



# C & I DIVISION NEWS LETTER

November 2025

## ELEMENTARY LEVEL LEADERSHIP

The Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction recently facilitated the launch of nine Scholastic Knowledge Libraries designed to cultivate a love of reading and a pursuit of knowledge for every Goldback, every day. With support from our Superintendent, our wonderful principals, and even a special visit from Clifford the Big Red Dog, this initiative brought excitement and joy to our school communities. Additionally, the Assistant Superintendent, alongside our elementary principals, participated in a highlight walk at GAMS Elementary led by the amazing Rosalie Peña.

Our ELA Curriculum Exploratory Committee has also been hard at work meeting with various providers and preparing for the launch of three curriculum pilots in the new year. This important work aims to provide teachers with a comprehensive, user-friendly curriculum that expands access to the joy of reading for all children.







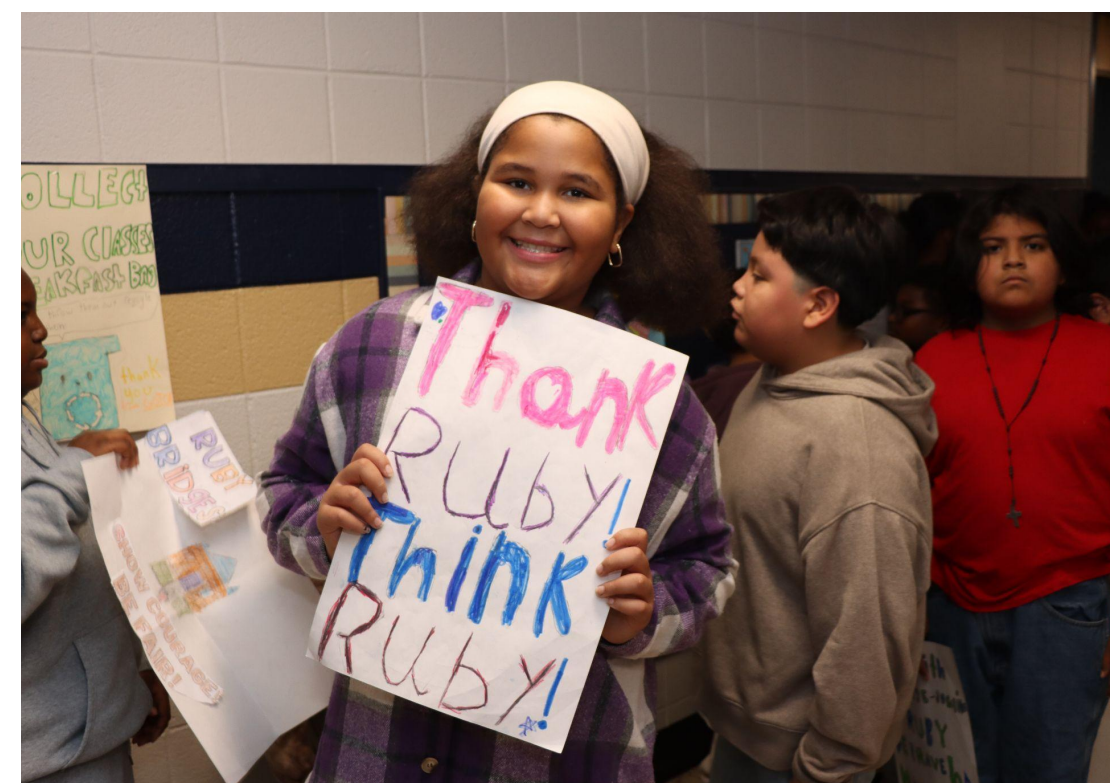
## ELEMENTARY LEVEL HIGHLIGHTS

November was a month of learning, celebration, and community across our schools. In addition to exciting building-level events, educators participated in district-wide professional development focused on strengthening instructional alignment and ensuring consistent, high-quality learning experiences for all students. Throughout the month, our classrooms and communities were filled with opportunities for growth, connection, and creativity. Below are some of the many highlights from around the district.

### **Ruby Bridges Walk Promotes Unity and Reflection**

Horizons-on-Hudson Magnet School

Students at Horizons-on-Hudson, in collaboration with Pamela Peterson, Director of Family and Community Engagement, participated in a school-wide celebration honoring Ruby Bridges. Classes joined together for a neighborhood walk, symbolizing courage, unity, and the importance of standing up for justice—echoing the legacy of Ruby Bridges' historic integration walk. The event fostered meaningful conversations about bravery, inclusion, and community.



