



# ENGAGED LEARNING IN THE FARMINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

September 19, 2022

## Farmington High School

### **Student Council Leadership Retreat at Winding Trails**

FHS Student Council members took part in a Leadership Retreat at Winding Trails to kickoff the school year on September 7th. Students engaged in various activities that focused on Communication, Teamwork, Leadership, and Relationships. Students planned events for the year that will positively impact the climate and culture as One School, One Community, and One Us at FHS.



## **Irving A. Robbins**

### **Kicking off the Year in Science!**

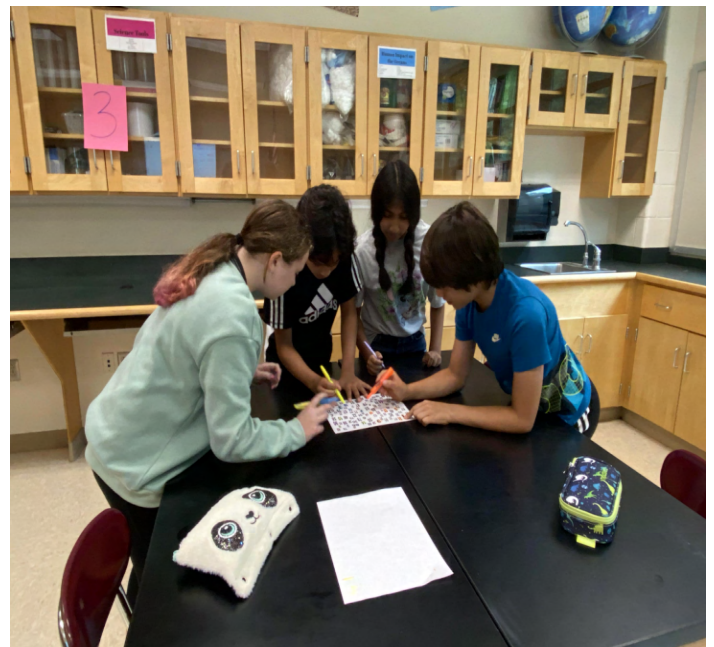
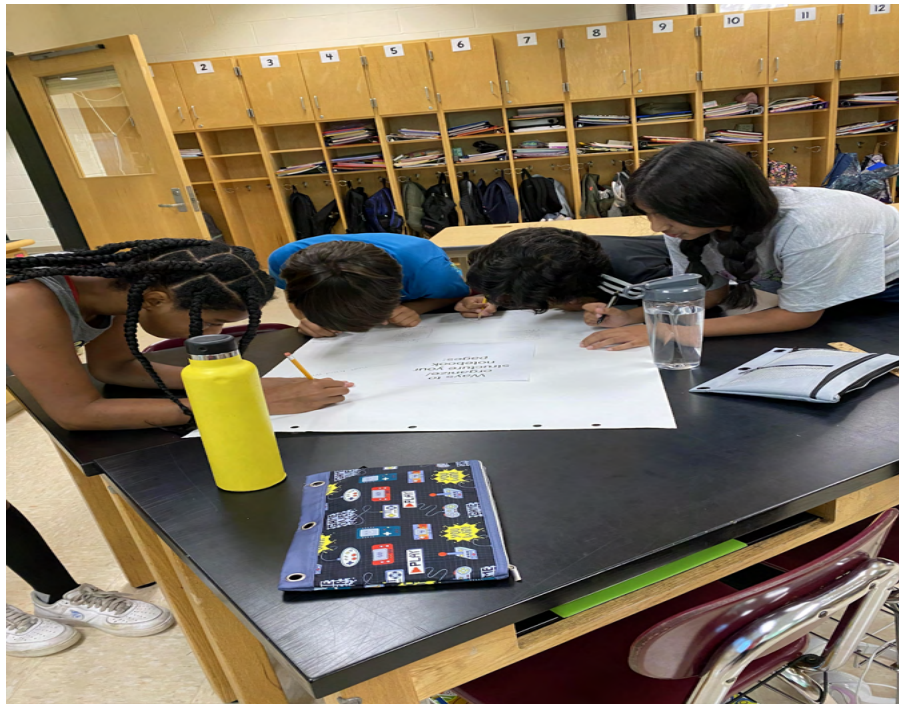
Seventh graders at IAR are engaged in their first investigation as they hone in on their measuring, data collection and analyzation skills to try to answer the question “What is the ideal amount of water for a successful bottle flip?” They will continue to learn about density and volume in their upcoming unit about the characteristics of matter. Meanwhile, Eighth Graders are asking questions and making observations about corn kernels to answer the question “Is it Living?” They are wondering if the kernel can survive under certain conditions, what the inside is made of, why it looks the way it does, and if it will reproduce. Their studies of characteristics of living things in the first unit should allow students to find answers to many of those questions!





## **West Woods Upper Elementary School**

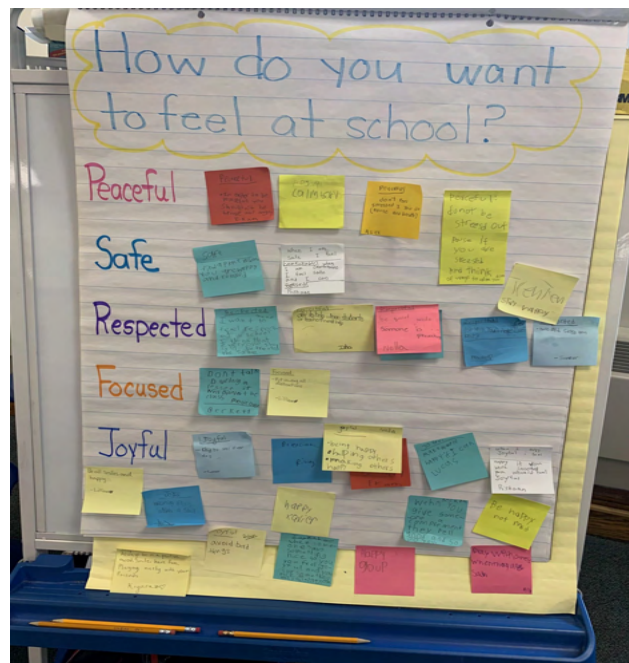
Our Wildcat CREW is back for the 2022-2023 school year! This week we welcomed back over 640 fifth and sixth grade students at West Woods, and students engaged in a variety of activities to build classroom communities. West Woods is committed to creating a caring and inclusive environment where learners work collaboratively to achieve personal and academic excellence. This month, students are focusing on self-awareness. This work will begin in CREW each morning, and continue throughout their school day through team building, purposeful instruction, guided emotion regulation, and regular reflection. Over the course of the school year, students will create portfolios to celebrate and guide their learning, and will begin to collect a body of evidence that supports their learning as Global Citizens through CREW. As classroom CREWs, students will monitor their progress, support one another, and lead both academically and socially. We are proud of our students and can't wait to dive into this work together as a whole school community!





## Union School

The 2022-2023 school year is off to a strong start at Union School. Students and faculty throughout the school have been working together to define the expectations and goals of their collaborative learning communities. On the first day of school the entire Union School community was able to gather together again for our traditional 'clapping in' ceremony in front of the school for the first time in three years. In classrooms, students have been engaging in teamwork experiences, learning the importance of caring for one another and interdependence. These experiences and the conversations that occur around them during classroom circles are used to create unique, evolving classroom charters that outline how students and teachers want to feel each day when they come to school and the actions that we all need to take to help each other attain those feelings in school. Within the first few days of school, students traveled to all of the different areas of the school on 'Rocky's Road Trip,' learning the positive behavioral expectations for each area. Students learned that their actions matter in how they behave in the classroom and beyond, academically and socially.





## East Farms

Students at East Farms School have been expressing their creativity in so many extraordinary ways. They have been channeling their emotions, hopes, wishes, dreams and inspirations from the world around them to create one-of-a-kind works of art. Their continued effort and artistry has filled each day with wonder and amazement. The pride they feel for their incredible creations beams from their smiles. We began the year creating personal rainbows to celebrate what makes each of us special! Students created their rainbows based on the prompts in this visual:

# What Does *Your* Rainbow Look Like?

Answer the following questions to find out!

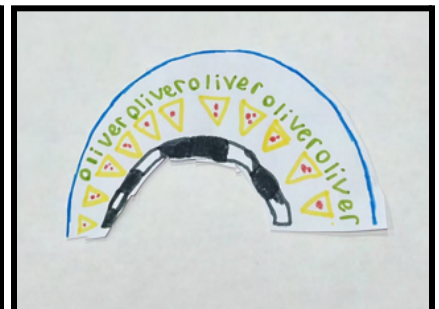
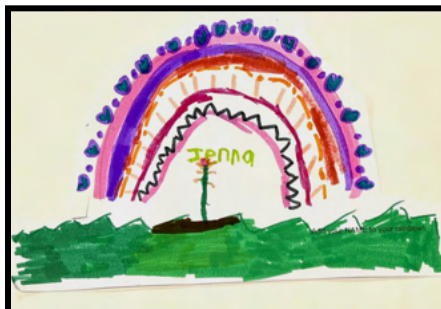
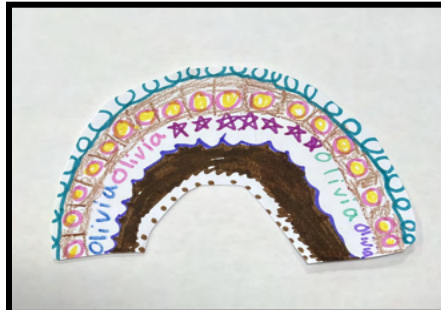
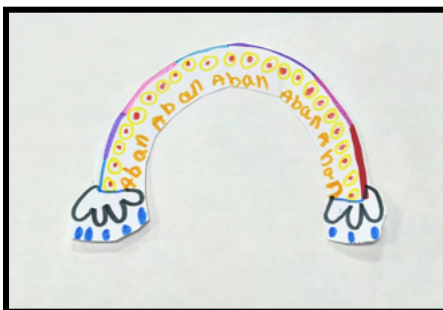
1. What is your favorite color?
2. What are the colors of your favorite animal?
3. What color is your favorite food or treat?
4. Think of a word that describes your personality, what color would that be?
5. What color is your hair?
6. What color are your eyes?

Now use those colors inside the rainbow shape!

You are one unique, colorful, amazing rainbow!  
Shine Bright!



Here are some of their wonderful rainbows from grades K-4!  
What does **YOUR** rainbow look like? Give it a try, fun family time!





# West District Elementary School

## Discovering the Vision of the Global Citizen

September is an exciting month at West District School. In addition to exploring new classrooms, meeting new friends, and engaging in new learning experiences, West District Tigers are discovering the dispositions of the Vision of the Global Citizen in ways that are meaningful to their age, grade, and the kinds of learning they are doing in their classrooms. Students are actively exploring what it means to be *Empowered Learners, Engaged Collaborators, Self-Aware Individuals, Civic-Minded Contributors, and Disciplined Thinkers* across their day, and in all different contexts, including specials. Working alongside their teachers, students study the dispositions and explore their meanings. The result is customized, meaningful resource charts that students and teachers use routinely to reflect on and improve their work.

A hand-drawn resource chart on lined paper with three main sections:

- We grow KNOWLEDGE.**
  - We explore our interests.
  - We get started right away.
  - We stay FOCUSED.
- We use tools and resources to help us.**
- We REFLECT on how we are doing.**
  - What are we doing well?
  - What do we need to work on?
  - Did we use our time wisely?

The chart also features a central speech bubble that says "We are **EMPOWERED** learners!" and a drawing of two stick figures sitting cross-legged.



## **Noah Wallace School**

We are settling into Kindergarten! We are very excited and proud of our work as mathematicians. We are learning how to collaborate and create partnership norms to guide our work so that we can be disciplined thinkers. We are learning how to focus, be creative and flexible, and persist when faced with challenges.







# ENGAGED LEARNING IN THE FARMINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

October 17, 2022

## **Farmington High School**

### **2023 National Merit Scholarship Semifinalists Named**

The National Merit Scholarship Corporation has announced the names of approximately 16,000 Semifinalists in the 68<sup>th</sup> annual National Merit Scholarship Program. These academically talented high school seniors have an opportunity to continue in the competition for some 7,250 National Merit Scholarships worth about \$28 million that will be offered next spring.

Congratulations to Farmington High School students, **Sophia Cho, Akshaj Ganta, Hudson Hu, Eileen Peng** and **Alan Wang**, who have qualified as semifinalists in the 2023 National Merit Scholarship program. Identified as a result of their outstanding performance on the Preliminary SAT, they will now move on in the competition to be considered as a finalist. Finalists will be announced in February.





**Farmington Robotics Team has a Dean' List Finalist! 2022 New England FIRST Dean's List Finalist:  
*David Marimekala***

The Farmington Robotics team is very proud to recognize one of our strongest team leaders David Marimekala, FHS class of 2023, who was recognized as a 2022 FIRST Dean's List Finalist for New England. In an effort to recognize the leadership and dedication of FIRST's most outstanding secondary school students, the family of Inventor and FIRST founder, Dean Kamen, sponsors awards for selected 10th or 11th grade students known as the FIRST Robotics Competition® Dean's List Award. Since its introduction in 2010, the FIRST Dean's List Award has attracted the attention of prestigious colleges and universities who desire to recruit FIRST Dean's List students. Similar to the very prestigious National Merit Scholarship Award, there are state, regional, and national levels to the award. The students who earn FIRST Dean's List status are great examples of current student leaders who have led their teams and communities to increased awareness for FIRST and its mission while achieving personal technical expertise and accomplishment. This year, David Marimekala reached the prestigious New England Finalist level. David was the first Farmington student ever to do so! The students, coaches, mentors, parents of the Farmington High School Robotics team were thrilled to see David recognized and very proud when he went on to represent our team at a special ceremony at the FIRST Championship in Houston, TX. As part of it, he enjoyed a special luncheon with FIRST founder Dean Kamen.

