

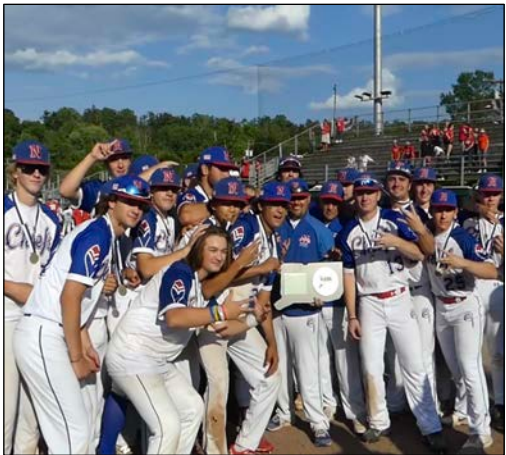
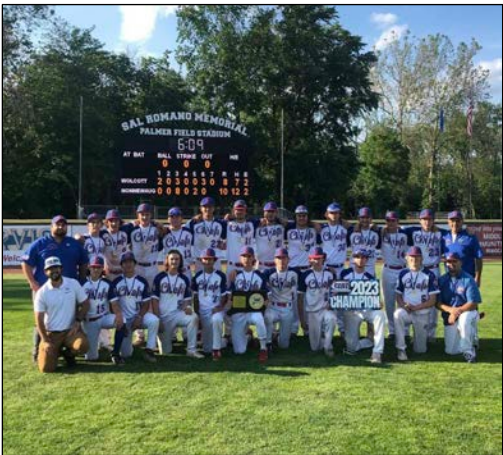
Focus on 14

The Region 14 School District Monthly Newsletter

Nonnewaug High School Boys' Baseball 2023 Class M State Champions **CHAMPS!**



Congratulations to the Nonnewaug High School boys' baseball team who became the first baseball team in Nonnewaug history to win the State Championship. The Chiefs clinched the Class M state championship in a 10-8 win over Wolcott High School at Palmer Field in Middletown on June 10. The bleachers were packed with students, parents, teachers, and community members from Bethlehem and Woodbury who came to see the Chiefs play for the state title. The energy from the win followed the school bus with the team from Middletown to Woodbury where they were met with a Fire and Police escort and congratulatory parade to bring them back to Nonnewaug High School. Congratulations on this huge achievement!



Last Day of School June 20
Early Dismissal Schedule 11:55 NHS/WMS & 12:55 BES/MES

From the Superintendent

I would like to take a moment to reflect on the 2022-2023 school year. This past year has been exhilarating on so many levels. It has been inspiring to observe all of the growth in our students the past year. They have been committed to their learning. Students have performed remarkably well on various assessments and have displayed an ability to persevere during challenging times. I will always remember the empathy that each student showed to their peers throughout the course of the school year.

I am extremely proud of the staff for their compassion that was exhibited during this past year. They always worked diligently to meet the needs of every child. The staff truly understands the importance of each instructional day and brought out the best in each student. The staff fostered a learning environment that was inclusive of all learners.

As we conclude the 2022-2023 school year, I am uplifted by all of the progress that was demonstrated over the past year. Mitchell Elementary School was named a School of Distinction by the Connecticut State Department of Education, Bethlehem Elementary School was identified as one of the top elementary schools in Connecticut, Nonnewaug High School successfully completed the first step in its accreditation evaluation, the Agriscience and Art programs at Nonnewaug High School were nationally recognized, and Woodbury Middle School was recognized for an exemplary school climate initiative. In addition, elementary school students were recognized for their scientific talents and progressed to the Invention Convention state finals.

The Nonnewaug High School baseball team won its first ever State Championship, the Boys' and Girls' tennis teams reached the state finals and semifinals respectfully, and Nonnewaug High School won the prestigious Ted Alex Athletic/Sportsmanship Excellence Award again from the Berkshire League.

