

# Bethlehem & Woodbury Region 14 Schools

## Nonnewaug Chief Advocate Staff Members Head to Woodbury Middle School for Journalism Workshop

January 12, 2023-- Timeliness. Relevance. Interest. Proximity. These are some of the tips on generating the best news stories that editors and reporters from the Nonnewaug *Chief Advocate* offered to eighth grade students beginning their unit on journalism.



Several members of the high school student-run newspaper and their faculty advisor, Kyle Brennan spent the day in Adam Brutting's ELA classes sharing advice and writing experiences with eighth graders.

Students on the *Chief Advocate* staff explained the process of brainstorming an article to seeing it through to publication. They spoke about the pre-writing editorial meetings, fleshing out and making story ideas better, where and how they

find inspiration for their stories, and how to make even a national story relevant to their school.



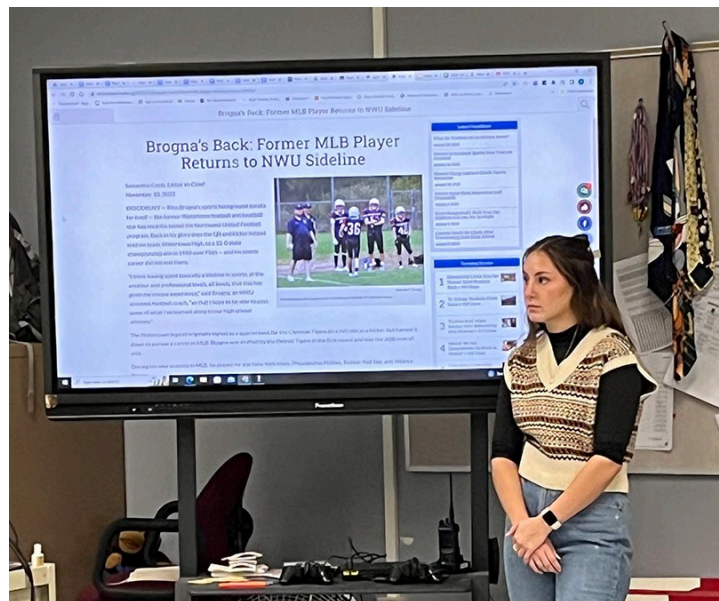
Some of the ways staff members said they find story ideas include talking to teachers, listening to morning announcements and talking to friends in the cafeteria, attending clubs, sporting events, listening to what fellow students are complaining about, and social media.

“As funny as this may sound, I do find a lot of my stories from looking at what is popular and trending on Tik-Tok and Instagram,” said Sam Conti, Editor in Chief. She added that taking a trendy or popular theme and making it relatable for her fellow students at Nonnewaug keeps their interest and ensures the newspaper is relevant.

During a brainstorming session, eighth graders had a few minutes to come up with an idea for a story. The high school students helped them dive deeper into a specific angle for the story and talked about who they might plan to interview.

Eighth-grader Elianna Obolewicz came up with an idea to highlight her youth soccer team’s successful season and brainstormed who to interview and what angle to pursue. She received encouraging feedback from her high school peers.

The journalism unit in ELA includes having the staff at the *Chief Advocate* edit the finished articles of their eighth-grade



peers. They will also choose some for inclusion in the *Junior Chief Advocate* an area of the paper that began last year as a way to highlight eighth grade work.



Brutting and Brennan, who began bringing the journalism students together last year, said the experience introduces a diverse kind of writing to middle schoolers preparing for high school and gives them an insight into what may have inspired the love of news writing for their older peers.

“The journalism students talk about why they like this kind of writing that is different and cool, and it gives the younger students who may not like traditional writing another option,” Brutting said. He plans to have eighth graders create their own personal journalism Google sites.

Brennan added that this joint workshop also leads to the longevity of the *Chief Advocate* itself when something sparks for a student in eighth grade to join the staff as a freshman. It also gives the current students the chance to share about their positive involvement on the staff.

“I am on the *Chief Advocate* because of the experience I had in this class last year,” said freshman Maia Colavito, staff writer on the paper.

Junior Izzy DeNunzio, the Community and Multimedia Editor, also came to the eighth-grade workshop last year. “I really enjoy seeing their ideas evolve,” she said. “Today I walked around and heard a couple of good ones. It’s nice to see kids excited about this. I think we have at least three potential staff members for next year.”

Check out the work by the staff at the *Nonnewaug Chief Advocate* by [clicking here](#).