In the team's nomination of David, he was identified as not only a key leader on large team projects, but also a role model of Gracious Professionalism and FIRST Core Values. As the 2021-22 Director of Community Outreach, David has been instrumental in connecting and strengthening our community partnerships, despite the interruptions and obstacles from the COVID-19 pandemic. Tuhan Nguyen, FLL Coordinator for Farmington Continuing Education, stated, "His contributions and support in the planning and execution of this past FLL DISCOVER & EXPLORE season have been absolutely critical to the success of the program. Without his work, I am confident that this season would not have run as smoothly or as successfully as it has. He was also pivotal in the execution of the Expo, which was well received and praised by parents and teams alike." In addition, David played a critical role in leading projects virtually and creating a transition plan back to in-person meetings over the last two years. Throughout that time, he has encouraged and supported other members, stepping back when necessary to let others grow as leaders in their own right. David was elected Team Captain for the 2022-23 school year by his peers, and will continue to demonstrate the leadership and enthusiasm for FIRST that led to his Dean's List Finalist nomination.

Congratulations David!



## **Irving A. Robbins**

Over 20 students at IAR joined Lego League, a problem-solving and engineering competitive club. Nathan Wojtyna and Evan Belisle, IAR advisors, teach students to learn more about design concepts. Items that students built included a dinosaur, a car, a robot, and a windmill. Each student created an item that must perform a specific task. Students learned to adjust their initial design to ensure functionality and accuracy. Students in Lego League are disciplined thinkers because they design objects strategically, purposefully, and collaboratively.



## **IAR Advisories Create Charters**



The IAR Advisory program serves to connect students together! In order for students to enact the VoGC, they need to be self-aware individuals. Initial lessons focused on Yale RULER strategies, including developing a Charter. Students created their Charters in Advisory classes by identifying how they want to feel at school, followed by establishing clear commitments for how to make IAR a more inclusive environment. These charters will be revisited frequently throughout the year. As a learning community, we have shared accountability for making IAR a great place to learn.



## **IAR Students Learn about Internet Safety**

Scott Driscoll, President of Internet Safety Concepts, presented to IAR students on ways to have a safe online presence. Students learned about how apps gather information, learned how to adjust their privacy settings for increased protection, and learned about the impact of social media usage. He also shared laws and policies related to cyberbullying. In February, students will hear from FHS Peer Leaders on how to create a positive digital footprint. IAR will continue to teach students about responsible technology usage throughout the year!



## **West Woods Upper Elementary School**

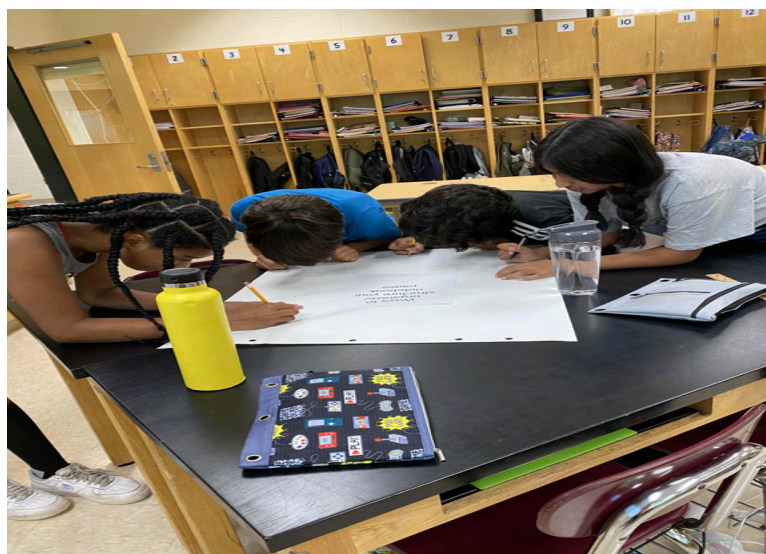
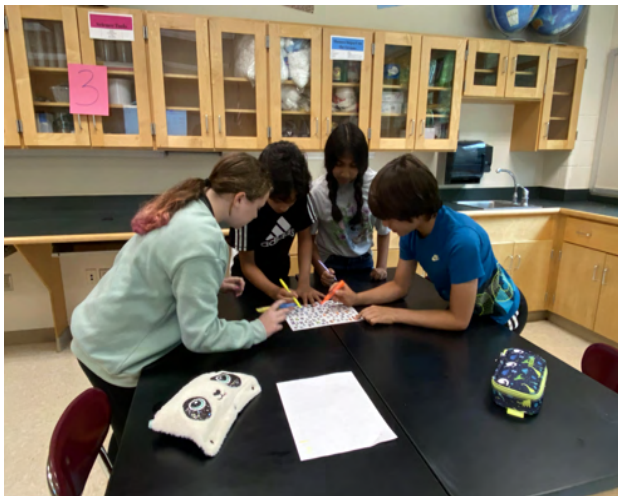
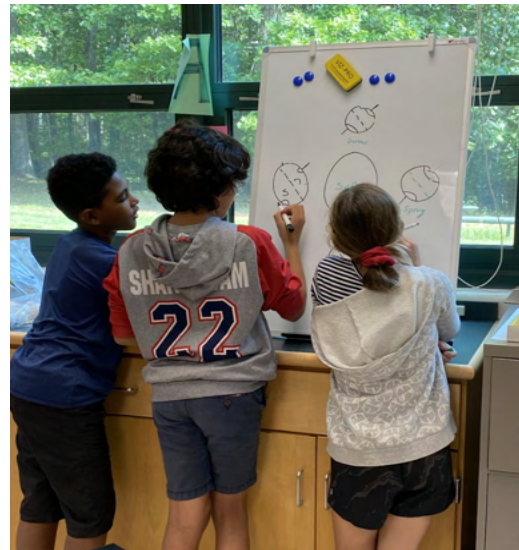
Why are there so many black bears in Farmington? How can we coexist with them? Fifth graders have been studying the local bear issue. While studying the concepts of ecosystems and interdependence, students are analyzing data, developing models, evaluating information, and designing and carrying out investigations. Several local experts, such as the Farmington Animal Control Officer, a DEEP educator, and local environmentalists will be sharing their expertise and opinions with students. After hearing various points of view, students will develop their own opinions about how to best address the issue with bears. To culminate their study, they will work to educate the community about how to coexist with bears.

Fifth graders spent the day at Winding Trails engaging in activities to build their understanding of food webs and interdependence in local ecosystems.





Sixth graders are engaged in studying weather/climate phenomena (connected to their social studies focus on Latin America). To begin the year, they started exploring the seasons . . . How can it be summer in Connecticut and winter in Uruguay at the same time? Students analyzed maps and data and constructed models in order to develop an understanding of the interactions between the Sun and Earth. They learned how these interactions impact temperatures and seasons on Earth. Soon they will move on to their next phenomenon . . . How do hurricanes form, and why do so many happen in the Caribbean?

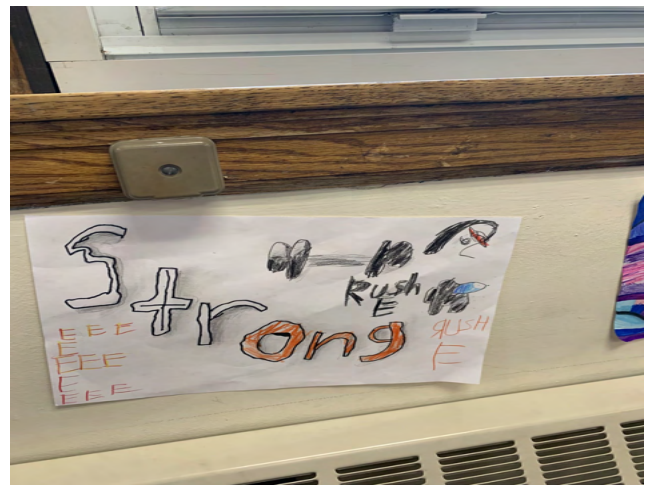
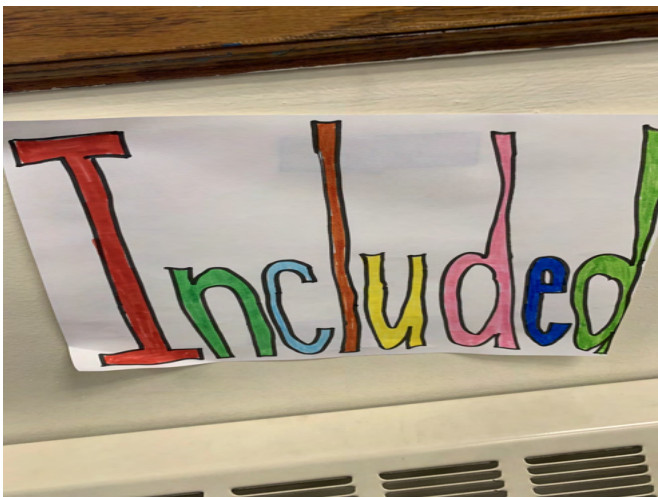


## Union School

The Union School community is so excited to be able to have our monthly celebration assemblies in person again this year. Each monthly assembly is a community event that brings us all together to learn, share, perform, and celebrate our school. Every grade level takes turns planning and hosting an assembly.

Last Friday, 9/30, our fourth grade classes planned and led an assembly titled #BESTYEAREVER. They read the book *One Word for Kids: A Great Way to Have Your Best Year Ever* by Jon Gordon, Dan Britton, Jimmy Page, and Korey Scott. They introduced the idea defining one's 'best self' and choosing a word to focus on throughout the year. The fourth graders and Ms. Smith, our music teacher, also taught the entire school the "one word" song.

After the assembly, students were tasked with going back to their classrooms, thinking about their "best self," and choosing their "one word" for the year.





## East Farms

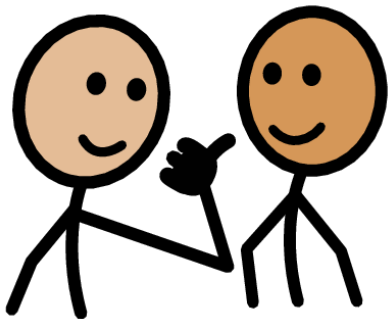
Kindergarten students at East Farms are happily engaged in exploring numbers through the implementation of our new Developing Roots Math Program. This is a play-based, exploratory approach to learning mathematical concepts. Our students are becoming leaders of their own learning through tasks that promote self-direction and collaboration.



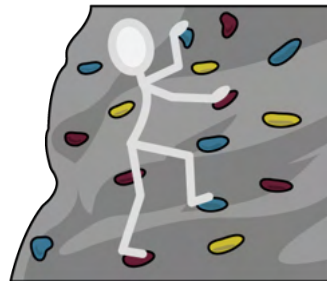
## West District Elementary School

### Together We Climb!

West District Tigers are **Engaged Collaborators** who love to work together to help one another succeed! In September, we were the lucky recipients of a Farmington Public Schools Foundation grant written to support partnership and collaboration between our students who receive support from the Specialized Learning Center and their peers. Working together, our students build communication and friendship skills as they tackle rock climbing challenges, build muscle control, and develop their hand-eye coordination. In addition to this specialized use, our rock wall is enjoyed by all West District Tigers during after-school sports, on Fitness Fridays during physical education classes, and during adaptive gym time. We are deeply grateful to the Foundation for this grant award and look forward to many years of fun, fitness, and friendship ahead.



Let's go



climb!



## **Noah Wallace School**

Third graders are kicking off the year with some hands-on, engaged learning. We took a field trip to Winding Trails where we learned about how different animals and plants here in our state survive.

We learned how animals find food, how they protect themselves from predators, what types of shelters animals live in, and also what all living things need in order to thrive.

Students had to be disciplined thinkers in order to participate in various games and activities while pretending to be different animals or plants trying to survive!



How can “tails” help some animals find prey?



Thinking about what trees need to survive in the forest!



Using camouflage to hide from predators!





# ENGAGED LEARNING IN THE FARMINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

November 14, 2022

## **Farmington High School**

### **FHS holds Annual Capstone Networking Event**

On September 20th and 21st, the FHS Career Center and Capstone program hosted the annual Capstone Networking Event in the FHS library. The event was held in person for the first time since 2019 after two years of being online due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Twenty seven professionals, including 8 FHS alumni, participated in the event from a variety of career fields such as healthcare, engineering, sports analytics and broadcasting, journalism, the arts, law, business development, and public safety. Each Capstone student had an opportunity to meet with a professional in an area of interest, receive feedback on their project ideas, and begin networking to establish community connections for their projects. Capstone students came to these meetings dressed professionally and prepared with notes to maximize their time with these professionals. Students left their meetings with ideas and community contacts that will support their year long Capstone journeys. The Career Center and Capstone program would like to thank everyone within the FPS community and beyond who helped to make this event so successful.



## Farmington High School – National Merit Scholarship Commended Students

Eighteen FHS students have been named Commended Students in the 2023 National Merit Scholarship Program. They are **Jordan Altimus, Vincent Ave'Lallemant, Seerat Bath, Grace Boye-Williams, Jingang Chen, Neel Kamath, Tanmay Kurkute, Matthew Leypold, David Marimekala, Vedanth Natarajan, Karen Pan, Karthik Pyneni, Radhika Sharma, Jingjin Shi, Vidipt Someshwar, Hannah Stephenson, Vangmayee Upadhyay** and **Yanna Zervas**. A Certificate of Commendation from the National Merit Scholarship Corporation was presented to them.

About 34,000 Commended Students throughout the nation are being recognized for their exceptional academic promise. Our congratulations to these students who have demonstrated outstanding academic potential by their high performance in the extremely competitive National Merit Program.





## **Irving A. Robbins**

### **Student-Led Conferences at IAR**

What does it mean to lead your own learning? You can ask one of our Irving A. Robbins' Middle School students. During three days in October, students, their caretakers, and their advisory teacher engaged in "student-led conferences." Students shared their current progress, their learning goals, and their plan for future growth. Some of our students stated: "It was really helpful talking about what we have learned so far" and "It was a little scary talking about our grades with our family and teacher, but in the end, I felt excited and relieved." Preparing for and participating in student-led conferences allowed our students to be assessment-capable learners, reflecting on where they are in their learning, where they are going, and how they are going to get there. As FPS Global Citizens, our IAR Roadrunners are self-aware individuals and disciplined thinkers!