It has been a truly spectacular school year. We are grateful for all of your support as we continue to strive for excellence in every one of our schools. We are thankful for allowing Region 14 to educate your child. We value our partnership with you. We are excited for the beginning of the 2023-2024 school year as we will be implementing many new programs and curricula offerings. I hope you have a restful summer with family and friends.

Brian Murphy

Team Beta Connects Students and Robotics at Nonnewaug High School and Beyond

Whether it's the love of coding, computer programming, mechanical engineering, or being around new friends, the enthusiasm of students in Nonnewaug High School's robotics Team Beta is electrifying.

Its small numbers didn't hinder its success as a formidable competitor in the team robotics competition season this year. Team Beta went 10 and 13 in the robotics events and their performance in two qualifying competitions landed them in the state competition. They made it to the semi-finals with their small robot – 19462 that was built and programmed to gather and stack small cones on a pole.

Team Beta is different for each of the members -- a way to explore an interest, an introduction to engineering and coding, a hands-on experience in building technical systems learning about engineering, a place to make friends and for some students, the club's draw is strong.

"It's a great introductory experience into a career in robotics," said senior Jacob Wells. "There are also many opportunities for scholarships through being in this club." Wells received an \$8,000 scholarship over four years from First Robotics to use at Embry Riddle Aeronautical University where he will study aeronautical engineering.

The advisors are Nonnewaug science teacher Bill Pease and teacher Mark Strumolo. Team Beta meets afterschool for building, brainstorming, strategizing, mentoring, a lot of trial and error, and fundraising. The club is self-funding for everything from robotic parts to members competition costs and they take advantage of every fundraising activity from ION Bank's Community Rewards Program to hosting local bake sales. They raised \$2,000 this year.



Some of the members and advisor Bill Pease posed this year with their robot after competitions.

Pease said he is proud of the team's perseverance. "The team and their robot showed marked improvement and increased performance at every competition this year," he said. "They remained competitive all year long." Pease and the underclass members are looking toward next year with a renewed hope of continuing to add new members and bring the Team into the forefront of state robotics.

Students Are Digging Bethlehem Elementary School's Community Garden



Radishes. Peas. Kale. These are some of the vegetable plants students planted in the new raised bed gardens at Bethlehem Elementary School.

Earlier in the spring each classroom planted several seed pots of vegetables for this new co-op garden called "Growing Bethlehem." Members of the BES Garden Club eagerly planted those seedlings in the garden beds in mid-May.

BES Principal Wendy Yatsenick said the project combines outreach and education with a goal of expanding the study of Agriscience to the elementary students while building relationships and supporting farm-to-school efforts in our community. The four new wood raised beds were generously built and donated to BES by the Bethlehem Lions Club. The topsoil was brought to the school by students in Agriscience program. Director Ed Belinsky and Agriscience students help students with the garden.



Visit to Ellis Clark Agriscience Program at Nonnewaug High School Was a Day of Wonder for Region Elementary Students

Kindergarten and second grade classes from Bethlehem and Mitchell Elementary Schools had a special visit to Nonnewaug High School to see the many facets of the Ellis Clark Agriscience Program.

They were greeted by smiling Agriscience student tour guides who introduced them to various parts of the program.

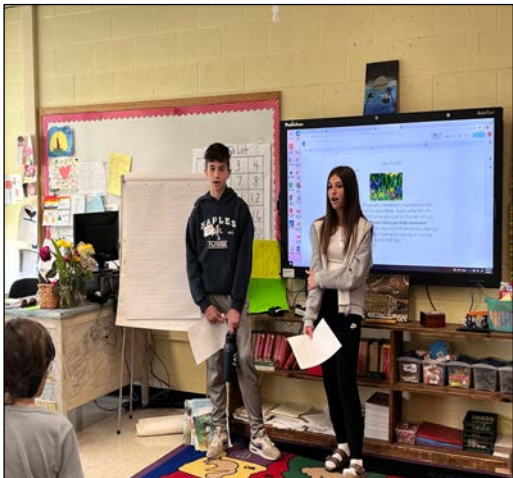
They saw the livestock in the large barns, rabbits, and other small animals in the small animal area, toured the horse barn, toured the aqua greenhouses to see aquaculture and aquaponics in action, got to sit on the various farm tractors, plant a vegetable in floriculture, and learn about the taxidermy animals in the natural resources area.



