building a positive school climate through restorative practices that center on relationships, teamwork, and respect. In classrooms, students regularly work together through partner reading, book clubs, and group activities that emphasize collaboration, sportsmanship, and supporting one another as a learning community.



A big part of this work is Wingman, which uses fun, hands-on activities to help students build empathy, courage, and connection. Recently, our Wingman group attended the Middle School Student Leadership Conference (Making Acceptance Acceptable), where students joined peers from across Connecticut in interactive workshops focused on building acceptance, making a positive impact at school, taking healthy risks, and using social connections in positive ways. These experiences help students feel confident stepping into leadership roles and contribute to a school culture where everyone feels seen and valued.

The middle school team has been active in creating team building opportunities at Sharon Center School. Prior to winter recess students and staff participated in an energetic and exciting Staff vs Student basketball game. The game was followed by our traditional multi-age group winter activity rotation which consisted of Karaoke, winter fun games in the gym, board games and craft making. Upon our return middle school students, led by Mrs. Pace, Mr. Hutchins, and Ms. Thurmond led activities in the library focusing on group problem solving and communication skills.



KIDS THESE DAYS ARE...

- Ian Strever

Just type “Kids” and the letter “t” into a document, and the predictive text feature will automatically suggest the phrase, “Kids these days are...”. The machine learning and artificial intelligence that produces such turns of phrase may save us time in typing, but at the expense of lazy stereotypes that populate mundane conversations. So how might we expect that sentence to end? “Kids these days are...”

“Lazy?”

“Rude?”

“Inconsiderate?”

We’ve all been in those situations and conversations, and recently I learned of a word for those kinds of answers: youthism. While we would never tolerate racism, sexism, or ageism, our culture often practices youthism as a form of fear-mongering about the future and an Affinity Bias that causes us to favor our own lived experiences over those of younger generations.

Fortunately, the antidote to cliches is mindfulness. When we catch ourselves auto-populating our sentences with easy responses, we are taking the first step in addressing biases and stereotypes.

I won’t deny some teenagers are lazy, rude or inconsiderate, as are some adults. But as someone who spends upwards of forty hours a week with teenagers, let me share some other answers:

“Thoughtful.”

“Funny.”

“Struggling.”

“Concerned.”

“Caring.”

I was in a classroom last week where I overheard a student making arrangements with a teacher to make up an assessment. Once that bit of business was finished, the student said to the teacher, “I’m really glad you’re here today,” to which the teacher replied, “I’m glad you’re here, too.” It struck me as remarkable that a teenager would take the time to notice and express that sentiment to her teacher. Kids these days are remarkable, too.

Such moments define the climate and culture of a school, and I am proud to say that I hear more exchanges like these than ones that are rude or inconsiderate. Our work with Restorative Practices is in some way a misnomer for the proactive work that we do to develop relationships with students, and as we get to know each other better, we can always find a more thoughtful and interesting way to end that sentence. Don’t be afraid to challenge those endings, too.



HOME of the MOUNTAINEERS

HOUSATONIC VALLEY REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL is known for its certified faculty and small classes, wide range of hands-on-engaging educational opportunities, community support and scholarships for seniors.





HEROES WORK HERE

REGION
SCHOOL DISTRICT



In 1940, some of the darkest times in British history, Winston Churchill told the House of Commons that "*Never was so much owed by so many to so few.*"

Thankfully, we don't live in a war zone but his words reverberate today for the Herculean job Region One Building Staffs did to get schools ready to open safely on January 27th. Please know how appreciative we are.

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](#)

Visit www.region1schools.org for videos on each of the schools and other important topics.