### **Building Community at IAR**

IAR counselors hosted an annual Mix-it-Up Day during lunch and recess. The purpose of this day is to provide students with opportunities to form quality relationships and connections with their peers in a fun setting. During Mix-it-Up Day, students were encouraged to hold conversations with other students they didn't know. There were conversation starters on each table, and students took turns asking their peers questions. Then, students went outside where there was a DJ, and they danced! This was a fun event to celebrate our unity as a school community. We believe teamwork matters at IAR, so it was wonderful to see many faculty, staff, and students coming together for the festivities.







## Pink Power Day at IAR

On October 18, IAR faculty, staff and students joined efforts with the FHS Girls Soccer team to donate to CT Breast Health Initiative. Students were excited to support an important cause, and they demonstrated that they were civic-minded contributors who have empathy and compassion for others.





## **West Woods Upper Elementary School**

Grade six social studies classes are finishing their study of the Constitution in which they are learning about the structure and function of our government. In November, all classes visited Connecticut's Old State House Museum and the Connecticut State Capitol. At the Old State House, in addition to learning about the history of the building, students engaged in an interactive program on the three branches of government. This program simulated the function of all three branches of government and demonstrated how citizens can actively contribute to society. To further civic development, students toured the State Capitol and Legislative Office Building. They participated in a question and answer session about the work of their legislators. The tour included some highlights of Connecticut history.





## **Union School**

All Union School teams have been engaging in Lesson Study in order to study, evaluate, and improve teaching and learning. Lesson Study can have a huge impact on teacher growth and student learning.

Each grade level chose a problem of practice related to their Team Action Research Goal and our School Development Plan. They developed a question to orient their learning.

In planning together, visiting and observing in each others classrooms, and debriefing observations of what students were doing, specific tasks, and lesson adjustments and redesign, teachers work to answer the question that is related to their problem of practice.



## East Farms

We are working in Physical Education at East Farms on fostering teamwork and sportsmanship during our PE classes. Each week one class is selected to earn the 'Golden Shoe Award.' Classes that have earned this award are cheering each other on, celebrating wins in learning and game play, and creating a fun place to learn.



We have also been connecting math and building into our overhand throwing unit. Students have been counting money, creating structures with blocks, and more while participating in a variety of overhand throwing and catching activities. Bridging interdisciplinary instruction into PE is allowing our learners to apply concepts and skills in new and exciting ways.

Students are still working with our Social Emotional Locker Room in Physical Education, too. Students are able to take moments to reflect and regulate their emotions during PE.

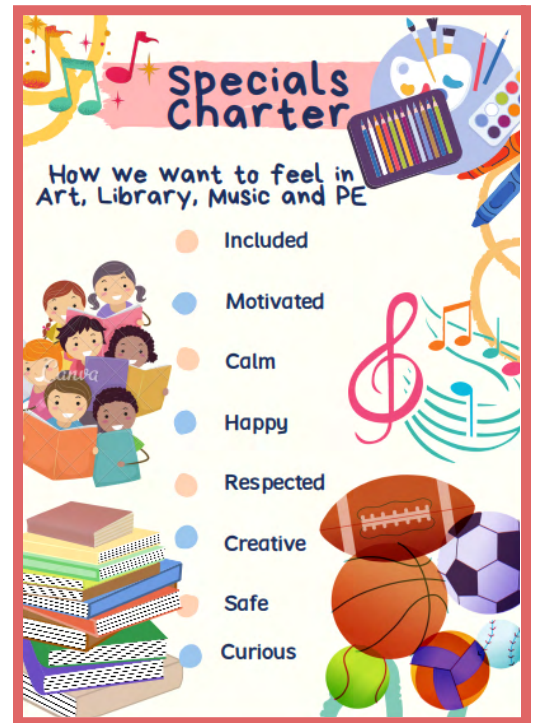




# **West District Elementary School**

## **Stop, Collaborate, and Envision!**

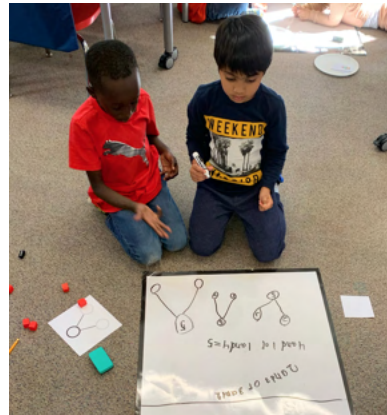
This year, West District Tigers came together in each grade to build a student-created Special's Charter that can be used in Art, Library, Music, and PE. Working together as grade-level teams, students articulated how they want to feel in specials each day. As specialists, we have noticed that having consistency between the four classes has helped students meet expectations, hold themselves accountable, foster independence/autonomy, and support each disposition in the Vision of a Global Citizen. As the year progresses, students will be able to use the Charter to reflect on their own contributions to their learning community in specials, and to set goals for their own improvement. The Charter has created a solid foundation that allows all students and teachers to be successful in each of our classes. The Specials Charter has already allowed students to successfully engage in cross-curricular learning as they took a Story Hike, pairing the story *Leaf Man* with an art activity involving natural materials collected on their hike.





## **Noah Wallace School**

The year is off to a great start. Our First Graders have built classroom communities and developed friendships with peers. They have done a fabulous job! As writers, first graders are telling stories about their experiences and writing small moment stories. This has been a fun and engaging way to get to know each other a little better. In Math, students are showing the dispositions of a Disciplined Thinker by learning how to communicate their ideas to others, collaborating in partnerships and groups during lessons. In reading, readers are building on what they learned in Kindergarten and learning to build good reading habits. We have been enjoying and cherishing every day that we have with them!







## ENGAGED LEARNING IN THE FARMINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

December 5, 2022

### **Farmington High School** **FHS Drama Club**

The FHS Drama Club, helmed by English Teacher Michael Gagnon as Director and Counselor Kurt Daigle as Producer, put on three performances of Joseph Kesselring's *Arsenic and Old Lace*. *AOL* is a theater classic. Despite its age, it remains popular among both professionals and amateurs, and for good reason. It's a true farce, full of larger-than-life characters and strung together with hilarious situational comedy. It's also a very demanding show, calling for an extensive set and feats of physical comedy and slapstick above and beyond your typical production. It is the kind of show where every performance demands the actors' full commitment to the roles.

The cast starred Oliver Przech ('23) as the protagonist, theater critic Mortimer Brewster; and Jordan Altimus ('23) and Rowan To ('24) as his deceptively sweet, but secretly murderous aunts. Owen Hill ('25) brought the villainous criminal Jonathan Brewster to life, supported by his accomplice, the plastic surgeon Dr. Einstein (not the famous one) portrayed by Marissa Nadeau ('24). Morgan McDade-Parsons ('26) portrayed Mortimer's hapless girlfriend Elaine and Eyden Gorman-Doyle ('26) made his debut as Mortimer's goofy younger brother Teddy. Other cast members included Michael Gove ('26), Alaina O'Keefe ('26), and Emma Reynolds ('26) as a dysfunctional but good-natured police force led by the hard-nosed Lieutenant Rooney, played by Theo Mancini ('24). Eva Skindaras ('26) and Abbey Gerace ('26), meanwhile, portrayed potential victims of the aunts' schemes.



**Friendsgiving**

FHS had a very successful Friendsgiving celebration on Tuesday, November 22.



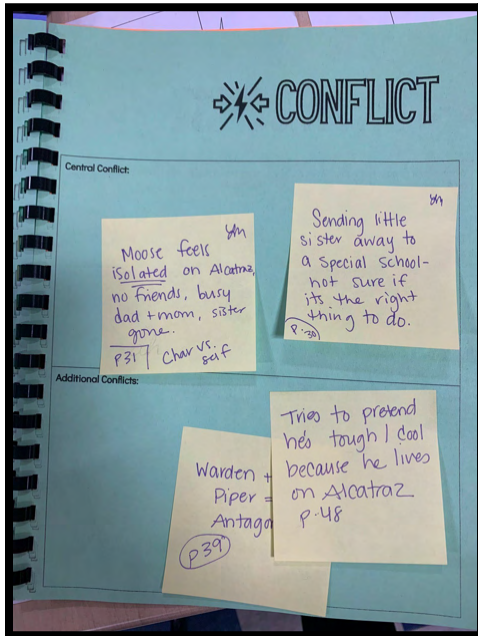




## **Irving A. Robbins**

### **Cultivating Independence in Independent Reading**

At the beginning of the school year, our English teachers at I.A.R. and F.H.S. were fortunate enough to be visited and taught by renowned literacy consultant, Kate Roberts. As a result, students in grades 7-12 are more regularly “jotting” and conferring about their reading. Teachers learned new techniques and strategies for supporting students in becoming more self-aware, independent readers! Our 7th and 8th graders demonstrate their self-awareness by identifying personal reading goals, committing to targeted action steps with their teachers, and following up in individual or group conferences to track progress towards those goals. Our teachers are consistently modeling the habits of mind of Engaged Collaborators and Self-Aware Individuals in their own professional learning and transferring it to their teaching and learning practices in the classroom.



### **Sharing the Joy of Reading**

Each Friday, the library at I.A.R. buzzes with the sound of preschool student giggles and middle school student reading. In partnership with the Farmington Preschool Collaborative, I.A.R.'s Library and Media Specialist, Alysson Olsen, facilitates reading partnerships between 7th and 8th grade students and our preschool students. I.A.R. students read aloud, ask questions about the book, and debrief how the books made their younger “buddies” feel. Our 7th and 8th grade students know how important it is to not just demonstrate the skills of being an engaged collaborator, but also how to model it for younger students!





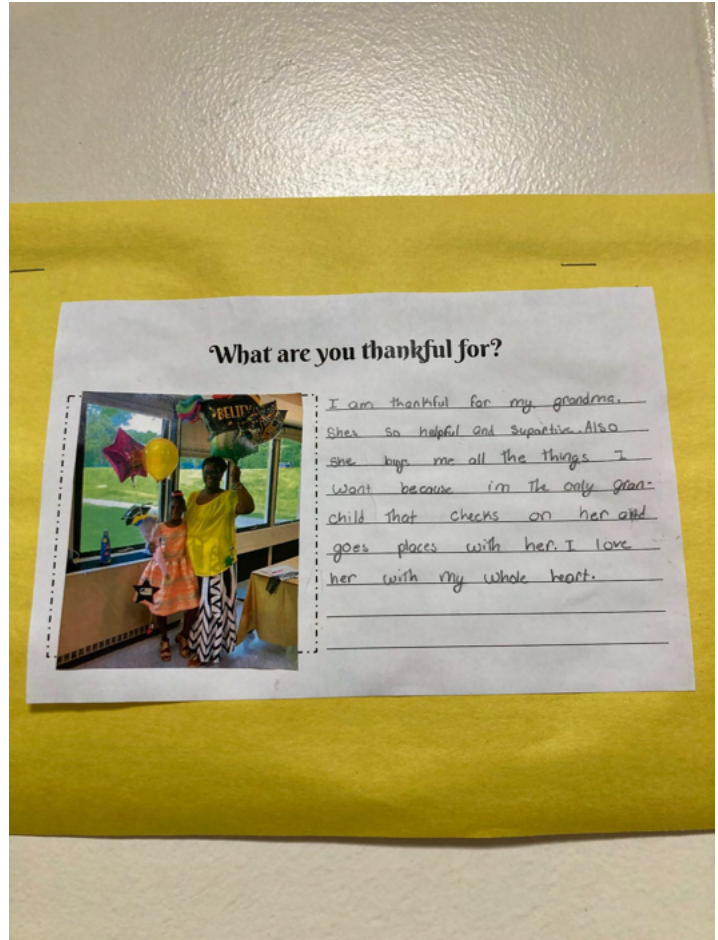
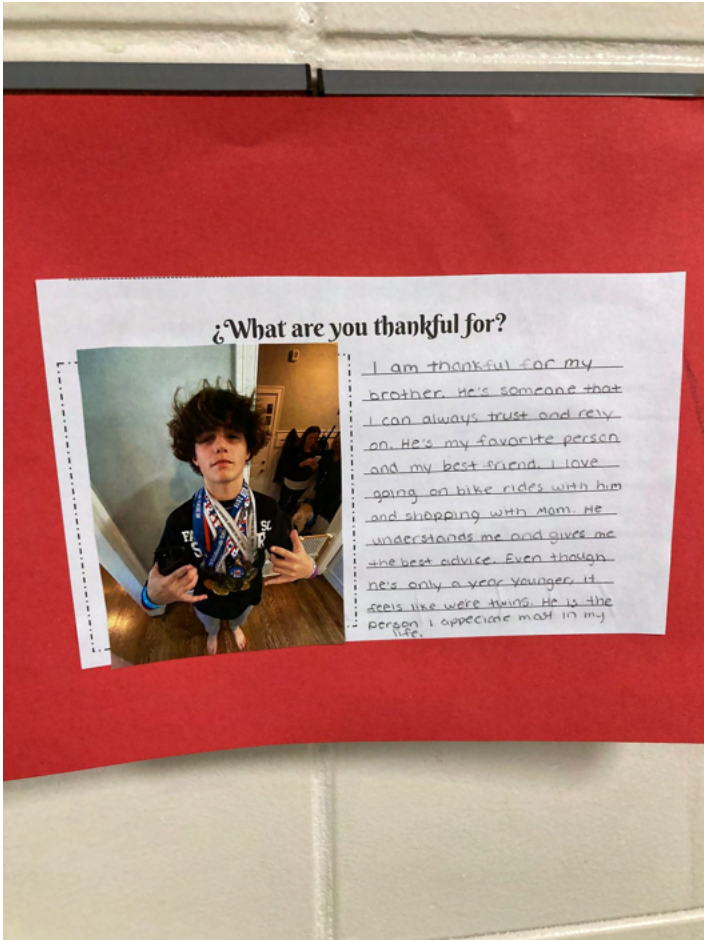
## **Annual Fun Run has amazing participation!**

IAR held its annual fun run on November 2! Over 200 students participated, and we raised funds for the American Red Cross, specifically for those impacted by Hurricane Ian. There were celebrations for the students who placed in the top five, for the most team participants, and for those who showed the most school spirit. We are excited to keep this tradition going as we are civic-minded contributors. We also had a great appearance from the FHS Riverhawk.



