



VERNON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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GOOD NEWS OF THE WEEK – October 11, 2013

ROCKVILLE HIGH SCHOOL –

English Department – On Friday, October 4th, Amy Matysek and Mike Breen attended the University of Connecticut Early College Experience Workshop for American Studies at the Avery Point campus. The workshop included seminars in writing a college-level syllabus, designing assignments that encourage higher-order thinking, responding to student writing, incorporating strategies for classroom discussion and encouraging critical thinking.

Family and Consumer Sciences - A Biscuit Bakeoff complimented all the Spirit Week activities on Wednesday and Thursday at RHS. Eight Food For Today classes competed and 20 faculty and staff were the judges over the course of the two-day competition! Congratulations to all the students and thank you to all the staff who made this event a great success!

Physical Education - The RHS Girls' Volleyball Team held their annual "Dig Pink" game on Friday October 4, 2013 to raise awareness for breast cancer and raised over \$1000 to donate to the Side-Out Foundation.

Music - For the second time this season, the Rockville High School Marching Ram Band finished in 1st Place in its division and 1st Place overall at the US Bands Marching Band Competition held at the Norwich Free Academy on Saturday, October 5th. The Rockville Band will play host to 9 marching bands at its home show, the Festival of Bands, on Saturday, October 19th.

World Languages – The World Language department is sponsoring a 10 day trip to Spain and France in the Spring of 2014. We had our first informational meeting last Wednesday, October 9 where a group of interested parents came to hear about the trip. Señor Ferrer and Monsieur Ndao expect to take a minimum of 12 students to experience the culture of Spain and France.

Youth Services – SSNAP -The mission of SSNAP (Students Seeking New Achievements Positively) is to promote good decision making. We work hard to encourage students to make good choices and wanted to take the opportunity to commend local establishments who were found in compliance with local liquor laws during an August alcohol compliance check that was conducted by the Vernon Police Department.

This week the Baking class at RHS prepared several types of cookie dough and the SSNAP group baked cookies and prepared platters for each of the stores who did NOT sell alcohol to minors. We then delivered the platters to the store owners/managers and thanked them for their continued efforts to keep Vernon youth safe.

VERNON CENTER MIDDLE SCHOOL – The guidance department hosted a program for parents on October 8 entitled, "How to Pay for College". The program focus was to provide information on financial strategies available to help make college affordable.

The Book Club has finished its second novel called *The Raft*, which is about a young woman who survives a plane crash but is stranded in the middle of the ocean. She learns a lot about survival, both physical and mental, as she struggles to stay alive. Our next book is a nonfiction journal by Mark Pfetzer, a sixteen year old boy who embarks on a journey to climb Mount Everest. It's titled *Within Reach: My Everest Journey*. This year's Book Club theme is "Surpassing Limits".

Mrs. Lee, Mrs. McManaman, and several students attended the History Day kick-off event at The Old State House on Saturday, October 5. They were able to see the projects of former state and national winners. Several guest professors from area colleges spoke about the best ways to choose a History Day project. The History Day Club is a challenging new offering at VCMS for students who have a passion for learning and a desire to work hard while delving into a topic of significance. This year's theme is Rights and Responsibilities and students are already considering topics such as Women's Suffrage in Connecticut, the rights of child workers in India, the impact of the mills in Vernon, the Connecticut's Freedom Trail, and the Underground Railroad.

The VCMS Student Council recently held its annual Induction Ceremony and potluck dinner. The Council welcomed forty-two members to the ranks this year. Over thirty students attended the dinner and were sworn in during a ceremony in the school's courtyard. With more than 100 people in attendance, we enjoyed a wonderful evening.

Almost fifty students in grades 6, 7, and 8 participated in the ING Run for Something Better event at Rentschler Field on Tuesday, October 8. The students ran their "final mile" in an effort to complete the equivalent of either a half or full marathon in training leading up to the event. The students were cheered on by Dr. Conway as they crossed the finish line!

CENTER ROAD SCHOOL – Kindergarten is finished with their first reading and writing workshop units! During the units the kindergarten students learned how to be readers and writers and our classes are SO proud to know how to read and write new letters and words! Today they had a celebration. The hallway was filled with the students favorite pieces of writing and some shared reading texts that the students know how to read. The teachers are trying to make a big deal out of the students all “knowing” how to read and write so they can feel proud of the progress they have made thus far and build confidence for their future. Banners will be displayed in the hallways and the kindergarten students will be wearing party hats at lunch for the celebration.

