

WUHSMS Principal's Report

by Principal Garon Smail

I am so grateful to share with you some of the accomplishments of students, faculty, and staff at Woodstock Union High School and Middle School from the 2021-22 school year. First and foremost, I extend my heartfelt thanks to this community for supporting our school.

We offer personalized, authentic, and student-driven learning experiences for our students. During the 2021-22 school year, our enrollment was 486 students in grades 7-12. To meet student needs associated with the impacts of the pandemic, we added a social-emotional learning specialist to the faculty and small group academic support. At the middle school level, we created a club and activity program providing students with more choices and opportunities to interact and build a middle school identity. The eighth-grade team created an end-of-the-year overnight experience celebrating students transitioning to high school. At the high school level, we continued to enhance our academic program by expanding offerings including the AP program, with 105 students taking 209 AP exams, STEM and design classes, and student-designed experiences via the Center for Community Connections, C3.

We launched teacher initiatives including the C.R.A.F.T. program, which integrates science, technology, and agriculture to promote deep learning about climate resiliency. The C3 Department created the Trailblazer Series, which hosted presentations and workshops by alums for current students. The modern and classical language department partnered with the international organization Soliya allowing students to engage in cross-cultural virtual dialogues with peers in Tunisia and Lebanon.

We are proud to recognize achievements and awards earned by members of our school community. The Social Action Club hosted the Leadership Summit for Social Justice. Participants considered barriers to inclusion experienced by students at WUHSMS, reviewed a draft of the WCSU proposed Equity, Inclusion, and Diversity in Education Policy, and inspired each other to take action for positive change. The Vermont Humanities Council awarded librarian Susan Piccoli the Victor R. Swenson Humanities Educator Award. Students had their work published in the VT Digger and Vermont Standard, broadcast on Vermont PBS, displayed in regional art galleries, and recognized by organizations including the University of Vermont Mathematics Department, American Junior Academy of Science, Future Business Leaders of America, and Vermont Holocaust Memorial.

We saw energy and enthusiasm in athletics and extracurricular activities with more than 70% of students participating and our biggest turnout of fans and audiences in recent memory. The Yoh Players performed four amazing shows, the Unified Sports soccer team won gold at the state tournament, and the girls' ice hockey team made school history by winning the state championship!

I am deeply grateful for the support of our generous community, and I look forward to another successful year at Woodstock Union High School and Middle School.