## The Spirit of Gratitude and the Season of Giving

I.A.R. students engaged in a series of advisory lessons to remember the importance of gratitude prior to Thanksgiving break. Students wrote in their gratitude journals, expressed thanks to their classmates for their contributions to the school community, and wrote thank you notes to educators, friends, and family. Each advisory class shared their products in the hallway and on bulletin boards. Also, the student council organized a donation for Farmington Food Pantry to support others in need during the holiday season. We encourage all students to express gratitude because as Dr. Laurie Santos, professor of psychology at Yale University and FPS convocation speaker, suggested it spreads joy and happiness.





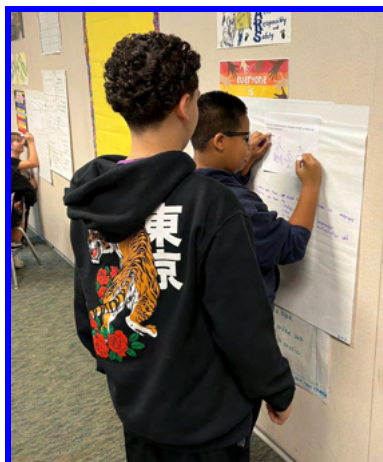
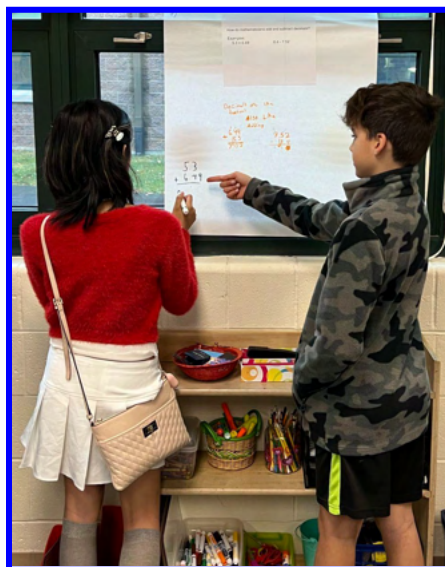
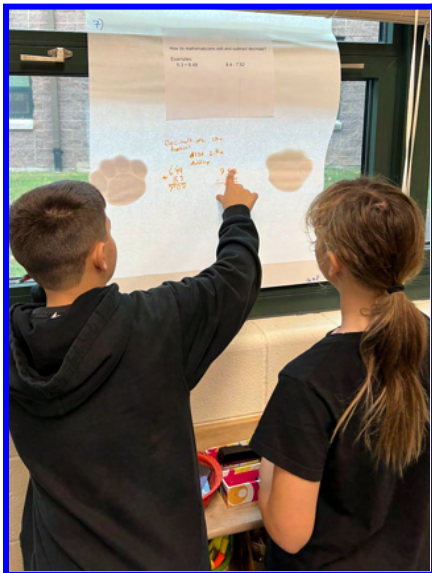
## **West Woods Upper Elementary School**

### **Giving Thanks at West Woods**

As a West Woods CREW, we have been celebrating Thanksgiving by reflecting on what we are thankful for, and finding ways to express our gratitude. Students have been engaging in reflective, collaborative discussions with peers and crafting thoughtful letters to those individuals that they are thankful for in their lives. Students are also learning that gratitude requires us to stay alert of the role of others in our lives and to empower kindness with action. During CREW time, teams have been discussing the many benefits of showing gratitude, including its impact on physical and emotional health, and the positive impact on our community. We have much to be thankful for as a WWUES family, and want to express our sincere appreciation to our Farmington community, teachers, families, and staff for loving and supporting our grade 5 and 6 learners. Our CREW believes the *West is the Best!*

### **Mathematicians at West Woods Exhibit Risk-Taking, Perseverance, and Collaboration**

West Woods mathematicians spent the first two months of school building classroom cultures where exploring, risk-taking, persevering, collaborating, and communicating are natural parts of their routines. Through these daily practices, students are not only learning the math content, they are also learning to *think* and *problem solve* and become mathematicians.



## **Union School**

### **Celebrating Veterans Day as a Union School Community**

On Friday, November 11th, the Union School community honored Veterans Day with an assembly, special artwork and bulletin boards, and handwritten letters of appreciation. Veterans were invited into the school to be honored at the student-led assembly. The Union School choir sang patriotic songs. Students learned about the history and importance of Veterans Day.





## Thanksgiving and Gratitude at Union School

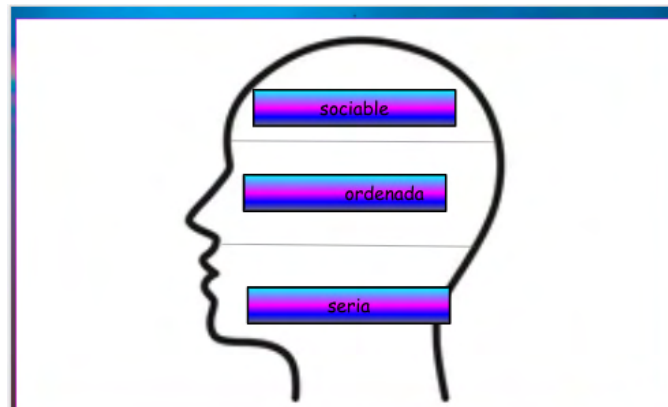
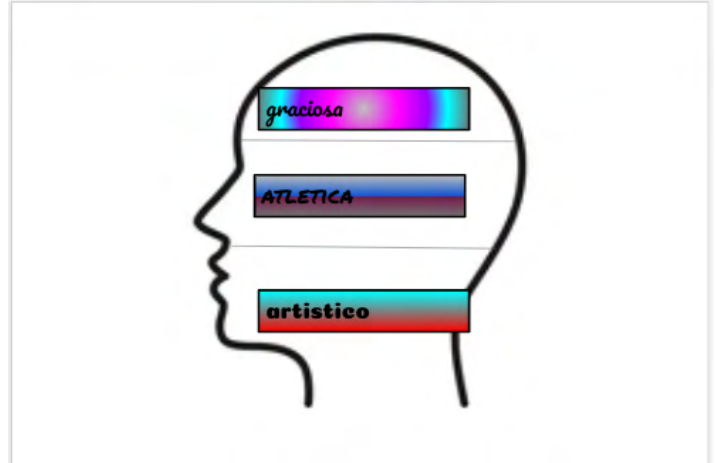
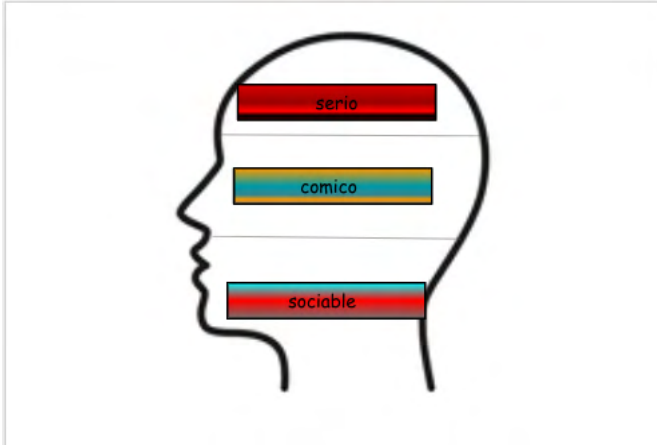
Students and teachers have been discussing gratitude throughout the month of November. Third graders have been brainstorming things they are thankful for and created gratitude lists that are hanging outside their classrooms. Kindergarten students created "I am thankful" books and painted beautiful artwork of turkeys to celebrate the season.



## **East Farms**

### **East Farms' Self Aware Individuals**

Third graders at East Farms School are learning how to be self-aware individuals. In Spanish class, students reflected on their own personalities and chose three adjectives that best described who they are as individuals.



### **Disciplined Thinkers:**

Fourth graders at East Farms School are disciplined thinkers exhibiting creativity, flexibility and persistence. Students created videos at home showing their own reactions to both delicious food combinations and interesting ones. Students needed to research the appropriate vocabulary and reaction words in order to create an authentic video.



## **West District Elementary School**

### **Honoring Our Veterans**

West District Tigers are **civic-minded contributors** who are learning to show compassion, responsibility, and stewardship to those in our community who have sacrificed so much for the safety of our country. On Friday, November 11, 2022, West District School welcomed our community veterans back into school for the first in-person Veterans Day celebration in many years. The families of our students shared pictures and stories of their time serving our country, and many joined us in person to be honored during our assembly. Ms. Adrienne Foret, our talented music teacher and a proud service member in the Connection Army National Guard, shared what being a member of the military has meant to her. Students collected quarters to make a generous donation to Operation Gratitude, an organization whose mission is to honor the service of our Military and First Responders by creating opportunities to express gratitude, and a beautiful wreath was placed at the Veterans' Memorial at Town Hall to honor the sacrifices and service of our military veterans. West District Tigers are filled with gratitude for the men and women who have served and continue to serve our country so proudly. Thank you, Veterans!



## Expressing Our Gratitude

In celebration of the Thanksgiving holiday, West District Tigers identified ways to demonstrate their gratitude. Classes read Thanksgiving stories and created gratitude trees to celebrate all the people in their lives for whom they are so grateful. Students identified family members, pets, our service people, and their teachers as important people in their lives who are deserving of their gratitude. In their classes, many students created centerpieces to bring home to their families as expressions of gratitude and love. As global citizens and civic-minded contributors, students are learning to demonstrate their gratitude by showing compassion for others and service to their communities. Following the Thanksgiving holiday, students are collecting snack foods to contribute to the Farmington Food Pantry. This act of service was organized by our Student Council as an act of service to our community and an expression of their gratitude.

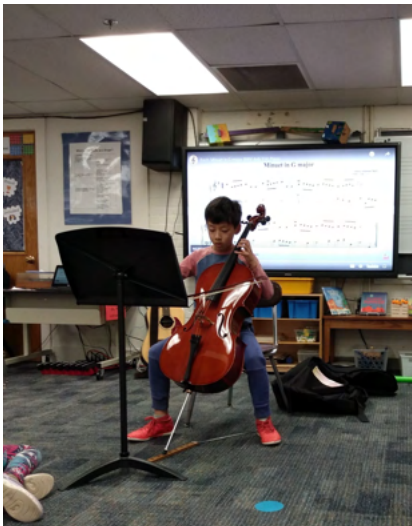




## **Noah Wallace School**

### **Engaged Learning and Honoring Our Veterans**

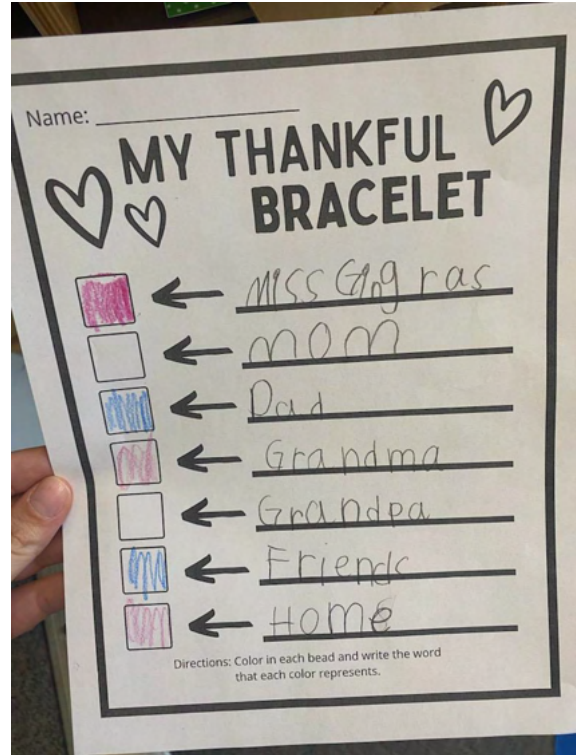
Noah Wallace students have been singing, dancing, reading music, and playing instruments in music class. All students have listened to our Musicians of the Month: Lin Manuel Miranda (September), Johann Sebastian Bach (October), and Yo Yo Ma (November). We came together as a school on November 11th to honor our Veterans. We offered several performances to the Veterans in our community: the Noah Wallace Choir (grade 4) performed *My Country 'Tis of Thee*, Audrea Wang and Mrs. Gilligan performed *This Land is Your Land* on the piano, and the whole school sang *This Land is Your Land*. We are looking forward to the following music events and hope to see you at our choir concert on December 15th on the front steps of the school!





## Thanksgiving Activities at Noah Wallace

Our first graders made turkeys with feathers that showed what they are thankful for. Our kindergarten students made bracelets. Each bead represented something that the student was grateful for in their lives. One kindergarten class made cranberry sauce and bread to share with their families.







