

NORTH STONINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Time to Value

The North Stonington Public Schools want all members of the school community to feel valued, in fact, it is part of this district goal - Embed practices and procedures throughout the schools and curriculum experiences that ensure all students, staff, and families feel safe, valued and have a sense of belonging. We are achieving this in many ways in classrooms and in the schools as a whole. The well-attended Veterans Day celebration at the elementary school, the reopened woodshop, our restorative approach to student behavior, the addition of an indoor track team, the new alternative education program, the student-constructed patio in front of Wheeler, and a strong district-wide mental health team are just a few of the ways we recognize and respond to personal experiences, interests, and needs, thereby making people feel valued.

Making people feel valued is important whether in school, work, or our personal lives. Throughout the winter season and beyond, I propose that one of the best ways to make people feel valued is to give them the precious gift of time, which can seem hard to spare. What could this gift look like?

- FaceTime with friends and family who you cannot see in person.
- Participate in a game that someone else wants to play.
- Listen, like you have never heard that story before.
- Bake favorite cookies with or for a friend.
- Be present with the people in your presence.
- Offer a greeting, a smile, and a helping hand to those you encounter.
- How do people, and pets too, feel after interacting with you - more valued or less?

Don't forget to give the gift of time to yourself as well! Think about how you want to spend time and then do it. The clock keeps ticking and, as of yet, time machines do not exist. Or do they? When you first give yourself the gift of time, it may seem like you have more to give others. Valuing yourself enables you to value others.

I hope to spend some time with you at upcoming school and town events. Please feel free to start a conversation, or just smile! Of course, you can always schedule an appointment by contacting Irma Wilhelm, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent, at (860) 535-2800.

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