### **Scholastic Knowledge Library Ribbon Cutting**

New Windsor School | Gidney Avenue Memorial School | Fostertown School

Three of our elementary schools hosted a celebratory ribbon-cutting ceremony to officially introduce the new Scholastic Knowledge Library. Representatives from Scholastic joined teachers and students as they unveiled this powerful small-group instructional resource, now being used across grades K–5. The Knowledge Library supports rich content learning, literacy development, and dynamic classroom discussions.







### **Fostertown Third Grade Shines in *Beauty and the Beast***

Fostertown Elementary School  
The stage came alive at Fostertown as third grade students delivered an impressive production of *Beauty and the Beast*. Their performance showcased remarkable poise, confidence, and command of the stage. Students memorized multiple lines, demonstrated strong ensemble cooperation, and put on a show that could easily rival a small-stage Broadway production. Families and staff were thrilled by the students' talent and dedication.



### **District-Wide Professional Development: Strengthening Instructional Alignment**

All departments within the Curriculum and Instruction Division worked in unison to plan and provide high-quality, district-aligned professional development workshops for all staff. Each session on November 4th and 5th was designed to ensure that educators received the pedagogical and content knowledge necessary to deliver high-quality instruction to every student. In addition to workshops led by department directors, the district further built capacity by utilizing instructional coaches and external partners to deepen staff expertise and support implementation.

### **GAMS Hosts UFLI Instructional Walkthrough**

Gidney Avenue Memorial School  
Gidney Avenue Memorial School welcomed school administrators for a UFLI (University of Florida Literacy Institute) Instructional Walkthrough. The visit provided an opportunity to observe, discuss, and strengthen the district's implementation of foundational literacy practices. Educators engaged in professional dialogue and shared strategies to continue ensuring high-quality literacy instruction for all students.





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## SECONDARY LEVEL LEADERSHIP

### ***Empowering Assistant Principals Through Targeted Professional Learning***

The Assistant Superintendent of Secondary Level convened campus leaders for a focused series of meetings to strengthen instructional practices and enhance student engagement across secondary schools. Leaders reviewed the district's WalkThrough Tool, analyzing data and collaborating on strategies to improve classroom environment and engagement. Assistant principals also engaged in reflective leadership by sharing their personal **"Why,"** highlighting the passion and purpose behind their work. The session closed with a shared sense of clarity and commitment to ensuring high-quality instruction and meaningful student engagement in every secondary classroom.

### ***Students Tour New CTE Building***

In addition, she coordinated visits for CTE students to tour the new CTE building, giving them an exciting preview of their future learning spaces. Photography students were especially enthusiastic about their new studio area and even flew drones over the site to capture updated images of the construction progress. Additionally, the Board of Education student representatives had the valuable opportunity to meet with the construction managers, gaining firsthand insight into the project's development.







