



# NEW WINDSOR SCHOOL NeWSLETTER

April 2026

## PRINCIPAL'S UPDATE

Dear New Windsor School Families,

As we navigate the vibrant month of May, I am filled with immense pride as I reflect on the incredible journey we have shared this school year. Our classrooms have been alive with discovery, and the progress our students have made—socially, emotionally, and academically—is a testament to their resilience and your unwavering support. From mastering new reading strategies to building lasting friendships, our children have truly flourished. However, the journey for this academic year is not yet complete. While the anticipation of summer is natural, these final weeks are among the most critical for cementing the skills learned since September. I encourage all our students to finish strong by maintaining their focus, attending school consistently, and putting forth their best effort in every task. This "final push" ensures they transition into the next grade level with confidence and a solid foundation.

One of the most impactful ways to support your child's growth right now is through continued reading practices at home. Even as schedules get busier with spring activities, carving out 20 minutes for daily reading makes a world of difference. Whether they are reading independently or you are sharing a book, this habit nurtures vocabulary, comprehension, and a lifelong love of learning. It is these consistent routines that prevent the "summer slide" and keep young minds sharp.

Beyond academics, I want to encourage you to maintain consistent, open lines of communication with your children. Taking the time each day to discuss their school experiences, validating their feelings, and helping them navigate social dynamics supports their emotional well-being and helps them feel secure. When children know they have a team of supportive adults at home and at school, there is no limit to what they can achieve.

Thank you for being such vital partners in our school community. Your dedication is the heartbeat of New Windsor School. Let's work together to make the remainder of this year a time of continued excellence and celebration. If you have any questions or need additional resources to support your child during this home stretch, please do not hesitate to reach out to our team.

**Newburgh**

*With New Windsor School Pride,*



*Mr. Caml*

**Principal**

## UPCOMING EVENTS



**PBIS GOLD CARD ACTIVITY**

04-28-2026

**NYSESLAT TESTING**

05-4,5,7-2026



**5TH GRADE SCIENCE TESTING**

05-6-2026

**KINDERGARTEN  
MOTHER'S DAY EVENT**

05-08-2026



**CHARACTER AMBASSADOR  
AWARDS (K-2)**

05-11-2026

**NWS STUDENT LEADERSHIP  
TEAM TALENT SHOW**

05-12-2026



**CHARACTER AMBASSADOR  
AWARDS (3-5)**

05-13-2026

**1ST GRADE  
BRONX ZOO TRIP**

05-14-2026



**3RD GRADE  
BLACK ROCK TRIP**

05-15-2026

**NWS SPRING  
INSTRUMENTAL CONCERT**

05-18-2026



**NWS SPRING  
CHORAL CONCERT**

05-28-2026

**NWS  
PARP CELEBRATIONS**

05-27-2026



**NWS 5<sup>TH</sup> GRADE  
TRIP TO LEGOLAND**

05-28-2026

**NWS 4<sup>TH</sup> GRADE TRIP  
TO FORT MONTGOMERY**

05-29-2026



**3RD GRADE  
BLACK ROCK TRIP**

05-29-2026

[Cont'd on Next Page]

Mark Your Calendars!  
So you don't miss any events!



## 2nd Grade Trip to Stonykill Farm!



Our second grade class had a wonderful trip to Stony Kill Farm! Students learned about farm animals, nature's recyclers, honey bees, and pollinators. They also had the chance to make Johnnycakes, which was a fun hands-on activity.

It was a beautiful day filled with sunshine, learning, and great class spirit. We made many special memories together!

Grade 2 Team: Mrs. Merrill, Ms. Hand, Mrs. Gordon, and Mr. Briccetti



## 100 Word Challenge in Kindergarten!

Our kindergarteners have been working so hard to complete our "100 Word Challenge". Our first winner to take the crown was Nouri Morales on April 6th! Then the following week Noah Fuat earned the crown. Followed by Emanuel Torres and Evie Mullarkey. Congratulations to the NWS Scholars!

Ms. Herrera's class



[Cont'd on Next Page]

## The Magic of the Printed Page:

### Why Paper Books Matter for Young Readers

In an era of tablets and e-readers, the glow of a screen is often the first thing a child reaches for. While digital devices offer convenience, the traditional paper book remains an unparalleled tool for a child's cognitive and emotional development. For elementary school students, the physical act of turning a page is more than just a motor skill—it is a gateway to deeper learning.

### Focus and Deep Immersion

Digital reading often comes with a barrage of distractions: notifications, clickable links, and the temptation to "swipe away" when a passage becomes challenging. Paper books, by contrast, offer a "quiet" environment. This lack of distraction fosters deep reading, allowing children to immerse themselves fully in a story. When a child holds a book, their brain can focus entirely on decoding words and building mental images, which is essential for developing a strong imagination.