# ENGAGED LEARNING IN THE FARMINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

March 20, 2023

## **Farmington High School**

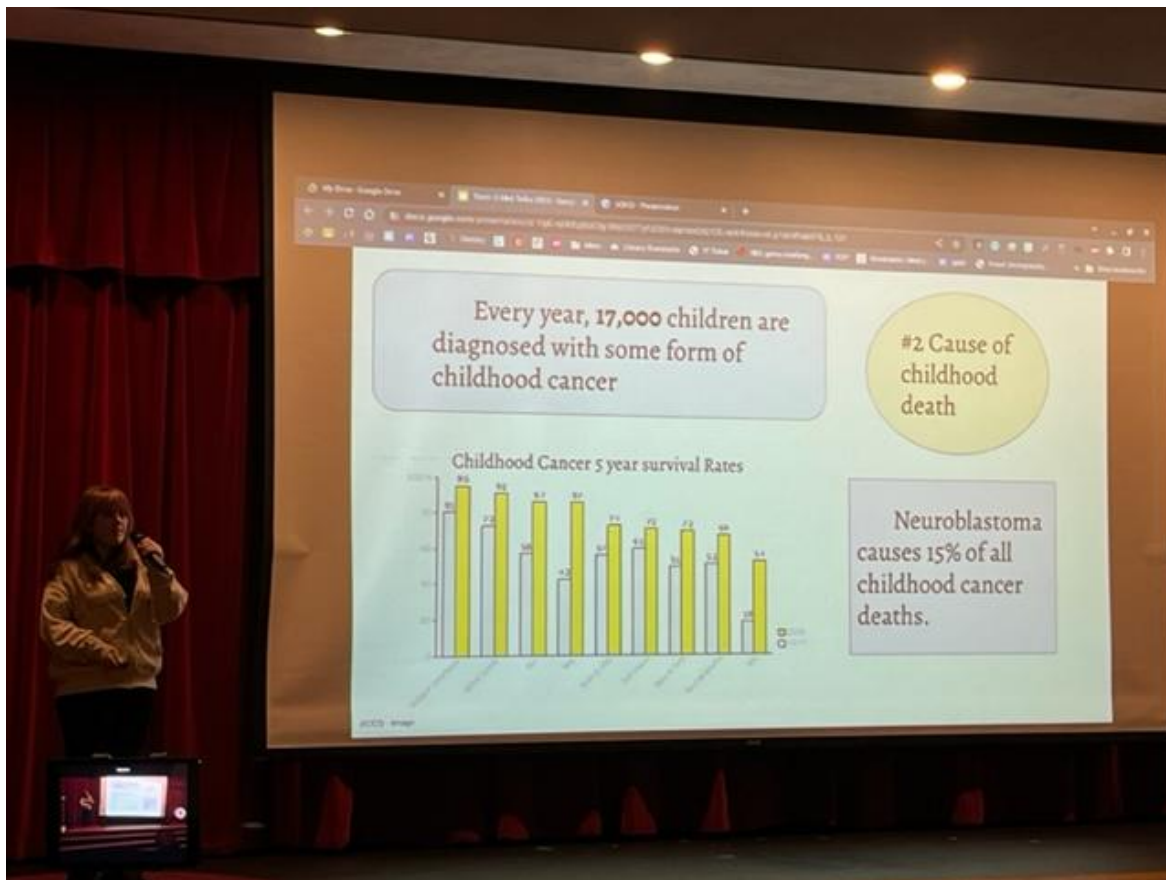
As part of celebrating Black History Month at FHS, on February 15th the FHS Black Student Union moderated a panel to recognize Black Excellence and Achievement in Connecticut. Over 200 FHS students attended the panel in the FHS Library and learned so much from our distinguished panelists.



## Irving A. Robbins

### Medical Moment

When was the last time you took a moment to educate yourself on your own well-being or factors that could affect your future health and those of people you care about? We commend our 8th graders for taking a moment to educate our IAR community about the interdependent systems of the human body as related to their medical moment topic. Many students chose personally meaningful areas of study related to family, friends or even their own personal medical situations. Students presented on topics from Parkinson's disease to diabetes to broken bones and selective mutism. The engaging newsletters, powerful MedTalks, and captivating screencasts allowed our students to shine as civic-minded contributors as they educated each of us about the causes, effects, treatments and implications of their topic. We are so proud of our students and would like to extend appreciation to our teachers and the medical experts in our community who showed unwavering commitment to this project!





## Podcast Challenge

Over the course of the last few weeks, empowered learners at I.A.R. have been researching, scripting, recording, and editing "podcasts with purpose" on a topic of interest. Topics this year included: the insulin shortage, cryptozoology, e-waste, the importance of music education, cybersecurity, worker's rights, and more! Students had the opportunity to conduct interviews with professionals in their field of study, attend feedback workshops facilitated by our 8th graders, and create their own music and sound effects. The Language Arts project culminated with a Celebration of Learning where students posed questions to a panel of experts, listened to each other's podcasts, and identified their favorite podcast on each team. As students interviewed each other about the project, one student reflected: "I learned what it means to persevere. It was so frustrating at first to do more research, re-write, and re-record my podcast - but in the end it was worth it. I'm proud of myself for sticking with it."



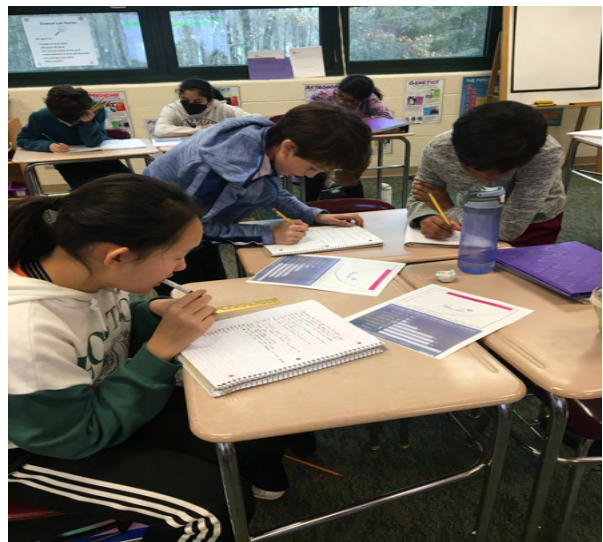
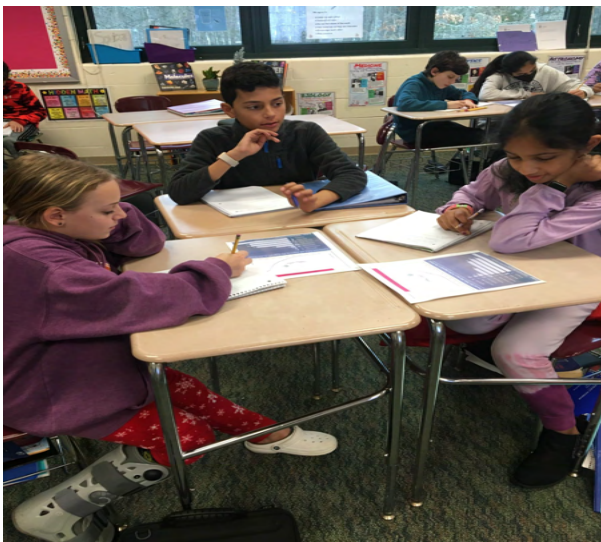
## **West Woods Upper Elementary School**

This month at West Woods, 6th grade students began a new science unit about Human Impact on the Earth through the lens of The Great Pacific Garbage Patch and plastics in the ocean. Did you know that the Great Pacific Garbage Patch, a big accumulation of ocean plastic swirling around in a gyre between Hawaii and California, covers an area three times bigger than the country of France?

We kicked off the unit by watching parts of the documentary, "A Plastic Tide", which highlighted the dramatic effect that humans have had on the environment including the large amount of plastic found in the ocean as well as the positive impact that a small group of people had on cleaning up local beaches. It inspired the students to act as stewards of the Earth!

To further our study on the issue of plastics in the ocean, we also tackled the rigorous task of developing a procedure for analyzing graphs during science class. Just as nonfiction readers follow certain action steps when reading a book, scientists also follow steps to understand a graph. Students worked in collaborative groups to determine five steps that could be applied to understanding the author's purpose or call to action of any graph. This data reinforced the problem of plastics in the ocean and motivated us to take action.

We are looking forward to finding ways that we can change our everyday behaviors to start solving the problem that has been created and will be educating and inspiring others to be a part of the solution!





## Union School

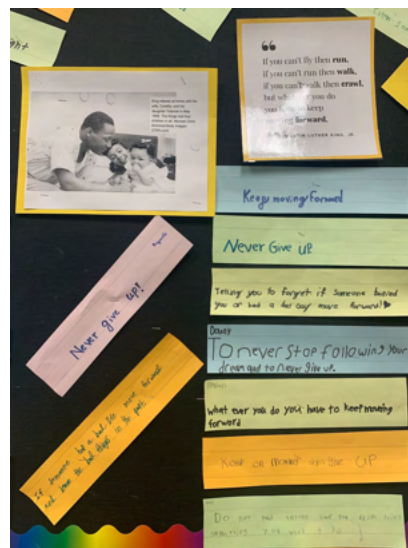
### Union School Welcomes Nash!

All students and staff at Union School have been excited to welcome our new School Resource Officer, Tony Ruggiero, and Nash, his facility/therapy dog. Nash did a great job listening to this group of students read aloud to him about therapy dogs. In the past few weeks, Nash has acquired many fans throughout the school. He is a great listener!



### Union School Celebrates Black History Month

In February, the Union School school community celebrated Black History Month. Throughout the month, students studied and learned about the contributions of black Americans through reading, research, and special visitors and guest readers from Farmington High School. At the end of the month we held an assembly hosted by our Student Council and KID (Kindness, Inclusion, Diversity) club.



## **East Farms**

During the interdisciplinary science unit, Forces and Motion, second graders were disciplined thinkers and empowered learners as they worked through the engineering process. The problem was to design a model of a roller coaster using upcycled materials such as pool noodles, cardboard tubes and duct tape. They worked collaboratively to design, build, and test their project. Throughout the process, they reflected on their work as engineers by thinking about what was going well and what needed to be improved. Teams then presented their roller coasters to each other sharing their engineer thinking.





## March Madness at East Farms!

Students, faculty and staff joined in community-building spirit days to celebrate Read Across America Week. East Farms was all smiles as we connected fun themed days to reading a variety of books that represent our culturally diverse community and country. As **Civic-Minded** learners we are open to learning about traditions and experiences different from our own. We celebrated the “Power of Words” by wearing expressive t-shirts, reading about inspirational leaders, and collecting quotes from books that encourage us to be our best selves. We were also delighted in listening to stories from guest readers, including parents, grandparents, and FHS students.



# West District Elementary School

## **Tiny Tigers Becoming Global Citizens**

Throughout their year of kindergarten, West District Tigers have been developing independence in discussing and thinking about the Vision of the Global Citizen. With developmentally appropriate vocabulary instruction followed by meaningful experiences that reinforce the concepts, learning about these dispositions becomes accessible to our youngest learners. Throughout their days, kindergarteners are purposefully engaged in opportunities for learning that draw upon the transdisciplinary skills of the VOGC. Kindergarteners show these dispositions each day, one recently stating, “When something new is scary, I don’t cry. I am brave.” Building habits of socially and emotionally productive behaviors, beginning in kindergarten, lays the foundation for students to achieve academic and personal excellence. When reflecting upon what it means to be an engaged collaborator, another student shared “Sometimes, I help other kids, and when we go outside we help each other on the swings. We do it all the time. It makes me feel happy because I care about my friends.”



**Vision of the Global Citizen**  
By: Miss Zygiel's Kindergarten Class

I am a **self-aware individual** when I make good choices.

I am an **empowered learner** when I notice, wonder and explore new things.

I am a **disciplined thinker** when I try my best.

I am an **engaged collaborator** when I work and play with others.

I am a **civic minded contributor** when I take care of my classroom community.

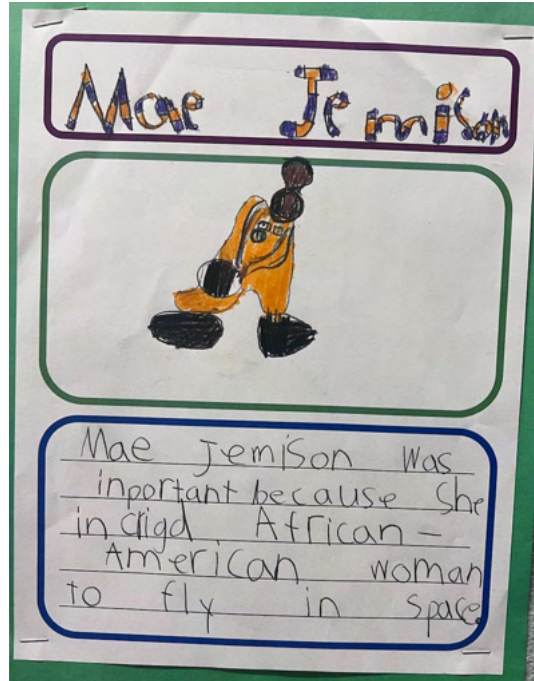
The central graphic is a vertical poster with a white background and a green border. It features the title "Vision of the Global Citizen" in large, colorful letters at the top. Below the title, it says "By: Miss Zygiel's Kindergarten Class". The poster is divided into five horizontal sections, each with a small cartoon illustration of a child and a short sentence describing a disposition. Each section also includes several small photographs of children in various classroom and outdoor settings that illustrate the disposition.





## **Noah Wallace School**

Noah Wallace celebrated Black History Month during February. The Noah Wallace IDEA+ Club and PTO invited Iddi Saaka to share his music, dance, and culture with our entire community. One highlight was when Iddi invited students to play traditional Ghanaian instruments with him. All students also studied an influential African American individual who helped to make a difference and the students taught others about the person's impact.



During professional development on March 2, teachers and paraprofessionals read chapter 7 of Culturally Responsive Teaching and the Brain and focused on the learning target: ***We can foster a growth mindset and restore our students' natural confidence as learners to shift their academic mindset.*** Teachers and paraprofessionals studied Hammond's suggestions for shifting the academic mindsets of our students and annotated ways that they support students during this process. Some examples included:

- Help students connect with their current expertise and competencies
- Notice and acknowledge when students are acting according to the elements of academic mindset.



## ENGAGED LEARNING IN THE FARMINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

April 4, 2023

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### Farmington High School

#### **Farmington High School – FHS Athletes and Coach Honored with Postseason Accolades**

Nick DeBrito '23, Luke Watson '23 and Head Football Coach Chris Machol set to be honored by The Doc Boisoeneau Northern Connecticut Chapter & College Hall of Fame on May 21st.

On Wednesday (March 15, 2023), two members (John Quaglia Jr. and Mark Snyder) from the The Doc Boisoeneau Northern Connecticut Chapter & College Hall of Fame surprised Nick DeBrito, Luke Watson and Coach Machol (in addition to family members, school counselors and FHS Administration) and presented Nick and Luke as the newest members of the organizations Scholar-Athlete Award. They will join 12 other student-athletes at the Aqua Turf, on May 21, for an awards ceremony and dinner.

The recipients of the scholar-athlete award were selected based upon a resume which takes into account Football Performance, Leadership, Community Involvement and Scholarship. Approximately 1,000 student-athletes (from 80 schools) were eligible for this award. 14 student-athletes were selected as recipients of the Scholar-Athlete Award.

Coach Machol is also being honored at the event as the recipient of the Asaph Schwapp Scholar-Athlete Alumnus Award. Coach played football at Newington High School from 1994-1997 and was the recipient of The Northern Connecticut Chapter & College Hall of Fame Scholar-Athlete award in 1998.

For more information about attending the banquet on May 21 please click [here](#).