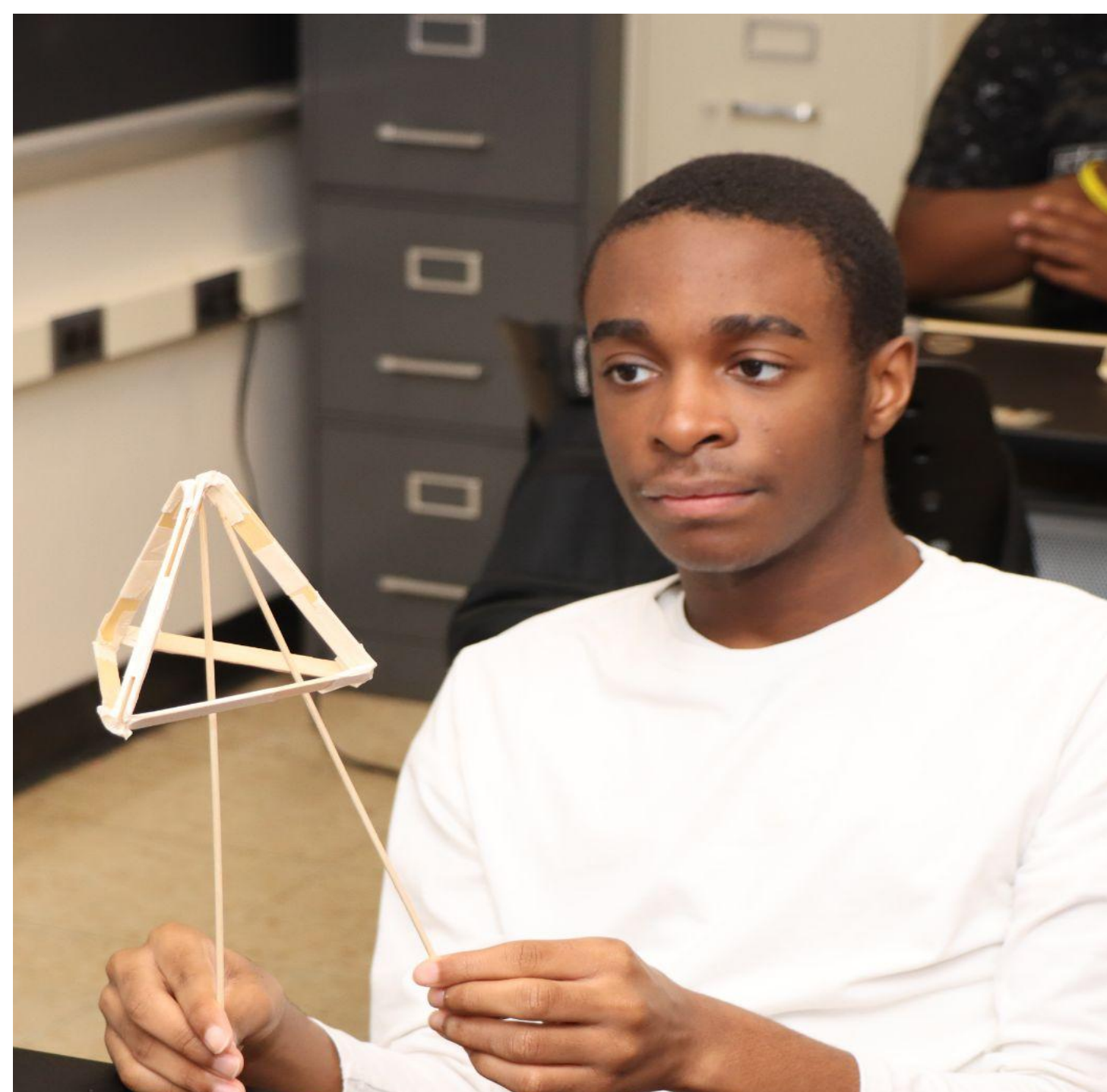
# SECONDARY LEVEL LEADERSHIP

## STEM

Our Director of STEM, Dr. Jeanine Hall, has been actively engaged in building meaningful connections with students and staff through regular classroom walkthroughs. These visits provide opportunities to foster positive relationships while observing and supporting students' academic and social-emotional growth in real time. Individualized curricular support has been provided to teachers through one-on-one coaching sessions. These personalized meetings allow for collaboration on instructional strategies, address specific classroom needs, and ensure that the curriculum is being implemented effectively across all learning environments. In science, the focus has been on implementing phenomena-based learning and storyline approaches that engage students in authentic, inquiry-driven experiences. Dr. Hall has also been supporting teachers as they navigate the new State-required Investigations, assisting with the integration of these components seamlessly into their instruction.



Additionally, Dr. Hall has been working closely with teachers to integrate Solara, the district's specialized AI tool, into their daily practice. Through these one-on-one training sessions, educators are being supported in leveraging data-driven insights to make informed instructional decisions that directly impact student achievement and learning outcomes.







## HUMANITIES

### **Secondary ELA & Social Studies Dive Into Panorama at November 4th PD**

On November 4th, Secondary English Language Arts and Social Studies teachers participated in a dynamic Professional Development day focused on the power of artificial intelligence in classroom instruction.

Grades 9–12 ELA teachers joined the session *Seeing Literature Deeply: Using Parts, Purposes & Complexities With Panorama Solara to Strengthen Literary Thinking and Writing*, facilitated by Humanities Director Ms. Carolyn St. Louis. Teachers explored the Panorama Solara AI tool and used it to design lessons within their current unit plans. By incorporating the Parts–Purposes–Complexities routine, teachers developed strategies to help students break down complex literary texts and strengthen their analytical writing.

Middle and high school Social Studies teachers engaged in rich collegial conversations centered on designing Regents-style questions using Panorama Solara.

Facilitated by Middle Level Director Ms. Mariya Pushkantser, and Humanities Director Ms. Carolyn St. Louis, the session provided a rare opportunity for grades 6–12 educators to examine the skills students need as they transition from middle school to high school. More information on the next page.