### The Tactile Connection to Memory

Research suggests that the physical attributes of a book—the weight, the texture of the paper, and even the spatial location of a paragraph on a page—help children map information in their minds. This "topography" of a physical book aids in reading comprehension and retention. The tactile experience of moving from left to right through a stack of pages provides a sense of progress that digital progress bars simply cannot replicate.

### Healthy Habits and Sleep

Screens emit blue light, which can interfere with the production of melatonin, the hormone responsible for sleep. Transitioning to paper books during evening "wind-down" time helps signal to a child's body that it is time to rest.

### Building a Lifelong Love

By filling your home with physical books, you send a powerful message: reading is a tangible, valued part of life. Let's encourage our young learners to feel the weight of a story in their hands and the satisfaction of closing a cover after a journey well-traveled. Sometimes, the best way to move forward in education is to turn back to the printed page.



### ***Celebrating Our Road Warriors!***



A huge thank you to our dedicated bus drivers and aides from West Point, George M. Carroll, and Visconti!

Every day, you are the first friendly faces our K-5 scholars see in the morning and the ones who ensure they return home with a smile. We truly appreciate your vigilance, care, and commitment to safety. Navigating the roads while keeping our students secure is no small feat, and your hard work does not go unnoticed.

Thank you for going the extra mile for our scholars!

### ***A Heartfelt Thank You to Our Cafeteria Heroes!***

*Our Culinary Heroes!*



We extend our deepest gratitude to the NWS Cafeteria Staff for their unwavering dedication to our K-5 scholars.

Your incredible flexibility in navigating the daily lunch rush, your endless patience with our youngest learners, and the genuine support you provide ensure that every student is nourished and ready to succeed. You do far more than serve meals; you create a welcoming environment that makes our school feel like home.

Thank you for all that you do!



## **RECENT EVENTS**



**NWS: D.E.A.R WITH CLIFFORD**  
**04-14-2026**  
[Link to Album](#)



**NWS: DRAMA PERFORMANCE**  
**04-17-2026**  
[Link to Album](#)



**NWS: BLACK HISTORY MONTH CELEBRATIONS**  
**03-17-2026**  
[Link to Album](#)



**NWS: BUILDING BRIDGES THROUGH BOOKS**  
**FEB & MAR-2026**  
[Link to Album](#)

[Cont'd on Next Page]



### NWS All District Teams



Ava Littles \* Emma Minnini \* Isabella Trinh \* Camila Acosta\* Mia Nava

The NWS Music Department proudly celebrated Music in Our Schools Month this March! Nineteen of our talented students worked diligently both in school with Mrs. Petruncola and Ms. Sheehy AND independently at home to master challenging pieces for the All District Music Festival.

These students were selected for their tireless dedication and enthusiastic commitment to music. The concert featured the top elementary performers from across the NECSD and was held on the stage at NFA.

Congratulations to these outstanding young musicians on their remarkable achievement!

*Mrs. Petruncola & Mrs. Sheehy*

*All District Chorus*



Renesmee Cabrera \* Antonio Taveras \* Giabella Tosco\* Skyla Gang  
Brittany Velasquez \* Ariel Silva \* Lillian VanHooker \* Martine Surfin



Lovely Matthews \* Ryan Nguyen \* Ava Carswell  
Wyatt Antona \* Aria Cho \* Mrs. P \* Naomi Correa Bustillo

## RECENT EVENTS



### NWS: ATTENDANCE CHALLENGE WINNERS ONGOING-2025-2026

[Link to Album](#)

### OUR MISSION

*As the Goldback community, we will educate and empower our students to build their futures and support their community.*

### OUR VISION

*Creating voice, choice, and opportunity for impacting the future of all Goldbacks.*



#### NWS: PBIS Expectations!

- Be Responsible,
- Be Respectful,
- Be Ready, and
- Be Safe!



#### NWS: Attendance Pledge

I pledge to go to school every day, be on time, and be ready to learn.



[Cont'd on Next Page]



## School Psychologist's Corner!

Coming up in May is -  
*Mental Health Awareness Month: Supporting Our Children*

May highlights the importance of emotional well-being—a foundation as vital as physical health for a child's ability to learn and build relationships. During elementary school, children are actively learning to manage emotions. Families can support this growth with these ten practical strategies:

- **Create a Safe Space for Feelings:** Encourage open expression. Let your child know all emotions—from joy to frustration—are valid. Listening without judgment helps them feel secure.
- **Build Strong Routines:** Consistency provides security. Regular times for meals, sleep, and play reduce anxiety by making the day predictable.
- **Teach Emotional Vocabulary:** Move beyond "mad" or "sad." Introduce words like "disappointed" or "nervous" to help children communicate more effectively.
- **Model Healthy Coping:** Children mirror adults. Practice stress-management together, such as deep breathing, counting to ten, or taking walks.
- **Encourage Physical Activity:** Movement is a natural mood booster. Simple activities like riding a bike or a family walk can significantly reduce stress.
- **Limit Screen Time:** Monitor digital content and encourage a balance with tactile activities like reading, drawing, or imaginative play.
- **Foster Positive Connections:** Support your child's friendships. Local resources, like the Newburgh Armory Unity Center, offer free activities to help children stay connected.
- **Celebrate Effort, Not Just Outcomes:** Praise persistence and problem-solving rather than just "winning." This builds lasting resilience and confidence.
- **Watch for Signs of Stress:** Be mindful of changes in sleep, appetite, or mood. If you notice persistent shifts, reach out to your school's psychologist or counselor for guidance.
- **Make Time for Joy:** Prioritize fun. Laughter and shared family moments are essential for making children feel supported and loved.

