

Focus on 14

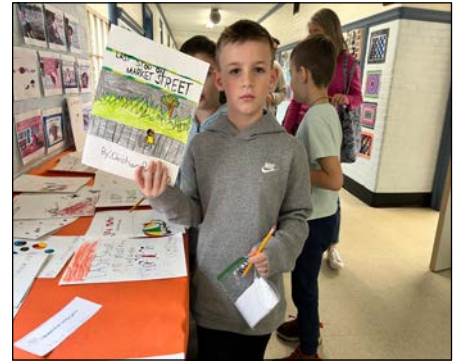
The Region 14 School District Monthly Newsletter

Black History Month in Region 14 Celebrates Change Makers

Mitchell Elementary School students and their parents celebrated the student research and projects for Black History Month with a museum-style Gallery Walk through the school.

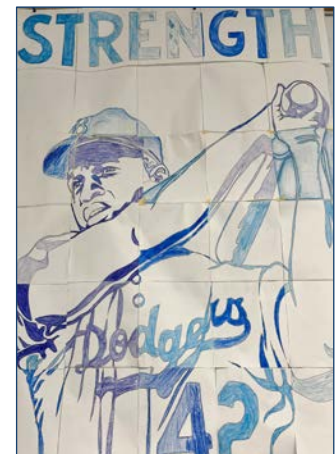
The hallways were teeming with displays on notable Black artists, musicians, inventors, authors, change makers, poets, and more. Projects included colorful "Bio Bottles," book covers and book reviews, posters, poems, and even videos of students singing. The inaugural Black History Gallery Walk also included a compliment component for students to leave accolades for their peers about their work. Students enjoyed sharing their work with each other and their guests.

Each grade level chose their topic at the beginning of February and worked throughout the month researching and creating their projects. Kindergarten studied music and each class was captured on video singing Louis Armstrong's iconic "What a Wonderful World."



First grade studied inventors. Second grade studied authors and created book covers. Third grade created Bio Bottles to resemble the change-makers that they learned about. Fourth grade studied poetry and created their own poems to display. Fifth grade studied about artists and musicians and created posters. PreK classes learned about Black astronauts and created a class space shuttle in their hallway.

Woodbury Middle School students collaborated on a Black History poster project with members of their WMS Family. Each Family group made up of sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students chose a notable person from the Black community to feature. Students used morning Family sessions this month to research their subject and have each designed a square to add to their giant collaborative grid poster. The posters celebrate the far-reaching achievements and diverse groups of people that make this such an important part of our shared history.



MBLE at Nonnewaug High School Turns Passions Into Projects

The options are endless for Nonnewaug High School students to present a mastery of skills outside of the regular classroom settings that are relevant and of special interest to them. This concept is called Mastery-Based Learning Experience and the students are turning their passions into semester-long learning projects.

“MBLE allows our students to invest their time into a subject that they want to learn more about that highlights something unique about them,” said Nonnewaug High School English teacher Jessica McKay, who is the MBL Coordinator. “Our goal is to provide students with an independent learning experience that fosters personal growth and advances the academic skills of our learners in this ever-changing global community.”

Proficiency-based learning became a high school graduation requirement in the state for the class of 2023 and beyond. Region 14 was in the middle of creating the Vision of A Learner and MBL was a natural extension that could incorporate the six learner attributes: think critically and creatively; collaborate and communicate effectively; demonstrate empathy; take initiative; persevere; and adapt and adjust.

Students can choose from a variety of projects for their MBL -- completing a college course, a mentorship or job shadow, complete a career-based certification course, an internship, a community service project, or a self-directed independent project.



Agriscience students can opt to take their required Supervised Agricultural Experience (SAE) project to the next level for MBL. Students also have the option for a Nonnewaug High School Legacy Project that is a yearly role students may apply for at the start of their junior or senior year. They are overseen by a member of the staff.

The MBL project is about 30-hours of additional work for students. They develop and share their learning and projects with the school community at one of three Nonnewaug Project Showcases. The Spring MBL Showcase will be held on March 29 at Nonnewaug High School.



Elementary STEM Experiments Get Students Exploring

Mitchell Elementary School second graders explored different kinds of chemical reactions in a Valentine's Day-themed STEM experiment. To start the Dancing Candy Hearts experiment students dropped candy conversation hearts into a mason jar nearly filled with club soda. They timed how long it would take for candies to float to the top with the help of the CO2 in the soda bubbles. After that, students waited to see how long it would take for hearts to fall back down to the bottom after the CO2 escapes.



Science in K-5 includes hands-on classroom lessons and grade-level STEM experiments with the Science/Social Studies Instructional Leader



Bethlehem Elementary School second graders learned about erosion and investigated how boulders change as they travel down rushing mountain rivers. Students used paper "boulders" to start and for each stage, they had 20 seconds to tear smaller pieces to represent the various stages of a boulder's travel down the river. Students saw how their pieces were smaller and their piles were bigger. They also came up with good predictions as to why some rocks don't make it all the way down like getting stuck under tree limbs or not enough rain to move them along. First graders designed and built devices that communicate messages with light and sound. Using materials like egg cartons, paper towel rolls, tissue paper, and their excellent imaginations, students came up with many bright ideas.



K-5 Science Invention Convention coming in March!

Region 14 Transition Academy Focuses on Community Inclusion

The Region 14 Transition Academy supports students with intellectual and other disabilities, ages 18 - 22, in an age-appropriate, 21st century learning environment. The primary goal of RTA is community inclusion, and the program is geared to offer ways for students to learn adult-life and work skills to help them become independent, contributing members of the community.

Students learn adult-life skills in house and then go out into the community to apply those skills to real-world experiences. They include grocery shopping, trips to the local stores and businesses as well as the local libraries in Woodbury and Bethlehem. Local businesses and organizations also help with employment opportunities for students. RTA students attend on a weekly cooking event at the Woodbury Fire House where they use the kitchen to prepare a meal to share with their parents, community members and Region 14 staff.

For Christmas and Valentine's Day, students make special dog and cat treats that they prepare in the program. With help from the program staff, the RTA have a small in-house business called "Bark and Purr Treats" where they make treats for cats and dogs and sell to staff at Woodbury Middle School and Mitchell Elementary School. They made more than 600 treats for their Valentine's Day sale. They will make Easter-themed pet treats to sell in April.



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Spring Adult Education Agriscience Classes



From floral arrangements to welding or how to raise chickens at home, residents have the opportunity to learn from local experts in their fields through the adult Agriscience Education program at Nonnewaug High School. The spring Adult Education courses at Nonnewaug High School's Ellis Clark Regional Agriscience Program begin on March 2. All courses are \$20 per class although some courses may require additional course material fees. The sessions are filled on a first come basis and capped at 20 participants. Course offerings include both single night sessions as well as multi-session courses over a five-week period in March beginning March 2 and running through March 30 in the agriscience building at Nonnewaug High School. The courses are taught by Agriscience teachers, local artisans, farmers, and agricultural professionals in the community, as well as former Nonnewaug High School agriscience students. Scan the QR code for course information.

Region 14 Schools Resume Free Meals for Students March

Earlier this month, Governor Ned Lamont extended the state's free school lunch program for all students through the end of the academic year. The state will shift funding from the federal American Rescue Plan Act into the Free Meals for Students program to allow our students to once again have free school lunches. Beginning March 1, all students in Region 14 schools will be offered one school breakfast and one school lunch per day through the end of the school year. [Click here for more information.](#)