### **NFA West Exhibition Week Highlights Student Growth**

Students at the NFA West Campus wrapped up Exhibition Week during the first week of November, proudly demonstrating their learning and growth. This year marked the introduction of the International Big Picture Learning assessment framework—a new tool that provides advisors with a consistent structure for evaluating student progress while helping students reflect on their own development. The framework is being gradually implemented and is already strengthening the assessment of student presentations.

### ***Daniela B. Wills presenting during Exhibition Week at NFA West***







## MIDDLE LEVEL



Our 7th grade students had the opportunity to participate in the Human Rights Institute for Middle School Student Leaders on November 20, 2025, hosted by the Holocaust and Human Rights Education Center at Congregation Emanu-El of Westchester in Rye. This inspiring leadership experience focused on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and encouraged students to become "upstanders" rather than bystanders in their communities. The day featured a keynote presentation by Sheila Arnold of History's Alive!, a performer who brings history to life through dramatic character interpretation and has presented at schools and organizations across 26 states. Following the keynote, students participated in breakout sessions then worked in school groups to discuss how they could bring what they learned back to our school community. We are proud of our students for representing our school at this meaningful event alongside participants from nearly 30 other middle schools across the region.

### Teachers Collaborate Across Grade Levels

On November 4, middle school and high school teachers came together for a professional development workshop focused on aligning instruction with the Next Generation Standards and new Regents exam expectations. Led by Carolyn Monereau-St. Louis, Director of Humanities, and Mariya Pushkantser, Director of Middle Level, teachers worked in mixed-level groups spanning grades 6-12 to explore how AI tools like Panorama and Solara can support standards-based instruction. Similarly, Dr. Jeanine Hall, Director of STEM and Mariya Pushkantser collaborated on a workshop for the Science Teachers. Participants in both workshops analyzed Regents-style questions to identify the skills being assessed, then practiced crafting purposeful AI prompts to generate rigorous classroom activities aligned to literacy standards across content areas. The collaborative session emphasized the key instructional shifts required by the new standards, including focusing on conceptual understanding, fostering student inquiry, and integrating content with skills. Teachers concluded the workshop by sharing their AI prompts in a gallery walk and reflecting on how to help students think critically within the disciplines rather than simply respond to test questions. Meanwhile, Math teachers 6-12 engaged in a workshop on Building Thinking Classrooms to embed discourse and collaboration in math classrooms.





## WORLD LANGUAGES

This past November 4th, during the Superintendent Professional Development ½ Day, World Language teachers engaged in a session titled World Language Standards-Based Lesson Planning Using Panorama where teachers explored using a Solara Tool in Panorama to create World Language lessons aligned to the World Language Standards, Topics, and Themes as per the NYSED Office of Bilingual Education & World Languages (OBEWL).

On November 5, Dr. Martinez-Morales submitted the Seal of Biliteracy District Notification Form due annually to NYSED OBEWL as part of the process for implementing the NYS Seal of Biliteracy for the 25-26 School Year.

On Tuesday, November 18, our juniors and seniors, representing NECSD at the Hudson Valley PRHYLI delegation, attended the second PRHYLI session of the 2025-2026 school year held at Dominican University! Our NECSD PRHYLI scholars are in the process of learning how to research, study, and debate bills such as Health & Mental Health Policy A05305; as part of the bills that students will be debating at the 2026 PRHYLI Mock Assembly at the state Capitol in Albany this coming Spring!



## MIDDLE LEVEL



**DataMate™**

### **Data-Driven Instruction Guides Student Learning**

Our middle school teachers recently administered unit assessments aligned to grade-level standards and their curriculum maps. Following the assessments, teachers analyzed student performance data to identify areas of strength and opportunities for growth. This careful review of student progress allows our educators to make informed decisions about next steps, including targeted reteaching, small group intervention, and enrichment opportunities for students who have demonstrated mastery. By consistently using data to drive instruction, our teachers ensure that all students receive the support they need to meet and exceed learning expectations.





### **District-Wide Professional Development: Strengthening Instructional Alignment**

This past November 4th & November 5th, the Division of Curriculum & Instruction offered Professional Development sessions during the Superintendent ½ Days. The professional development choices included ELL-Specific sessions open to all teachers in grades K-12, as well as sessions specific to ENL, Transitional Bilingual, and Dual Language programs.

One of the sessions at the Secondary level, (see picture above) titled: Adapting Discourse: Exploring Language Transfer and Communicative Competence by Martha Young was attended by ELA and ENL teachers. Another session attended by ELA and ENL teachers K-8 was Leveraging ELL Data to Enhance Writing Instruction Using Panorama by Silvana Diaz-Paron. During this session, teachers learned how to use Solara and data from Panorama to plan differentiated instruction for ELLs in their classrooms. Additional coaching and support opportunities have stemmed from these professional learning sessions.