Supporting mental health is an ongoing journey. Through small, consistent actions and a strong home-school partnership, we can ensure our children feel confident and ready to thrive. Reach out to our school team anytime for additional resources.



*Mrs. Caci*  
**School Psychologist**

## BLAST FROM THE PAST



**NWS: 2018-2019 FIELD DAY**

**JUNE-2019**

[Link to Album](#)



**NWS: GIRLS ON THE RUN**

**JUNE-2019**

[Link to Album](#)



**NWS: KINDERGARTEN MOVING UP**

**JUNE-2019**

[Link to Album](#)



**NWS: 5TH GRADE MOVING UP**

**2018-2019**

[Link to Album](#)

[Cont'd on Next Page]



## NWS FAMILY TIPS

### *The School Counselor's Corner!*

So as the end of the school year, believe it or not, bears down on us, the leadership team that was highlighted last month decided to end the year with a school event. We tossed some ideas around and landed on a school talent show. I personally have never facilitated this kind of event, so I'm learning as I go, but it's all good, because I have an amazing group of scholars ready to take on the challenge. That said, those scholars on the team will be the MC's, the judges, and the ushers for the show. As of the time that this blog is being written, we've had three sign ups, which is great since the fliers went out less than 48 hours ago. Events like talent shows have a positive effect on students; socially, academically, and developmentally. Here are some of the ways that this happens:

Talent shows can positively impact student mental health by fostering confidence, self-esteem, and social connection. While they provide a creative outlet to reduce stress, they can also induce anxiety or stress if not managed properly. Participation helps build resilience and reduces stigma, especially when showcasing diverse talents.

- **Positive Boosts:** Participating in arts activities like talent shows enhances well-being, improves self-acceptance, and strengthens social cohesion among peers.
- **Anxiety Management:** Talent shows can act as a form of "immersion therapy" for students, helping them manage stage fright by gradually exposing them to performing in front of others.
- **Vulnerability and Growth:** Sharing talents in a supportive environment allows students to be vulnerable, reducing feelings of isolation and increasing confidence.

~The University of Arizona Health Sciences  
 ~The National Institutes of Health (.gov)  
 ~PubMed Central (.gov)  
 ~On The Stage (.com)

It is also simply an opportunity for students to see their peers taking healthy risks in front of their families and classmates, putting themselves out there and showing the world what they're good at, where their passion lies, and what they're proud of. This event is happening on May 12th. If that date hasn't passed yet when you're reading this, and you think your child would like to participate, check the flier that went home on or around April 16th. There's a QR Code for the online sign-up form, which has instructions for recording and submitting your child's video tryout for the show.

Sincerely,



*Mr. Michalek*  
**School Counselor**

# NEWBURGH GOLDBACKS

### Building Bright Futures:

#### ***Why Early Sleep Matters for Our Youngest Learners...***

For students in the foundational years of Kindergarten through 5th Grade, the secret to classroom success isn't just found in a backpack—it's found in a consistent bedtime. As children navigate the complexities of early literacy and social-emotional growth, sleep serves as the essential fuel for their developing minds.

#### ***The Science of Rest***

Research suggests that children in this age group require 10 to 12 hours of quality sleep per night. During these hours, the brain processes the day's lessons, moving new information into long-term memory. Without adequate rest, "working memory" falters, making it significantly harder for a child to master phonics or follow multi-step instructions.

#### ***The Health Connection***

The impact of sleep deprivation extends beyond academics. Physically, a tired child has a weakened immune system and lower energy levels for physical activity. Mentally, lack of sleep is a primary trigger for irritability and emotional outbursts. For a 7-year-old, "being tired" often looks like "acting out" because their brain lacks the energy to regulate big emotions and frustrations.

#### ***The Digital Distraction***

The greatest thief of modern rest is the electronic device. The "blue light" from tablets and phones tricks the brain into thinking it is still daytime, suppressing the natural sleep hormones needed to drift off. Furthermore, the high stimulation of digital media keeps young minds "wired," making the transition to sleep difficult and restless.

#### ***A Simple Solution***

To ensure your child is school-ready, experts recommend a "device curfew" at least one hour before lights-out. Replacing screens with a shared book or a quiet routine not only improves sleep quality but also provides a calm space for family connection. By prioritizing an early, screen-free bedtime, you are giving your child the best possible start to their school day.