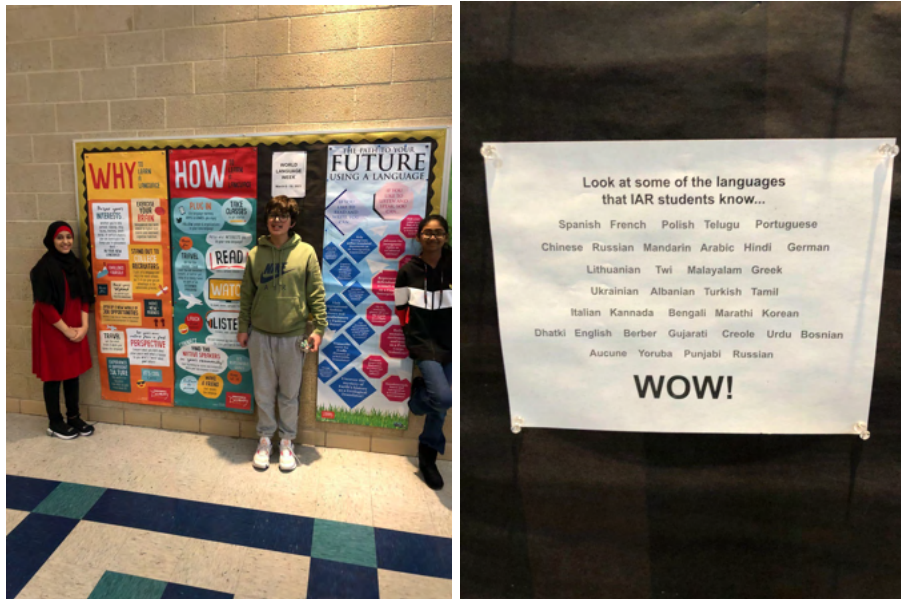
## Farmington High School – FHS Social Justice Council Wins SERC Award

The Farmington High School (FHS) Social Justice Council was recently honored with the George A. Coleman Award by the Connecticut State Educational Resource Center (SERC) and they will be recognized at the *Dismantling Systemic Racism: 2023 Conference on Race, Education, and Success*. The Social Justice Council is made up of FHS students from the following clubs: Asian American Student Union, Black Student Union, BRAVE (Female Empowerment), Gender Sexuality Alliance, Indian Student Union, Jewish Student Union, LatinX Culture Club, Mental Health Awareness Club, Multicultural Student Union, Muslim Student Union, and Social Justice Club. The Social Justice Council led the planning and implementation of the 7th Annual [Social Justice Week](#) at FHS. Each year over 2,000 students, faculty, and staff attend the Social Justice Week presentations in an effort to “create an inclusive culture of respect, belonging, and high expectations” ([FPS Equity Framework](#)). The students on the Social Justice Council are embracing the district's commitment to Equity and they embody the district Vision of the Global Citizen.



## Irving A. Robbins

IAR joyfully celebrated **World Language Week** (March 6-10) throughout the building! It is a week across the United States to celebrate & promote how languages benefit our lives! Students shared morning announcements in the following languages: Telugu, Chinese, French, and Portuguese!



The IAR World Language Club created this bulletin board for the main lobby of the school!



In Advisory, students shared which languages they know; these papers were left on the outside of student lockers for the week so everyone could walk by and see all the languages of our community!





## West Woods Upper Elementary School

### *Physical Education*

Recently, 5th and 6th grade students at West Woods took part in a Badminton unit during their physical education classes. The unit began with students exploring the history of badminton and its cultural origins. Students then shared with each other their own personal experiences and connections to the game. Then, they began working to unpack a variety of skills, as well as an understanding of the rules needed to lead to playing in a culminating doubles badminton tournament. Additionally, students had the opportunity to view a professional badminton match to observe for strategies used in the game that they might not have previously considered. West Woods Wildcats had the opportunity to apply the new strategies they discovered to their final round of games. For example, prior to watching the professional badminton match, students noted that they had assumed the only way to cover the court was to stand side by side with their partner and had never considered any other option. After watching the professional doubles match, students were seen attempting the “front and back” coverage strategy in their own games. Students demonstrated a high level of engagement throughout the unit as the complexity of skills and application of strategies progressed.





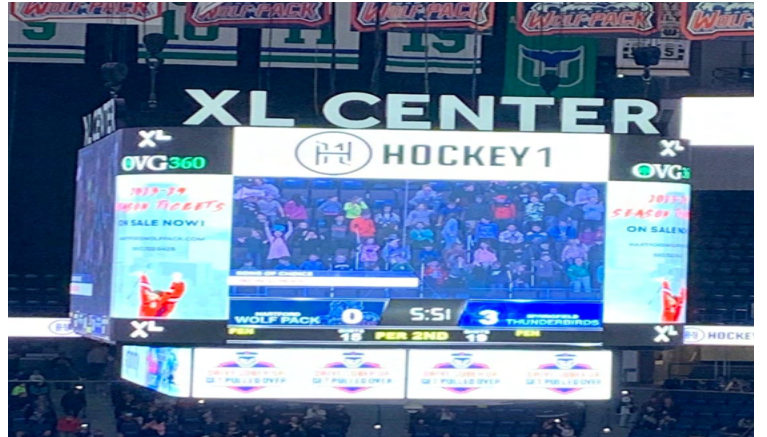
## *Physical Health and Wellness*

In Grade 6 Physical Health and Wellness, students learned about keeping themselves safe in a number of different ways. Topics included fire safety, sun safety, bike and car safety, and water safety. During the fire safety lesson, students learned about the importance of having an evacuation plan in the case of a fire emergency. Students also learned about what constitutes a detailed and effective plan, specifically related to their own homes. Aspects to consider included where doors and windows are, a primary and secondary escape path from each room, and a setting a meeting spot where they would reconvene with their family once safely outside. Students then had the opportunity to draw a map of their home, making note of all the important aspects of an evacuation plan. Students were then tasked with bringing this plan home to share with family members, post in a visible place, and practice at least twice a year. This authentic and relevant task was highly engaging to students and provided them with a clear purpose that will positively impact their daily lives outside of school.



## Union School

Union School Students performing, out and about and in the school



Union School Students are civic minded both in the school and beyond. Students from all grades performed the song "This Little Light of Mine" at the Hartford Wolfpack game on Saturday, March 25th. We had over 50 students in attendance and were featured during the break between the 2nd and 3rd period. Ms. Inga Smith led the students in song.

Our third grade strings musicians, led by Ms. Mikaela Oss, are performing classroom mini-concerts throughout the school. These third graders, all of whom are new to strings this year, have worked hard to learn what it means to be instrumental musicians. They are enjoying sharing their new performance skills with younger friends in the school.





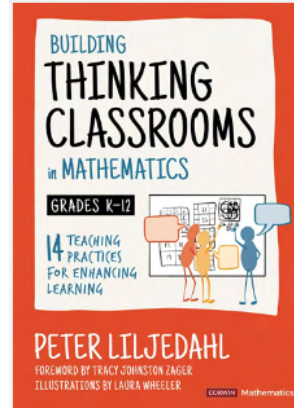
## Kindergarten Read Alouds with a Cool Audience

Kindergarteners in Ms. Chang, Mrs. Galvin, and Mrs. Persa's classes reserved time with our facility dog Nash and his friend Clifton (Simsbury Police Department). They are practicing reading aloud and sharing some of their favorite stories with these K-9 friends.



## East Farms

First grade mathematicians at East Farms have been trying out some strategies from the book *Building Thinking Classrooms in Mathematics* by Peter Liljedahl. These strategies yielded outcomes where students were able to demonstrate that they are Engaged Collaborators.



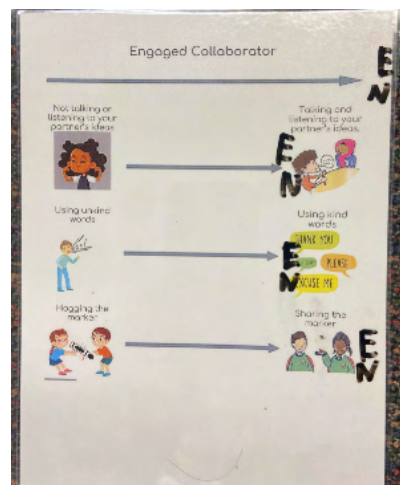
Students show how they have adaptability and can work with diverse groups of people. Each day they have random partners for the anchor task by choosing a playing card.



Students seek to understand the ideas of others and take perspective by working with only one marker and actively listening to their partners ideas.



Students reflect on how they did by using a kid-friendly engaged collaborator rubric.





## West District Elementary School

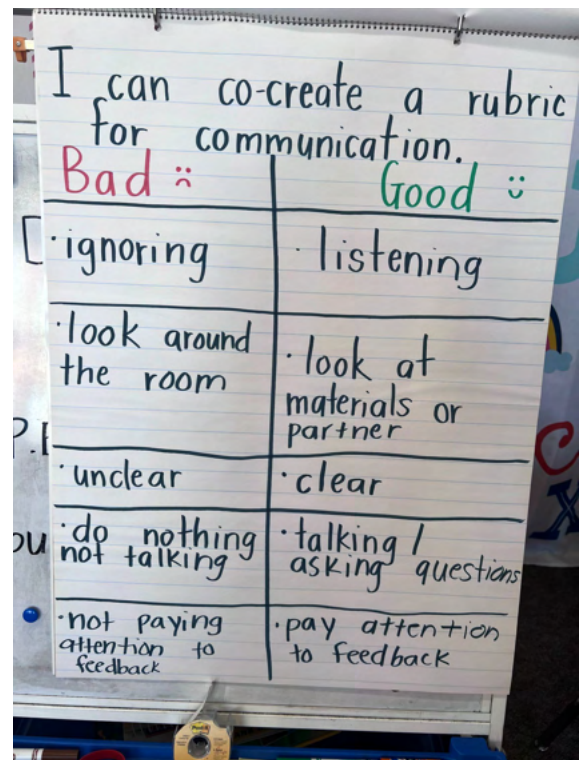
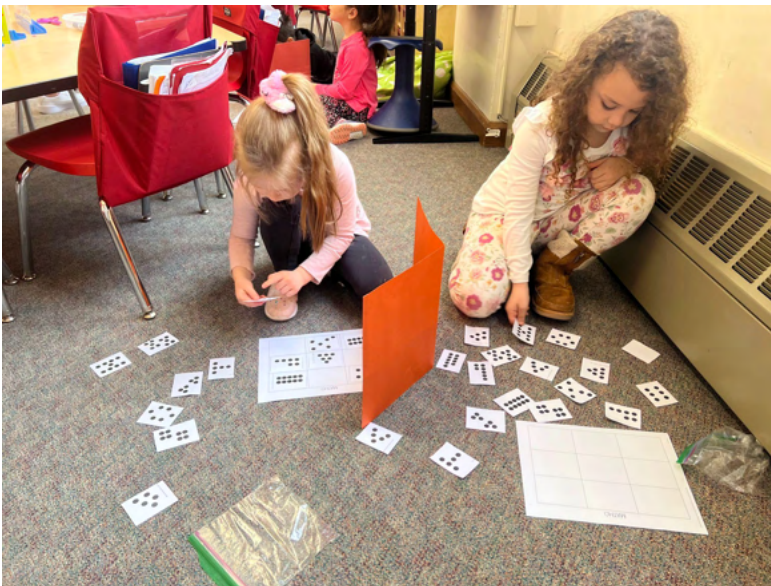
West District Tigers in third grade are becoming **Civic-Minded Contributors** as they learn to be stewards of the land. On Wednesday, March 22nd, third graders kicked off a new integrated unit (On This Land: Indigenous Peoples and Colonists) by engaging in a collaborative task that allowed them to explore how the earliest inhabitants used the land. Students were tasked with using natural resources to create clothing, forms of shelter, and tools for building, eating, and playing. Through this inquiry-based activity, students were able to compare and contrast their own experiences which helped students gain perspective and develop an appreciation for others. Third graders were **Disciplined Thinkers** when they worked creatively and flexibly to design innovative solutions to the task at hand. Students are excited to continue learning, exploring, and contributing to the betterment of their local community as they progress through the unit.



## Noah Wallace School

**Disciplined thinkers** are persistent, collaborate, and communicate effectively. Students in kindergarten developed rubrics to help them become more persistent and better collaborators when working on learning tasks earlier this year.

Most recently, students engaged in a math task in groups of two and had to communicate with their partner to help determine the configuration of certain dot cards. After this task, students brainstormed ways that they were good communicators and ways that they needed to improve their communication skills. This list will become a new communication rubric that they will be able to use when communicating with their peers during learning tasks.







# ENGAGED LEARNING IN THE FARMINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

May 1, 2023

## Farmington High School

### **NHS & Red Cross Club host Blood Drive**

The National Honor Society partnered with the Red Cross Club to sponsor a Red Cross blood drive at FHS. Danielle Huntington, our Red Cross liaison, shared the good news that the drive was very successful. She told us the following:

"Our goal was to collect 25 units (1 unit = 1 donation) and we far surpassed that and ended up with 31 units. The students did such an amazing job properly educating and preparing their donors that we had our lowest deferral (turn away) number in years. Every unit of blood saves 3 lives and because of their hard work, almost 100 people will receive the lifesaving treatment and transfusions that they need to see another day."



## Irving A. Robbins

### **Author Visit with Dr. Padma Venkatraman**

7th and 8th grade global citizens at I.A.R. were privileged to hear from renowned YA author, Padma Venkatraman at the end of March. Dr. Venkatraman has written several novels that our students read over the course of their time at both West Woods and Irving Robbins. Her visit began with a small group meet-and-greet with several of our students who were able to pose questions to her about her reading life, her writing process, and how she became a writer (she has a fascinating background!). Dr. Venkatraman then addressed the whole school on the importance of diversity, especially in texts, and compassion.