During the K-12 ELL Department Meetings held in November, Dr. Martinez-Morales shared information about the NYSED transition from NYSESLAT/NYSITELL to WIDA starting in 2027 as well as continued professional learning sessions about Panorama & Solara.

Translation support for our parents was coordinated and provided during Parent-Teacher-Conferences, including for ASL (American Sign Language).



# NEWBURGH FREE ACADEMY ATHLETICS NEWSLETTER

November 21, 2025



## UPCOMING EVENTS

### WINTER SEASON OPENING HOME GAMES

12/2 - Boys Varsity Basketball  
*NFA Main Gym - 5pm vs. VC*

12/2 - Boys & Girls Bowling  
*Pat Tarsio Lanes - 3:15pm vs. PJ*

12/3 - JV Boys Basketball  
*NFA Main Gym - 5pm vs. VC*

12/4 - Girls JV Basketball  
*NFA Main Gym - 5pm vs. Cornwall*

12/4 - Girls Varsity Basketball  
*NFA Main Gym - 6:30pm vs. Cornwall*

12/9 - Boys Freshman Basketball  
*NFA Main Gym - 4:30pm vs. Warwick*

12/10 - JV Wrestling  
*NFA Main Gym - 5pm vs. Monticello*

12/10 - Varsity Wrestling  
*NFA Main Gym - 6pm vs. Monticello*

12/12 - Modified Boys Basketball  
*Temple Hill Gym - 4pm vs. PB*

12/12 - Modified Girls Basketball  
*Heritage Gym - 4pm vs. PB*

1/12 - Unified Bowling  
*Pat Tarsio Lanes - 3:15 pm vs. Beacon*



## GOLDBACK

### WINTER Fall 2025 National Signing Day

Four of our standout student-athletes officially signed their commitments on Fall National Signing Day, taking the next step in their athletic and academic journeys at the Division I and Division II levels. Each of these athletes has sent years building toward this moment- early mornings, long practices, tough losses, big wins, and the steady determination that set them apart. Their signings represent not only personal achievement but the strength of our entire athletic community: the coaches who pushed them, the teammates who supported them, and the families who cheered them on every step of the way.

These commitments span multiple sports, showcasing the depth of talent across our programs. Whether competing in high pressure championships, setting new personal records, or becoming leaders on their teams, these seniors earned their opportunities through consistent hard work and character. Fall National Signing Day gives us the chance to celebrate the years behind them and the bright futures ahead. Josh Yan, Roman D'Alfonso, Samantha Williams and Julia Lopez we are so proud to see you take your game to the next level and represent our school as well as your new colleges with the same pride, determination and heart that has brought you this far.





## GOLDBACK UPDATES CONTINUED

### WINTER SEASON KICKOFF

The winter season is officially underway, with JV and Varsity tryouts wrapping up this week and modified set to begin next week. The energy in the gyms has been high, and our coaches are excited about the talent and work ethic they are seeing across the board. Girls and Boys Basketball, Boys Swim, as well as Wrestling are all gearing up for what are expected to be strong, competitive seasons, with returning leaders ready to set the tone. Competitive Cheerleading, Indoor Track and Field, and Bowling had impressive numbers at tryouts and are looking to have exciting seasons as well. Beyond our interscholastic teams, the Empire Program continues to grow, bringing even more students into athletics. Intramural Volleyball is launching at the middle schools and high schools, December 9th, giving

students a fun, low-pressure way to get active, build skills and enjoy time with friends.

For more information visit our Empire page at <https://www.newburghschools.org/page.php?page=127>



### Athletic Director's ShoutOut

A big shout-out to all of our incredible school nurses, who have been working nonstop to make sure our student athletes are cleared and ready for tryouts. The last few weeks before each season begins is always extremely busy, and they handle it with patience, professionalism, and genuine care for every student who walks through their doors.

Their behind-the-scenes effort keeps our programs moving and ensures our athletes can step onto the court, mats and jump into the pool safely and on time. We're grateful for everything you do to support our kids and our athletic community!

### FALL SEASON WRAP-UP

As we gear up to start the Winter Season here at Newburgh, we wanted to take a quick look back at our fall season and the tremendous accomplishments of our student-athletes.

