

NEF Offers \$10,000 to each Norwalk Middle School for After School Programs

There's growing evidence that an enriching and engaging after school program helps boost the success of students in-school and contributes to important work-ready skills such as teamwork, problem solving and decision-making skills. With this in mind, the Norwalk Education Foundation is offering each of Norwalk's four middle schools, Ponus, Roton, Nathan Hale and West Rocks \$10,000 to put in place a Middle School After School program open to all students. The effort is made possible with the support of EMCOR Group, Inc., GE Capital and Marion Moore Foundation.

In the past, each middle school has had some form of NEF extracurricular activities, but they were limited and not always open to all students. NEF is offering the support in order to have consistent, quality enrichment programs at all four middle schools that are open to all students and involve parents, students and teacher through a committee that will help shape the program. So far, Roton and Nathan Hale Middle Schools have signed on to the program.

After the Bell Successful and Growing

Now in its second year, Norwalk Public School's before and after school program After the Bell has grown, nearly doubling its enrollment from 150 children to 286. The Board of Education-approved program which runs at Kendall and Rowayton Elementary schools, was created to better connect the school day to out-of-school time for children with working parents.



After the Bell's continuity for the children is accomplished through school staff who oversee the day-to-day program management, and who also teach enrichment and academic classes in the program including "Money, Money, Money," a class on money management; "The Kendall News", putting together a student newspaper; cooking; karate and dance.

"The programs children engage in play a key role in their ongoing learning by providing opportunities for exploring interests, and gaining important lifelong skills such as problem solving, conflict resolution, teamwork and leadership," says NEF President Lauren Rosato.

Elementary Students Draw On!

Eleven Norwalk elementary schools will take part in the Aldrich Museum's Draw On! program at the end of the month. Between March 29 through April 9, children that are involved in NEF's Power Hour classes will work on pieces with the theme "What Does Norwalk Mean to Me?" Volunteers from General Electric will be lending a hand, helping the students with the projects.

On Sunday, April 10, the Aldrich will hold a Family Day as a culminating event. Draw On! brings together people of all ages through drawing, while also fostering new and imaginative ways to think about art. Last year the program drew more than 2,500 participants from all over Connecticut and parts of Massachusetts, who attended events in various venues throughout their towns.

Save the Date!

BET Budget Hearing
Wednesday, March 24, at
7:30 p.m., City Hall.

NEF 12th Annual Golf Classic
May, 3 at Shorehaven Golf Club (link to the invitation)

Norwalk School Teachers Discover the Art of Using Drawing to Teach

Fifteen Norwalk Public School teachers traveled up to Ridgefield last month to The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum, and took up pencil and paper. This was no ordinary art class, however. These teachers were taking part in a "Learn and Draw" workshop sponsored by the Norwalk Education Foundation to discover how art can be used to help students in thinking and communicating ideas.



Participants took part in hands-on activities that illustrated ways in which drawing can help children learn habits and skills that can be used for analyzing, collecting information, hypothesizing, imagining, recalling, storytelling and visualizing, among others.

Jennifer Imhoff, a first grade teacher at Columbus Magnet School, talks about a still life activity they learned using 2 dimensional or 3 dimensional materials. "As a teacher, I am used to modeling how to do an art activity. In this approach students try different ways of doing the activity with different materials and art becomes more of an exploration similar to a science experiment."

It is ideas like that that NEF hopes will be brought into the classroom, helping teachers to interest, inspire and educate their students.

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A donation to NEF is an investment in Norwalk's future - helping to bring quality education to 10,500 public school students.

Tune In!

The Norwalk Board of Education meetings can be seen on Public Access Channel 78, Monday-Friday at 8:00am & 4:00pm, or online. Thank you to our high school film student volunteers!

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