The field trips to Nonnewaug High School Agriscience program provide a unique experience for elementary students to explore the many aspects of agriculture, aquaponics, livestock, and more while at the same time serves as an assertive agricultural leadership opportunity for the high school students in the program.

Woodbury Middle School Students Help Ease the Transition To Sixth Grade

How do lockers work? What is passing time like? What happens if you can't find your classroom? What is the homework load like? These questions and many more were answered for fifth graders by a group of eighth graders who offered their younger peers some information about the transition to Woodbury Middle School.



Students headed to both Bethlehem and Mitchell Elementary School with Woodbury Middle School counselors Andie Rocco and Sarah Rossi to visit fifth grade classes. The visit is part of the many transition activities planned for the district fifth graders prior to the fall when they begin at Woodbury Middle School.



Superintendent Awards For Woodbury Middle and Nonnewaug High Students



Four Region 14 students were recently honored at the Aqua Turf in Southington at the annual Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents Student Award Recognition.

Region 14 Superintendent Brian Murphy honored Nonnewaug High School seniors Max Wolff and Jamie Paige along with Woodbury Middle School eighth graders Jady Heron and Ethan Butkus.

The students were selected for this award based on community service and service to others, academic success, and leadership service to the school community.

11 NCAA Commits from Nonnewaug High School



Congratulations to the 11 student-athletes from the Nonnewaug High School Class of 2023 who have officially signed letters of intent to play collegiate sports at the NCAA Division I, II, and III levels.

- Brett Davino -- baseball at the University of Connecticut
- Ethan Mosier -- men's lacrosse at Johnson & Wales University
- Zoe Inglis -- women's lacrosse at Merrimack College
- Mackenzie Pfahl -- volleyball at Salve Regina University
- Samantha Conti -- women's basketball at Curry College
- Alyssa Calabrese -- softball at Post University
- Sage Mauro -- field hockey at Salve Regina University
- Sarah Cipriani -- softball at Saint Anselm College
- Madelynn Orosz -- softball at SUNY Cobleskill
- Jack Wendel -- men's wrestling at York College
- Ben Stewart -- baseball at Eastern Connecticut State University

Representing the Nonnewaug High School Class of 2023



Principal Pam Sordi with Valedictorian Rebecca Varnum, Salutatorian Jack Rubacha, and Essayist Mallory Tomkalski at the 2023 NHS Awards Ceremony on May 25. The top three students will address their fellow graduates on June 17.

Nonnewaug High School Athletics Berkshire League Awards



Nonnewaug High School had 60 All-Stars who were recognized at the annual 2022-23 Berkshire League All Star Banquet at the Aqua Turf. Nonnewaug was also the recipient of the Ted Alex Award, the league's top honor that recognizes athletic success and sportsmanship. Mallory Tomkalski was awarded the Ray Marinko Award, given to one senior student-athlete in the BL for outstanding athletic ability, scholarship, leadership, integrity, courage, versatility, and service.



Curriculum Corner Dr. Taryn Fernandez, Director of Teaching & Learning

As the year draws to a close, we reflect on the learning that has occurred in our classrooms, the smiles we've shared, the joy we've expressed, and the growth we've made.