## Earth Day Celebrations

April 22 is recognized as a global day to celebrate nature and bring awareness to our Earth. Eighth grade students toured the IAR campus to explore different aspects directly around us that have an impact on our area. As they walked the outskirts of the wetlands area, one of our paraprofessional experts and IAR Garden Club advisor, Ms. Jerkiewicz, introduced students to the importance of flood control, controlling pollutants, drought protection and the ecosystem. Mr. Mullaj, one of our dedicated custodians, educated students about our science courtyard, which includes our pond and greenhouse. He emphasized growing local food and caring for our duck friends, who return to nest each year and provide us with an opportunity to watch their ducklings grow and mature throughout the spring! Back in science class, students offer suggestions and reflect on their contributions as citizens to help keep people, ecosystems and wildlife healthy. Seventh grade advisory classes chose to explore a topic related to our larger Farmington community, which could have included topics related to the Farmington Green Efforts Commission, local farms, our community garden plots, the Farmington River and our local water department.



## West Woods Upper Elementary School

West Woods sixth graders have been engaged in the study of Latin America. Students kicked off the unit with a geography exploration to develop a sense of location and understanding of the landforms in this region. Students explored images to define "What is a Civilization?" where they developed the understanding of the universal components of a civilization (government, religion, jobs, social classes, writing/communication, cities/technology, arts). They used those categories to develop research questions about the Maya, Inca, and Aztec Peoples. Further conversations were had about culture and how people's perspective, practices and products play a significant role.

On April 6, West Woods sixth graders enjoyed a daylong celebration of Latin America by holding a FIESTA! This day is a part of our social studies unit on Latin America. The day began with an assembly by Trio Surcari, a Latin American musical group, who performed authentic dance and instrumental music. In preparation for this fiesta, students made crafts related to Latin American culture, which they sold to other students in the Mercado (marketplace) on the morning of the fiesta. Overall, it was a wonderful experience for students and staff alike.





## Union School

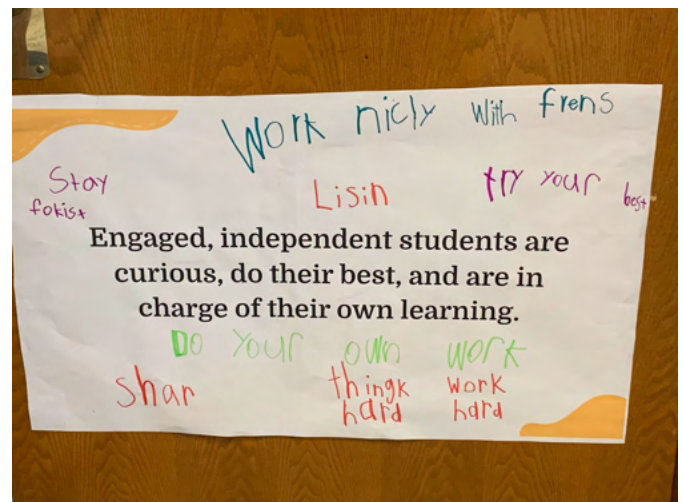
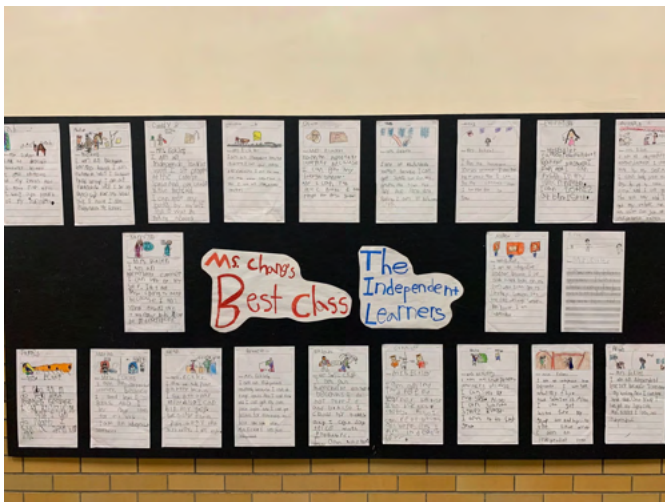
### Kindergarten and Grade 1 Reading Night at the Zoo

On March 28th, Union School Kindergarten and first grade students and their families were invited to attend a special literacy night event, Night at the Zoo. Each classroom had a different theme/activity related to an area or animal at the zoo. There were also craft activities and an amazing photo booth. We had amazing attendance at this family event.



### Engaged, Independent Learners Across the School

The Union School community has come up with one, unifying definition of what it means to be an engaged, independent learner. Through focus groups and class meetings this definition was developed with input from every student in the school. Once a definition was narrowed down, it was shared with the community at our March celebration assembly. Each classroom is working to annotate and develop the definition further based on the norms and expectations of their grade level and classroom community.





## East Farms

First graders have been busy learning all about the weather in science! We have studied the different parts of weather and how it affects our lives.

Some first graders then started to inquire more about precipitation. These **Empowered Learners** asked questions, such as: “Where does the rain come from?” and, “What happens to the water in puddles after it rains?” These questions led to studies about the water cycle. After researching and learning, we made our own water cycle experiments!



Other first graders spent more time studying and researching all about the wind! These **Disciplined Thinkers** then used different materials to design, build, and test their own wind tools!





## West District Elementary School

West District's first grade tigers developed skills as **Disciplined Thinkers** and **Engaged Collaborators** through two engineering projects related to our science and social studies units of study. Our social studies unit (Geography and the World) focused on the question "How does geography affect the way people live?" The unit culminated with an engineering task in which students were challenged to design, build and test a house that would stay dry inside, proving a successful construction. Throughout the process, students were disciplined thinkers as they demonstrated flexibility, persistence, logical reasoning, and creativity. Additionally, they developed skills as engaged collaborators through active listening to the ideas of others, effective communication, compromise, and adaptability all while having fun. Later in our weather unit, first graders had the opportunity to hone these skills as they worked in teams to develop a tool that would measure the speed of the wind. This task tested students' persistence as many of their initial attempts did not work. They practiced flexible thinking and adaptability by considering what they would do differently on a second attempt.





## Noah Wallace School

At the Annual Meeting of the Farmington Land Trust on April 21, Ms. Nelson and her Noah Wallace kindergarten students were recognized as “Stewards of the Year.” Ms. Nelson and her class have been actively involved in promoting conservation and sustainability practices at Noah Wallace and in the Farmington community. Ms. Nelson and her students regularly visit one of Farmington’s Land Trust properties known as the Bull Lot. They have learned the importance of stewardship and have been actively involved in taking care of the property and learning about the plants and animals that live in that habitat. These students understand the role of the steward and how it has helped them become civic-minded contributors. One student stated in a book they wrote, “I am a good steward when I am planting seeds and watering plants.” Another student read a poem at the meeting that she wrote about the Bull Lot:

At the Bull Lot  
By: Zohana  
Nature and  
Water for animals to drink  
Scientists learning  
Amazing discoveries  
Waiting to be found







## ENGAGED LEARNING IN THE FARMINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

May 15, 2023

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### Farmington High School

#### **Class of 2026 takes part in ADL's Names Can Really Hurt Us Assembly**

On May 3rd the FHS Class of 2026 took part in the Names Can Really Hurt Us assembly, which was co-facilitated by FHS students and the Anti-Defamation League (ADL). The Names program is a dynamic, student-centered assembly program designed to provide a safe forum for students to examine important and difficult issues and begin to effect positive change in their own behavior and their school. Central to the Names Assembly program is a panel of students who share with their peers their stories about bullying and name-calling. Student voice is a key part to the Names Assembly and many times during the assembly students were able to participate and have their voices heard. The assembly culminated with FHS students sharing next steps about what we can do to improve the climate and culture as One School, One Community, and One Us.

## Irving A. Robbins Middle School

### **IAR Science Bowl Team Competes at Nationals**

At the end of April, Irving A. Robbins Middle School students Claire, Samanyu, Daniel, Pranit and Chengcheng competed in the national science bowl competition. From 9:30 a.m. to 8 p.m. (with breaks for snacks and meals), they competed against 47 other teams from the continental U.S., Hawaii, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. Their coach, Mrs. Nancy Stacy, their families, former and current teachers and their science bowl teammates at IAR helped to prepare them well for the competition! Students were required to be self-aware individuals, knowing themselves and how to best navigate the opportunities of the competition. They met civic-minded contributors who volunteered for the NSB event, many as alumni, from different STEM-related organizations and professions. We are proud to announce that our team placed in the Top 8 at the competition, earning \$1000 for IAR! Students answered questions in the fields of energy, biology, physics, math, earth and space science and chemistry. We are proud of our empowered learners for their academic achievements, but also for the compassion, inclusivity, understanding and encouragement they showed to not only each other, but to the other teams who were competing as well, representing the best traits of who we are in Farmington!





## Welcoming Our Newest Roadrunners to IAR

Transition planning happens throughout the year at IAR. We know that **Actions Matter**, and the actions we take to welcome our new students are very important. We have several spring events designed to help us get to know our new students and their families, as well as helping them get to know us and our building. Recently, we had two important transition events, our new family orientation meeting in March, and our rising 6th grade students will visit IAR in May. Our student ambassadors are key members of the team for both events, which allows them to be **Civic-minded Contributors** contributing to our school community and helping fellow FPS students to acclimate to their new school. They are also **Engaged Collaborators** who help to create an inclusive environment by showing empathy and communicating effectively. Our ambassadors had an opportunity to share their personal experiences at IAR and these contributions were knowledgeable and reflective, also demonstrating how they are **Empowered Learners**.

## College and Career Readiness at IAR



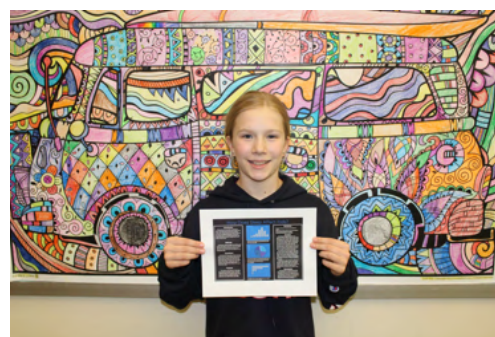
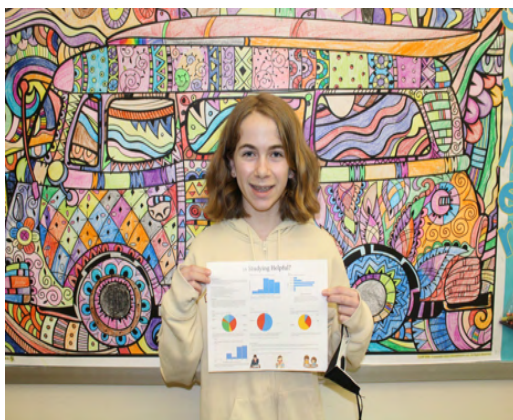
The School Counseling Department is hosting college and career readiness month at IAR during May. Students will utilize Naviance to improve their self-awareness by completing a career-interest inventory and learning about career clusters. These activities are designed to empower students to match their personality, interests, strengths and skills with an appropriate future occupation. All students will receive direct instruction through advisory, guidance lessons and several school-wide initiatives to empower them to take charge of their learning and make informed decisions about their future.

## West Woods Upper Elementary School

During the months of February and March, sixth grade students in advanced math focused on two units: introduction to statistics, and measures of central tendency. To kick off these units, teachers presented the long term learning targets, as well as the opportunity for students to apply their knowledge and skills to a contest offered by the CT Chapter of the American Statistical Association. For the contest, students were asked to:

- Select a topic to investigate;
- Gather and examine data from different points of view, and
- Summarize the data and present their results graphically.

Students worked on their projects after each statistics lesson, during FLEX and at home. Many students submitted entries and **West Woods had 4 winners for the grade 4-6 category!** These students will be awarded certificates and monetary prizes this weekend at Yale, and their posters will also be entered into the ASA National Poster Competition.

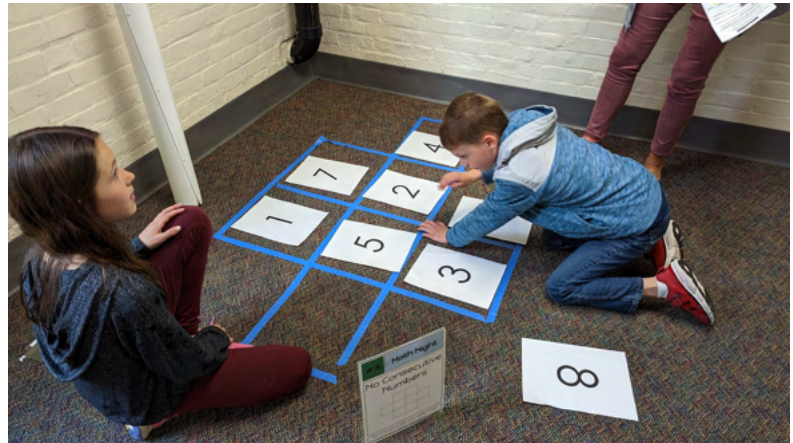
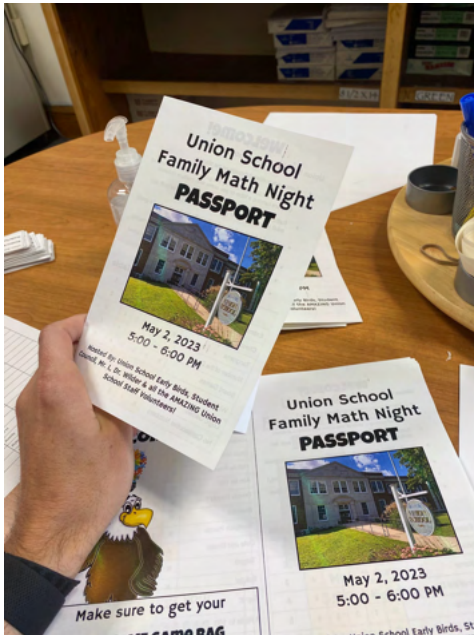




## Union School

### **Math Game Night at Union School**

On Tuesday, May 2nd, Union School students and families enjoyed a night of math-themed games and fun hosted by Mr Langstaff, Math Specialist, and our fourth grade leaders. Each table had a math activity or game to try. Students had a 'passport' to fill out to keep track of which activities they'd tried. After completing each game or activity, students earned raffle tickets. It was an amazing, well-attended event and fun was had by all.