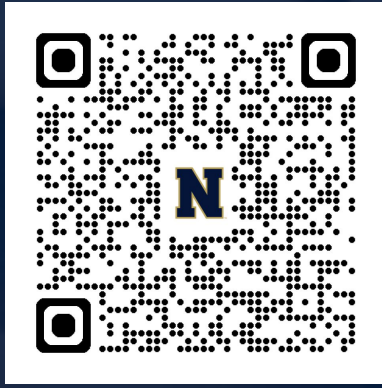
Six of our varsity teams competed in the sectional tournaments. Cross Country, Girls Swimming, Football, Volleyball, Girls Tennis and Boys Soccer! Out of this amazing group we had two stand out teams that won sectionals and made runs at the State level!

**Girls Tennis** sophomore, Vivienne Bucci had an impressive year winning the Section title and participating in the State Tournament. She is going to be a force next year as she prepares in the offseason to make a deeper run in 2026.

Our **Boys Soccer** team delivered the most exciting playoff push of the season, battling all the way to the State Quarter Finals! They have raised the bar for the program, with so many contributors returning, the group is determined to push even further next year and break through to the Finals!

Across every field, court, pool, and trail, our athletes represented Newburgh with pride and heart. The commitment they've shown sets the stage for even bigger wins in the year ahead.





## 21ST CENTURY

The 21<sup>st</sup> Century After-School Program is off to a great start.

The four elementary schools are in the middle of their first rotation. Be on the lookout for their family showcases in January.

Academic enrichment has started at the secondary levels.

High School - all campuses - Tuesday and

Thursday - 2:20-3:50pm

Middle Schools meet one hour after dismissal.

## EMPIRE



## EMPIRE

The Empire State Grant for after-school programs, part of the new Learning and Enrichment After-School Program (LEAPS) initiative, funds programs that provide academic support, social-emotional learning, and enrichment for students in New York.

So far this year, the program is fostering a strong sense of community and belonging. Students are building confidence in expressing their feelings and ideas and they are developing a more positive attitude and approach to challenges. Students and teachers are enjoying time spent together outside of the traditional classroom setting as they engage in activities that help them learn new skills and debrief from the school day.

### Important Information Middle School and High School

Session II:

- Dec. 9, 2025 - Feb. 26, 2026

Session III:

- Mar. 10, 2026 - May 28, 2026

### Empire Rock the Regents Saturdays NFA Main, North & West

@ NFA North, 8AM-11AM

- Dec. 13, 20, 2025
- Jan. 10, 17, 2026

**REGISTER TODAY!**



Although registration is guaranteed, individual programs are first come first serve so make sure to visit [newburghschools.org](http://newburghschools.org) and select **Empire** under the “Families” tab or use the QR Code to apply today!



# EMPIRE IS BACK!

**PROGRAMS WILL RUN AFTER SCHOOL**  
**South Middle & Heritage Middle 2:15PM - 3:15PM**  
**Meadow Hill & Temple Hill 3:15PM - 4:15PM**

*\*TRANSPORTATION WILL BE AVAILABLE BUT VERY LIMITED\**



MEADOW HILL OFFERINGS	TEMPLE HILL OFFERINGS	SOUTH MIDDLE OFFERINGS	HERITAGE MIDDLE OFFERINGS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Band</li><li>• Book Club</li><li>• Chorus</li><li>• Dance/Step</li><li>• Drama</li><li>• Sports Clinics (volleyball, soccer &amp; basketball)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Book Club</li><li>• Crochet &amp; Sewing</li><li>• Drama</li><li>• Drumline</li><li>• Electronic Orchestra</li><li>• Puzzling</li><li>• Weights &amp; Walking</li><li>• Sports Clinics (volleyball, soccer &amp; basketball)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Arts &amp; Crafts</li><li>• BROS</li><li>• Drama</li><li>• Gardening</li><li>• Lego Spike Prime</li><li>• Sports Clinics (volleyball, soccer &amp; basketball)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Arts &amp; Crafts</li><li>• Mindfulness &amp; Teen Talks</li><li>• Crochet &amp; Sewing</li><li>• Dance</li><li>• Lego Spike Prime</li><li>• Set Design</li><li>• STEM: Hydro Cars and Robots</li><li>• Sports Clinics (volleyball, soccer &amp; basketball)</li></ul>

**EVERY**  
**GOLDBACK**  
*every day*

**Application Deadline:**  
**Ongoing**



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Rock the Regents  
at **NORTH**  
**SATURDAYS**  
Dec-Jan