Our Vision of a Learner attributes were evident in every classroom and in our numerous extracurricular activities through both the students and the adults in the Region 14 community: we persevered when faced with challenging tasks; we thought critically and creatively to solve problems, test hypotheses, create artwork, develop lesson plans and determine areas of focus for projects; we adapted and adjusted as we applied our new learning to unique, real-world situations; we demonstrated empathy in the face of loss and difficulty; we collaborated and communicated effectively to support the community both locally and abroad; and we took initiative to not only start all of this important work, but to take the steps necessary to see it to completion!

With summer vacation on the horizon, we want to ensure that learning continues for our students even while they are not in school. The Instructional Leaders and Library Media Specialists in Region 14 have developed a [summer learning site](#) where parents, guardians, and students

can access learning resources for literacy and math along with an elementary science activity.

These activities help students maintain their learning and avoid the "summer slide" that can sometimes occur when they are not exposed to the concepts recently learned for an extended period of time. Additionally, there is a link to our Vision of a Learner site with resources for parents and guardians that provide tips on how to support your child in the development of the Vision of a Learner attributes. The great thing about the Vision of a Learner attributes is that they can be practiced and taught in every situation and location.

Whether on a road trip in the car, on the beach building a sandcastle, or at home talking about a movie you just watched, there are always opportunities to model and acknowledge taking initiative, perseverance, adapting and adjusting, demonstrating empathy, collaborating, and communicating effectively, and thinking critically and creatively. It is our hope that the resources on the website support you in taking advantage of these opportunities throughout the summer. Enjoy the summer, and we look forward to seeing your child on August 30th!

Scene Around Region 14 – End of Year Activities Keep Students Learning



Nonnewaug High School Envirothon Heads to International Competition in Canada

For the first time in the team’s history, the Nonnewaug High School Envirothon has won the state competition and will travel to Canada to compete in the National Conservation Foundation’s Envirothon, an international environmental and natural resources education competition for high school students.

The five-person Nonnewaug team and advisor, Agriscience teacher Audra Leach will spend a week in New Brunswick, Canada competing against teams from every state as well as Canada and China using this year’s current issue “Adpating to a Changing Climate.”

During the week-long competition in July, student teams will demonstrate their knowledge on soils and land use, aquatic ecology, forestry, and wildlife management through lectures, practical experiments, written tests, and interactive stations. They will spend one full day preparing an oral presentation on this year’s current issue. The students will be meeting up until the competition and will meet with industry professionals in June and July to prepare them for the contest.

Envirothon at Nonnewaug challenges students to develop critical thinking skills and come up with inventive solutions to local and global environmental and



natural resources issues facing the world today. Students get hands-on outdoor field experiences and areas that include aquatic ecology, forestry, soils and land use, wildlife, and current environmental issues. Envirothon members are fundraising for much of their Canadian trip and are looking for local sponsors. To donate: <https://ctenvirothon.org/donate/>

EdAdvance Grant Funds Added Behavioral Health Staff in Region 14 Schools

Region 14 School District is participating in a grant through EdAdvance that will offer staff, students, and families a range of emotional, behavioral, and mental health services and support over the next five years. As part of this grant, EdAdvance will provide two school-based mental health professionals.

Dionna Reynolds will be in each elementary school building one day per week and at Woodbury Middle School three days per week. She will be involved in providing a range of services intended to support students’ wellbeing and success in the classroom. Dionna will work with staff on professional development opportunities on Social Emotional Learning strategies and classroom interventions that support learning. Gail DeFrancesco will be at Nonnewaug High School five days per week involved in providing a range of services intended to support students’ wellbeing and success in the classroom. Gail will work with staff on professional development opportunities on Social Emotional Learning strategies and classroom interventions that support learning. They will also both work with students on organizational and decision-making skills, developing strong social relationships, and providing small group academic support when appropriate.

Congratulations on your retirement...

Pam Sordi, NHS
Nadine Pratt, NHS
Elaine Peck, WMS
Jacqui Meghani, WMS
Lee Hubbard, WMS
Donna Marcinek, District

GOOD LUCK!

The new school year begins
on August 30, 2023.
Have a great summer!

