

# VERNON PUBLIC SCHOOLS



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## Maple Street School Students Create 266 Veterans Day Cards to Win Superintendent's Challenge

(VERNON, Connecticut) – The students at Vernon's Maple Street School have won the Annual "Superintendent's Challenge" by creating 266 hand-made cards for local Veterans to mark Veterans Day.

For several years Vernon's superintendent of schools has challenged students to make cards for veterans and Superintendent Dr. Joseph P. Macary continued the tradition this year.



Vernon Superintendent of Schools Dr. Joseph P. Macary stands with Maple Street School students after the school won the Superintendent's Challenge.

*The Vernon Public Schools, in partnership with family and community, is committed to provide a quality education, with high expectations, in a safe environment where all students become independent learners and productive contributors to society.*

Vernon students created 1,163 cards that were distributed to veterans through local businesses and organizations and at the Veterans Home and Hospital in Rocky Hill.

“Understanding the meaning of Veterans Day is important, and this is a way for all students, especially our youngest students, to begin to develop an appreciation for the special people who have served our nation in the armed forces,” Dr. Macary said. “The students at Maple Street School did an especially wonderful job creating cards for our veterans.”



At Maple Street School, some students made more than one card, Principal Josh Egan said. Teachers urged their students to create cards and the art teacher encouraged students too, he said.

“My father was a veteran so we wanted to make sure we were supporting our veterans for all they did for the country,” Egan said.

Veterans Day falls on November 11<sup>th</sup> each year, and marks the armistice that ended World War I on November 11<sup>th</sup>, 1918. The holiday, initially called Armistice Day, was created in 1919.

Schools were in session on Armistice Day because school and community leaders understood that the best way to convey the somber meaning of the day was to have children in school. The holiday was renamed Veterans Day in 1954, and eventually schools closed on the holiday.

In 1995, the legislature changed the law to allow Connecticut schools to be in session on Veterans Day if there were programs about veterans. Vernon has opted to be open on Veterans Day for several years.

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This year, COVID-19 prevented veterans from visiting to talk to students about their experiences in the armed forces and to help them understand the meaning of the day. But that will resume.

“The students learn firsthand about what the holiday means,” Dr. Macary said. “I think it’s really, really powerful and it brings Veterans Day to life.”

Egan said it is unfortunate students were not able to meet and listen to veterans this year.

“Having veterans in the building and celebrating them is a great thing,” Egan said. “We have a lot of family members that served and it’s a great way to show them our appreciation.”

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