Also, our grade 5 students went to Nathan Hale Homestead in Coventry, CT. The Nathan Hale Homestead was the home of the family of State Hero, Nathan Hale. The students enjoyed learning about Nathan Hale's life, life style and history of this home.

LAKE STREET SCHOOL – Lake Street students were treated to two fabulous presentations from the Bright Star Theater. The shows, Bluegrass and Tall Tales for K-2 and Soundtrack to Freedom, Gr. 3-5, combined history and music. Students were captivated by these intriguing performances!

EEKK!!! Kindergarten and first grade students are sitting Eye to Eye, Knee to Knee with their partners as they learn how to talk with their partners about their books. Here is a poem Mrs. Jones uses with her students.

EEKK
Elbow to elbow,
Knee to knee,
I'll read to you,
You read to me!
Elbow to elbow,
Knee to knee,
Book in the middle,
So we both can see.

Students in all grades are writing final drafts of their first writing pieces. Upper grade classes are typing final drafts on the computers. Students are utilizing peer support as they navigate the tools to add pictures and graphics to their pieces.

Students in Fourth Grade are working in co-operative groups and are exploring how force applied to an object changes the motion of the object, as they dig into their Science unit on Motion.

MAPLE STREET SCHOOL – The Maple Street Community School began on Monday, October 7. Our first week went very well. More than 60 students in grades K – 5 participated. All students were served a snack, participated in an academic support, attended an extra activity, and had a light dinner. Our activities included Cub Scouts, Cheerleading, Reading with dogs, and safety program.

On Monday, all of our students participated in the Bus Jump and bus safety program. We had a beautiful day for this and Mr. Gardiner did a fantastic job to make sure that all of our students learned how to be safe on the bus.

On Friday, our art teacher, Ms. Sabal, coordinated an activity with Mr. Gardiner and Ms. Perrett-Manly to create the cards and messages for our upcoming Veterans' Day celebration. The children did an excellent job in our gym that was turned into a giant art studio.

NORTHEAST SCHOOL – All day kindergarten is in full swing at Northeast School. Over fifty kindergarteners come to NES each day ready to learn. Their days are filled with a balanced literacy program including reader's workshop, writer's workshop, shared reading and writing as well as math and science. The days are rounded out with our Unified Arts program: Art, Music or Physical Education. Over the past month the students in Mrs. Champagne, Mr. Lewchik and Mrs. Santella's classes have been working hard on their listening skills, being a good friend and learning the routines of the classroom. We are ready to grow as learners and friends.

SKINNER ROAD SCHOOL – 94 % of the Skinner Road students and staff participated in the International Walk to School Day. The school has been participating in the Walk To School Program for the past six years. This year the Connecticut Safe Routes to School's Organization donated 100 Vernon Walks T Shirts for staff who participate in the walk as well as bright reflective bracelets for the students. Everyone had a great time walking and are looking forward to continuing to walk to school every two weeks as a school community.

On Thursday the Vernon Volunteer Fire Department came to school to teach students about fire safety. Students watched the fire fighters put on their fire gear and learned not to be afraid of the firemen and women if they show up during a fire. The students had the opportunity to hear the fire fighters talk through their breathing apparatus. After learning about the fireman's job and safety they got to go outside and see the fire truck.



VERNON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - This week classes at Vernon Elementary School have been engaged in a variety of exciting learning experiences. In Mrs Field's class, read alouds are getting very interesting as the children are predicting and retelling the adventures of Roald Dahl's "The Twits." Our middle school students have been duplicating a few of the science experiments from the well known "Mythbusters" television program. Yes, diet coke and mentos do create a fountain. Last but not least, our third and fourth graders continue their in depth study of jumping rope. Their research revealed that the world record for consistent jumps using only one leg is 110 within 30 seconds. Stay tuned as our students challenge this record.....one student already has reached 85!

The Vernon Public Schools, in partnership with family and community, is committed to provide a quality education, with high expectations, in a safe environment where all students become independent learners and productive contributors to society.