- ELA
- Math
- Science
- History

# EMPIRE IS BACK!

**PROGRAMS WILL RUN AFTER SCHOOL FROM  
2:20PM - 3:20PM**

*\*TRANSPORTATION WILL BE AVAILABLE BUT VERY LIMITED\**

## WINTER

December 9 to  
February 26, 2026

## SPRING

March 10 to  
May 28, 2026

## EMPIRE PROGRAM OFFERINGS at NFA MAIN

- Culinary
- Autobody
- Welding
- Library TECH/HW Help
- Swimming/Adaptive Swimming
- Intramural Sports (Volleyball, Soccer, Basketball)
- Rock the Regents - Variety of regents content area review sessions

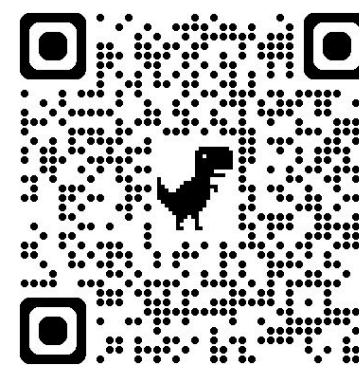
## EMPIRE PROGRAM OFFERINGS at NFA NORTH

- Nursing
- Safety & Security
- Intramural Sports (Volleyball, Soccer, Basketball)
- Rock the Regents - Variety of regents content area review sessions

**EVERY  
GOLDBACK**  
*every day*

**Application Deadline:  
Ongoing**

NEWBURGH ENLARGED CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT



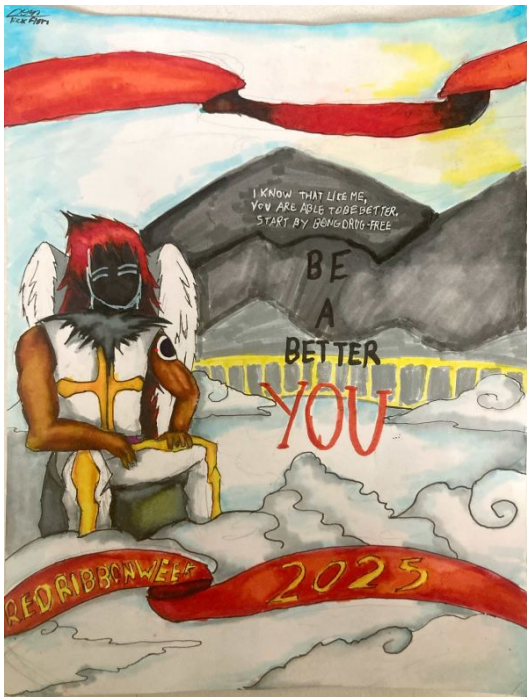
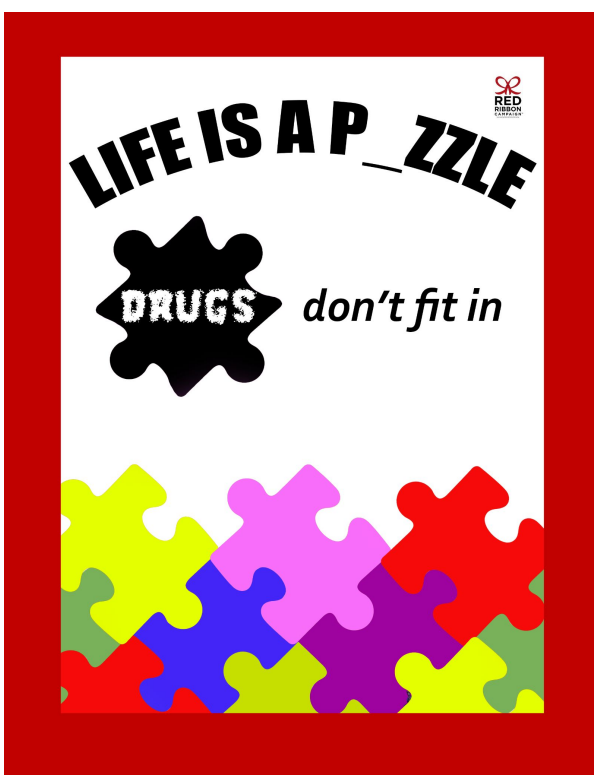
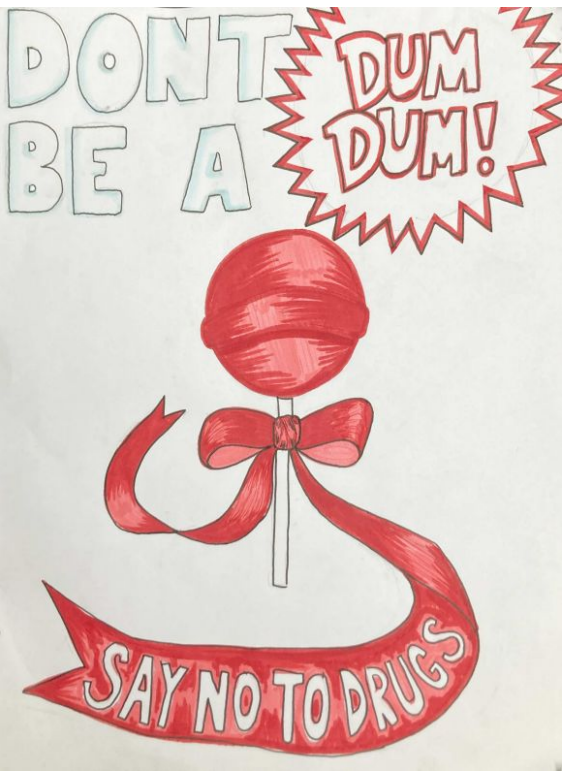
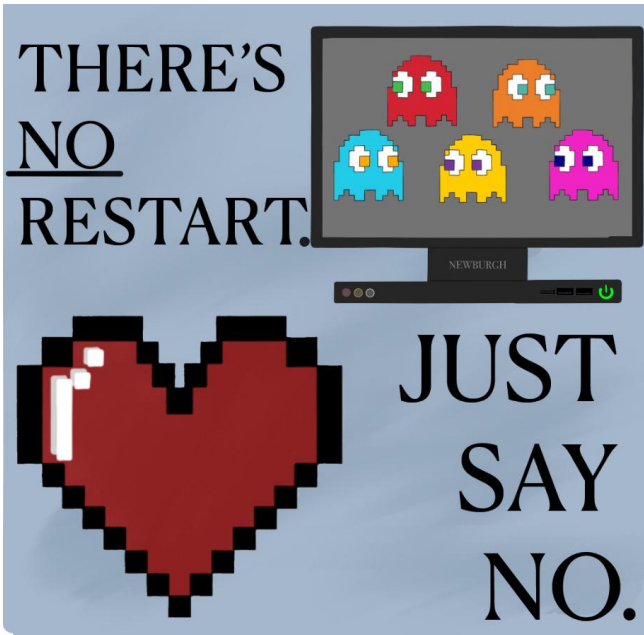