## East Farms

During the American Revolution Unit, fourth grade students demonstrated characteristics of being an engaged collaborator during their research process. The class collaboratively created criteria for successful notes. Using the co-created criteria, students analyzed the work of their peers and effectively communicated feedback about the strengths and recommendations of next steps. Students demonstrated open-mindedness when listening to the feedback from peers. After hearing feedback, students exhibited personal accountability by creating a goal to improve the information in their notes. This process lifted the quality of the students' research, which led to a deeper understanding of the topic.



### Note Taking Criteria

I CAN synthesize information from a variety of texts while researching a particular topic and take notes effectively.

#### Criteria for Successful Notes

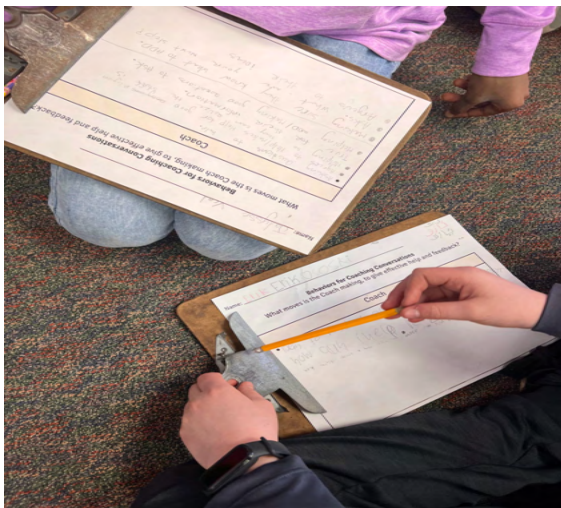
##### Facts

- Take notes in my **own words**
- Focus notes on the **specific subtopic**
- Consider **different viewpoints and perspectives**: What is a fact? What is someone's perspective?
- Look for **repetition** across sources, to validate information
- Include **important information**
- Organize** notes - consider text structure and **note-taking structures**

##### Sources

- Evaluate sources, to make sure they are **credible and appropriate** for my topic/ subtopics
- Cite** all sources
- Designate a **specific place in my notebook** to cite sources

Students co-created a note-taking criteria chart.



Students used the note-taking criteria chart to provide feedback.



## West District Elementary School

West District School welcomed back an annual **Math & Literacy Game Night!** When members of our community come together and share space to celebrate learning, we are stronger! This family event reinforces the existing strong family-school partnerships by engaging families in ways that support high academic achievement. This *civic-mindedness* was evident this spring when hundreds of families engaged in both math and literacy activities with family and friends! West District Tigers and family members used reasonableness, strategy, perseverance and agility! Others had the opportunity to read by a campfire, fish for vowels and even share a book nonverbally using “Proloquo2Go”, an augmentative and alternative communication application.



## Noah Wallace School

**Third Grade:** Our third-grade string players have been continuing to work on developing good bow holds, left hand position, and posture while playing their instruments. In March, they showcased their learning by performing Classroom Concerts for their peers. They are now preparing for their Spring Concert which will be a time for families to come see (and hear) all that they have accomplished this year!

**Fourth Grade:** Our fourth-grade string players have continued to build on their foundational skills and have been learning more advanced techniques with their Suzuki pieces. Members of the orchestra have also been working on music in preparation for their Spring Concert!

**Practice Club:** A number of third and fourth grade students have been participating in the after-school practice club since January. High school orchestra students have been coming to Noah Wallace every Thursday to play some strings-related games and/or help individual students reach their goals. Club participants have also been invited to perform alongside the high schoolers prior to the FHS orchestra concert!

### Upcoming Music Events:

- May 17th - Grade 3 Spring Concert
  - 6:30 p.m.
- May 18th - FHS Orchestra Concert
  - Featuring some third and fourth grade string students
- May 25th - Grade 4 Spring Concert
  - 6:30 p.m.







## ENGAGED LEARNING IN THE FARMINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

June 5, 2023

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### Farmington High School

#### **Open Choice Liaison of the Year Award**

Farmington High School faculty member, Chris Loomis, was named Open Choice Liaison of the Year for 2022-23 at their recent Liaison Breakfast. One of his colleagues is quoted as saying: *“Chris Loomis is a dedicated advocate for our students. He is a “waterer” for the beautiful students we have in and out of the Choice program. With his affirming and kind soul he encourages students to embrace their identity and become change agents as Farmington students and more importantly as Global citizens. Our Social Justice Council wouldn’t be where it is today without his dedication and support. He is a true gem and asset to our learning community.”* Congratulations to Chris on this outstanding recognition.

#### **2023 National Merit Scholarship Finalists Named**

The National Merit Scholarship Corporation has announced that FHS seniors, **Sophia Cho, Akshaj Ganta, Hudson Hu, Eileen Jianing Peng** and **Alan Wang** have qualified as finalists in the 2023 National Merit Scholarship program. Identified as a result of their outstanding performance on the Preliminary Scholastic Assessment Test and selected from a group of 16,000 semifinalists, they are now being considered for a Merit Scholarship award.

## Farmington High School – Twenty Farmington High School (FHS) Students to Receive 2023 National Center for Women & Information Technology (NCWIT) Aspirations in Computing Awards

Twenty (20) FHS students were selected from more than 3,300 applicants from the United States and Canada. According to the NCWIT, the NCWIT Award for Aspirations in Computing (AiC) honors 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade women, genderqueer, and non-binary students for their computing-related achievements and interests, and encourages them to pursue their passions. Award recipients are selected based on their aptitude and aspirations in technology and computing, as demonstrated by their computing experience, computing-related activities, leadership experience, tenacity in the face of barriers to access, and plans for post-secondary education. Four (4) FHS students were recognized at the National levels as Honorable Mentions. *All awardees will be honored at an AiC Award Celebration on Monday May 22 at the Travelers Claims University in Windsor, CT.*

1. Sayada Arouna	CT Winner & <b>National Honorable Mention</b>
2. Sophia Cho	CT Winner & <b>National Honorable Mention</b>
3. Doorva Garg	CT Winner & <b>National Honorable Mention</b>
4. Jingjin Shi	CT Winner & <b>National Honorable Mention</b>
5. Sophia Ave-Lallemant	CT Winner
6. Sreenidi Bala	CT Winner
7. Sneha Balur	CT Honorable Mention
8. Sydney Bigelow	CT Honorable Mention
9. Shesh Budhabhatti	CT Honorable Mention
10. Mackenzie Campbell	CT Honorable Mention
11. Olivia Ceres-Barber	CT Winner
12. Zeeva Haviland	CT Winner
13. Ananya Jayaram	CT Honorable Mention
14. Rhea Kallely	CT Honorable Mention
15. Ananya Krishnamurthy	CT Honorable Mention
16. Himani Kumar	CT Honorable Mention
17. Karen Pan	CT Honorable Mention
18. Alison Rodriguez	CT Honorable Mention
19. Sia Sharma	CT Honorable Mention
20. Ria Verma	CT Honorable Mention

Each recipient will receive:

- Recognition and prizes
- Induction into a community of over 15,000 technical womxn
- Access to resources, scholarships and internship opportunities

“Encouraging young women’s interest in technology careers is critical: our workforce needs their creativity and their innovation,” said Lucy Sanders, CEO and Co-founder of NCWIT.

The National Center for Women & Information Technology (NCWIT) is a non-profit community of more than 1,240 universities, companies, non-profits, and government organizations nationwide working to increase women’s participation in computing and technology. NCWIT equips change leaders with resources for taking action in recruiting, retaining, and advancing women from K–12 and higher education through industry and entrepreneurial careers. Find out more at [www.ncwit.org](http://www.ncwit.org).

Farmington High School is proud to have the most students honored in the state for the 10th time. FHS endeavors to offer a growing number of computing courses as part of its curriculum, recognizing their value to students’ future success. This year’s awardees were endorsed by the FHS Science Department’s faculty member, Timothy Barron (Computer Science teacher).



## **Irving A. Robbins Middle School**

### **Investigating Local History: Project Paideia**

Should the State of Connecticut exonerate the victims of the Hartford Witchcraft Trials? What are the modern-day implications of the Connecticut whaling industry? Was Sarah Porter a feminist? These are some of the questions our 8th grade students have been wondering as they have embarked on Project Paideia. An institution in Farmington Public Schools, students have been doing Project Paideia for the last 45 years. As the project evolves to continue to promote disciplined thinking, empowered learning, and civic-minded contributions to our community, students continue to research and study the fascinating local history of the greater Hartford area. Each year, students have the opportunity to interview local experts, share their learning with the larger school and caretaker community, and celebrate their accomplishments by exploring each other's projects and voting for their favorites. Our Celebration of Learning culminates in the pie-ing of their social studies teachers, Mr. Belisle, Mr. Casarella, Ms. Wolf and I.A.R. librarian, Ms. Olsen.



### **Celebrating Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month with Guest Readers!**

On May 25, secondary students from across FHS and IAR traveled to the elementary schools to serve as guest readers in our K-4 classrooms. At Irving Robbins, 30 students walked across the street to East Farms to read and celebrate books that center Asian American and Pacific Islander characters, authorship, and stories. I.A.R. civic-minded contributors kept remarking how reflective,

inquisitive, and thoughtful our East Farms friends were as they listened to our read-alouds. We had a fantastic time! Thank you to East Farms for having us!





## **West Woods Upper Elementary School**

During the months of April and May, fifth grade students developed their abilities to be civic-minded Contributors. Students began their social studies curriculum learning about Farmington's local history regarding the Underground Railroad and Amistad. To frame the unit, students investigated three questions: How did enslaved people in the United States rise up and fight for their freedom, what role did Farmington citizens play in this quest for freedom, and how have the contributions of African-Americans helped to shape American culture?

To support student understanding, fifth graders participated in a field trip to the Farmington Historical Society where they learned about a number of important and influential Farmington residents who worked together to support the freed Amistad captives. In addition, students engaged with actors and learned about the courage and cleverness of the people who collaborated on the Underground Railroad.

As civic minded contributors, 5th graders culminated the unit by reflecting upon how they as members of their CREW, their team, their larger West Woods community, and their local community could contribute to the betterment of our society.



## Union School

A Visit from the Space Foundation- On Tuesday, May 9th, Union School hosted a visit from the Space Foundation. The day started with a whole school assembly led by former astronaut Duane "Digger" Carey. Carey shared information about what it is like to travel to space and pilot a spaceship. The day also included a STEM themed hands on activity led by Space Foundation educators for grades 2, 3, and 4. Kindergarten and first grade classrooms had a special visit and Q & A session with Digger. This fun-filled day was funded by the Petit Family Foundation.

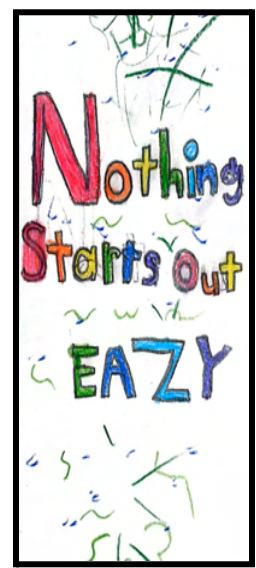
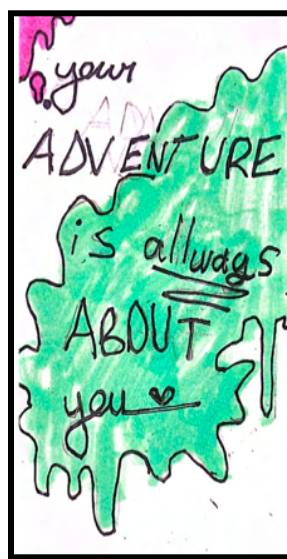




## East Farms

On Friday, May 12, 2023, East Farms hosted its annual YARC day ~ Young Authors and Readers Celebration. Farmington's Vision of the Global Citizen came to life throughout the day as we celebrated our growth and achievements in literacy by sharing a published piece of writing with our PACK groups. We were also treated by the PTO to presentations from two amazing Connecticut authors, **Renata Bowers and Susan Hood**, whose work and ethics align with our core beliefs. Students and faculty alike were inspired by their messages of being yourself, supporting others, and following your dreams. One student said, "Author Bowers thinks like me; sometimes I need to wait for the idea to come to me." Another said, "Miss Renata is the first author who helped me in my own life."

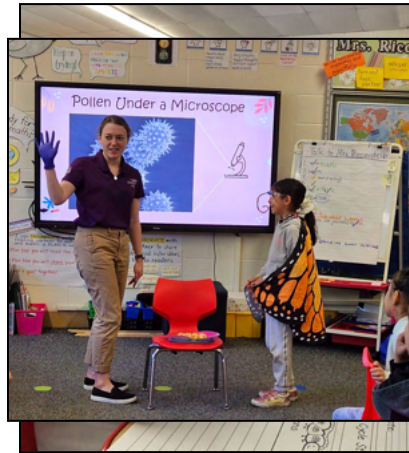
East Farms students will be continuing to spread the positive messages inspired by these authors by creating bookmarks with encouraging words on them. The bookmarks will be collected and then randomly distributed to all students, faculty, and staff to spread joy.





## West District Elementary School

As part of our unit of study about pollination and life cycles, second grade students have learned to make scientific observations of the Painted Lady butterfly's life cycle. We welcomed the CT Science Center to our classrooms to test different materials to learn what properties make good pollinators. Students used this knowledge to determine which animals make "good" pollinators. Along with the CT Science Center, the Rotary Club partnered with the American Honey Queen Program to bring Allison Hager, the 2023 American Honey Princess to classrooms to share the importance of honeybees to Connecticut and their roles as pollinators, along with the magical benefits of honey. During this visit, students also had an opportunity to work with Rotary Club volunteers to plant a seed, decorate a flower pot, and bring it home to grow. In the remaining few weeks, students will engage in a research project about a specific pollinator to present to the class. These engaging experiences help to develop *civic-minded students who understand the interdependent systems and their impact on people and their environment.*





## Noah Wallace School

On Thursday, May 25, Noah Wallace hosted our annual Student Art Show. Kinga Fernandes, Noah Wallace's new art teacher, displayed at least one piece of art created by each child in kindergarten through grade four in the hallways of Noah Wallace. Families and students participated in a scavenger hunt which allowed them to explore the many different forms of art produced by the students. We are so proud of our Noah Wallace artists.

