



BES NAMED STATE SCHOOL OF DISTINCTION FOR SECOND CONSECUTIVE YEAR



Bethlehem Elementary School has been named a Connecticut School of Distinction for the second consecutive year by the Connecticut State Department of Education, recognizing its overall student performance and high academic growth for the 2024-2025 school year. Bethlehem Elementary School is one of 160 schools to earn this distinction. The designation is based on five separate categories in which BES ranked in the top 5% of all schools in the state. The areas are High Performance and High Growth (All Students) - ELA & Math, and High Growth (High Needs Students) in Math.

The CSDE released results from the 2024-2025 Next Generation Accountability System in October. The system measures individual school and district growth by gauging how well a school is preparing its students for success. According to the CSDE, the Next Generation Accountability System comprises 12 indicators and extends beyond test scores and graduation rates to provide a more comprehensive, multifaceted perspective on district and school performance, incorporating student growth over time. The Next Generation Accountability Index is predominantly based on the state's Smarter Balance Assessments given to students each spring.

BES TAG EXPLORES THE DAIRY INDUSTRY WITH ADOPT A COW PROGRAM

The Talented and Gifted students at Bethlehem Elementary School have adopted a cow, a Holstein dairy calf that was born on September 11 at the Mountain Dairy in Storrs. Their calf, Samantha, is part of the national Adopt a Cow program through Discover Dairy. This is an interactive, cross-curricular, multi-levelled program designed to demonstrate where milk comes from and the many ways dairy farms contribute to our world. Our BES students will get quarterly updates on Samantha's progress, including photos, activity sheets, and lessons to follow on animal health, milk quality and safety, dairy in the community, and nutrition. Samantha lives on the farm with her host family, and BES students will follow her journey as she grows. This Adopt a Cow program allows these students to learn all about their cow, including how much she weighs – 75 pounds – and how tall she is – 31 inches and how she is cared for by her farmer. In the spring, the TAG group will participate in a live chat with the farmer and meet Samantha virtually. The program offers these students an exciting opportunity to explore dairy farming and animal care and celebrate farming in our community. At a recent TAG session, students also discussed the career of a veterinarian and heard about VO-AG programs, 4H, and FFA.



WAYS TO CONNECT WITH REGION 14



NHS 2025 GRAD NAMED U.S. PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLAR

Congratulations to Nonnewaug High School graduate Chloe Weaver, who is a 2025 U.S. Presidential Scholar! Chloe, a 2025 graduate of the Agriscience Program at Nonnewaug, is one of four students in Connecticut and one of only 161 nationwide to earn this prestigious honor. The U.S. Presidential Scholars Program recognizes and honors top-performing students in the nation in academics, visual, fine, and performing arts, and the career and technical education fields. As part of the program, scholar recipients nominate a teacher who has been a positive influence in their school career. Chloe nominated Agriscience Teacher Jennifer Jedd for the U.S. Presidential Scholars Distinguished Teacher Award. Chloe is now a freshman at the University of Vermont, majoring in Animal Science, and is in the STEM Scholars Program.



NHS SENIOR MAIA COLAVITO EARNS COMMENDED SCHOLAR STATUS



Nonnewaug High School senior Maia Colavito is a 2026 National Merit Scholarship Commended Scholar for her exceptional performance on the PSAT/NMSQT exam. This honor highlights Maia's outstanding academic proficiency and places her among the top 30% of high school student-scholars nationwide. The 2026 National Merit Scholarship Commended recognizes the top 50,000 students who took the PSAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test as juniors. Although they will not continue in the 2026 competition for National Merit Scholarship awards, Commended Students receive a Letter of Commendation from the National Merit Scholarship Corporation.