# MUSIC & FINE PERFORMING ARTS

At the October 28th Board of Education meeting, student artwork celebrating Hispanic Heritage Month was proudly on display from schools across the district. Students shared colorful and creative projects such as bulls inspired by Pablo Picasso, folk art Mexican mirrors, sugar skulls, and pieces honoring José Guadalupe Posada. They also created self-portrait sombreros, woven Mexican Zapotec carpets, and monarch butterflies representing Día de los Muertos. In addition, students learned about the work of artist Julie Dominguez and designed their own artwork inspired by her vibrant style. The display was a beautiful celebration of creativity and culture.

As part of Red Ribbon Week, students were invited to design posters promoting healthy choices and positive lifestyles. Four creative posters were selected and shared with the school community. Congratulations to the students for sharing their talent, creativity, and commitment to spreading a positive message during Red Ribbon Week.



## UPCOMING EVENTS



11/ 4 & 11/5 - SMS Musical Auditions

11/14 & 11/15 - *Chicago: Teen Edition*,  
NFA Main Auditorium  
(11/14: 7pm, 11/15: 2pm & 7pm)

11/18 - OCMEA Jazz Auditions (Warwick Valley HS)

11/20 - Fostertown 3rd Grade Musical,  
6:30pm

11/20 - SMS Bits and Skits, SMS  
Auditorium, 6pm

11/21 & 11/2 - NYSSMA Area All-State  
Festival @ Cornwall HS

11/25 - Music Council Open Stage Night  
@ NFA M Black Box Theatre, 6pm

12/5 - Fostertown 1st Grade Song Swap

12/5 - NFA Dance Winter Production -  
Winter Ballet @ NFA M Auditorium 6pm



**NECSD Department of Fine &  
Performing Arts**

*Inspiring lifelong learners, enthusiasts,  
and active participants in the arts,  
contributing to a vibrant and enriched  
community.*

Questions? Email: [kjohnsen@necsd.net](mailto:kjohnsen@necsd.net)