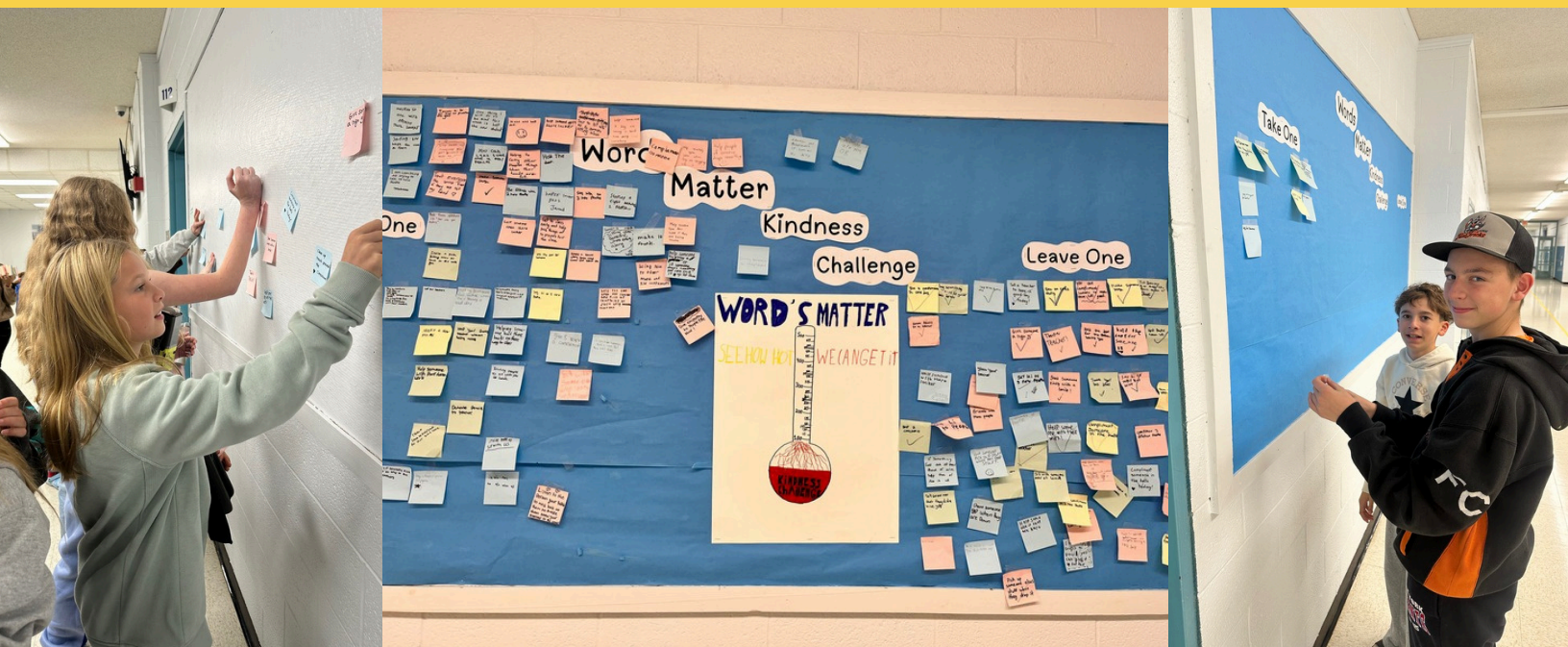
NHS ESPORTS TEAM DEBUTS WITH WINS IN CIAC LINEUP



The new Nonnewaug High School Esports teams headed to Post University for their first official match as a CIAC-sanctioned SMASH BROS/Play Vs Esports team and took two wins. The teams competed against Johnathan Law High School from Milford and Conard High School from West Hartford. The team was formed by NHS Media Arts teacher Katie Blake over the summer. With about ten student members, the E-Sports team has three different teams that will be competing in various games throughout the year. E-Sports became a high school CIAC-sanctioned sport several years ago.

WORDS MATTER INITIATIVE AT WMS SPURS ACTS OF KINDNESS

Words Matter at Woodbury Middle School. The Words Matter group meets weekly with School Counselors and Support Services staff, who work together to design activities and engage in discussions about improving the school culture and climate at WMS. In October, the group led a Kindness Challenge, where they encouraged the school community to select an "Act of Kindness" from the Words Matter bulletin board and complete it. The Words Matter group tracked the progress on a large paper thermometer for all to see. More than 100 acts of kindness adorned the board by the end of the month, a reminder for students of the relationship between our actions and how they contribute to the culture and climate of WMS.



WMS ALLIANCE OFF TO A STELLAR START OF LEADERSHIP & SERVICE

Several members of the Woodbury Middle School Alliance leadership group headed to the Connecticut State House for the CT Association of Student Councils 2025 President's Symposium. This event is open to Connecticut middle and high school student councils and student government organizations, focusing on citizenship and leadership. Students took part in workshops and breakout sessions to help turn their school visions into action. Student leaders, state officials, and mentors also shared real experiences and strategies for creating change and leading with impact. Throughout the symposium, motivational quotes and meaningful discussions encouraged students to strengthen engagement and help foster a welcoming, supportive school climate. The WMS Alliance student leaders left feeling inspired and equipped with new strategies to promote positive change within the school community. WMS Alliance also took time to prepare for spring programming by sowing and planting tulip beds in a sunny spot in front of the school. The WMS Alliance leadership group is growing the tulips as part of a spring fundraising initiative.



MES WELCOMES WVFD FOR FIRE SAFETY DAY

Members of the Woodbury Volunteer Fire Department visited Mitchell Elementary School in October to mark Fire Prevention Month. WVFD Chief Janet Morgan, along with eight members of the department, gave Mitchell School's Pre-K, Kindergarten, and first graders an overview of fire safety, showing them the fire truck apparatus, including the hoses and fireproof clothing and gear they wear for their jobs. The highlight for the students was getting to climb up into the fire engine! Thanks to the Woodbury Volunteer Fire Department for a great experience for the students.



HELPING BUILD A COMMUNITY OF CHARACTER AT MES



Mitchell Elementary School's latest character trait in the Building a Community of Character initiative is Responsibility. These two MES students did their part, showing their peers what that means. This fall, Melody Jurman watered all of the mums that adorn the main entrance. Javon Smith moved the recess cart outside before the Kindergarten headed out for recess, and made sure that it was properly stored when not being used.



BRINGING LIBRARY BOOK CHARACTERS TO LIFE AT BES



Inspired by the popular children's book characters, scientist Ada Twist and engineer Rosie Revere, Bethlehem Elementary School second graders jumped into the engineering design process in Library Media class with Ericca Johnson. Their mission was to dream up a robot that could solve a real-world problem, learning a powerful lesson along the way: that failing is really just the first step toward finding a solution. After designing their robots and drawing up plans, students gathered recycled treasures and brought their amazing robots to life.

Upcoming Community Events

Veterans' Day at NHS

November 10

Veterans' Day at WMS

November 10

WMS Senior Citizen Harvest Lunch

November 20

NHS Drama Presents "Dracula"

November 20-22

NHS Senior Citizen Drive-Thru Meal

December 4

Christmas Festivals in Bethlehem & Woodbury

December 5 -7



The Nonnewaug High School Drama Club will present Bram Stoker's "Dracula" for four shows in November. The cast and crew have been preparing for this classic and dark story of Transylvania's famous vampire, Dracula, for several months with NHS Drama Club director Catherine Pelky. "Dracula" the play, promises suspense, seduction, and horror in four wickedly theatrical performances complete with some amazing special effects. The performances are Thursday, November 20 at 6 p.m., Friday, November 21 at 6 p.m., and Saturday, November 22 at 1 p.m. & 6 p.m. in the Nonnewaug High School auditorium.

NHS AGRISCIENCE SHINES AT ANNUAL FFA CONVENTION



The FFA National Convention in Indianapolis was an amazing experience for our Nonnewaug High School Agriscience students and teachers. Our students were among FFA members from across the country who were recognized for their accomplishments as individuals, teams, and chapters. Our students engaged in presentations, competitions, put their leadership into action with Days of Service, worked to polish their skills so they are ready to make an impact, and so much more. The parliamentary LDE (leadership development event) team took home a bronze medal in showcasing their expertise in parliamentary law and impromptu debating. The Connecticut state winning Quiz Bowl LDE team was ranked 14th in the country, and the Officer delegates who competed were ranked 24th. What a testament to their knowledge of FFA. And our own Katie Golembeski received the Honorary FFA American Degree.

SPANISH FIELD TRIP BRINGS STUDENTS TOGETHER



Las Zanahorias. Los hormigueros. La Escuela. Mitchell and Bethlehem Elementary School students had a special visit in October from students in the Nonnewaug High School UConn ECE Spanish class for a short lesson. The Spanish students visited kindergarten through third-grade classrooms to read a story and introduce them to some Spanish vocabulary words. This is an annual visit by NHS Spanish students that falls during Hispanic Heritage Month in October.



STUDENTS HELPING THE COMMUNITY



The Bethlehem Elementary School second-grade food drive was a terrific success. Part of a recent lesson on community for second graders centered on how to be good citizens. Students collected about eight big boxes of non-perishable items for the Caring For Bethlehem Food Pantry.



Trick or Treat Street is a beloved community tradition and food drive held annually by the NHS Student Council. Representatives from the Woodbury Food Bank and Caring For Bethlehem stopped by NHS to pick up the donations from the event - more than 12 bins full of needed non-perishable items to fill the shelves for residents in our community.



First graders at Mitchell Elementary School made special dog and cat treat bags for animals in a local shelter. During the last three weeks, the class collected dog treats, cat treats, and small cat toys. Students filled decorated bags with items, and they were delivered to the shelters on Halloween.

FOUR BERKSHIRE LEAGUE TOURNAMENT CHAMPS



Congratulations to the Nonnewaug Chiefs Field Hockey, Volleyball, and Girls' and Boys' Soccer on winning their Berkshire League Tournaments this year. Four new championship banners will adorn the NHS gym.

