



A program of
Stamford Peace Youth Foundation

BEYOND LIMITS NEWSLETTER

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STRONG START TO 2025-26 ACADEMIC YEAR

Beyond Limits continues to deeply engage students and empower them to be their best selves – and families are taking notice.

This past September, Beyond Limits launched its math & science tutoring sessions with a renewed emphasis on flexibility. Families can now access on-site or remote support six days a week, with sessions available as late as 8:00 p.m. on select weeknights.

Tutoring requests are matching – and in several cases exceeding – last year’s record highs, with more than 50 individual sessions each week. These numbers reflect not only steady program growth,



but also increasing community awareness and confidence in the academic support provided.

A key driver of this momentum is our commitment to collaboration. Beyond Limits continues to strengthen partnerships with many community organizations, including Kids in Crisis, Kids Helping Kids, and Stamford Public Schools. These strategic alliances ensure that tutoring doesn’t happen in isolation – it becomes part of a coordinated, community-wide effort to help students grow academically, socially, and emotionally.



READING IS EVERYTHING

Although we have focused exclusively on Math and Science academic supports since opening our doors years ago, we can’t ignore a critical reality: in 2024, only about 31% of 4th graders were rated proficient or advanced in reading, according to the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). The NAEP – often called the Nation’s Report Card – evaluates 4th and 8th-graders’ reading and math achievement every two years, offering one of the clearest snapshots of students’ academic progress.

In response, this January, we launched our first-ever reading and writing workshop series for 4th and 5th graders, powered by the incredible dedication of a passionate, highly experienced volunteer educator.

Designed to be fun, welcoming, and intellectually enriching, the workshop provides students with the tools and confidence to grow as readers and writers – setting them on a strong path toward lifelong literacy.



REAL PROFESSIONALS. REAL CONVERSATIONS.

Our long-standing collaboration with Stamford High’s Early College Studies (ECS) program is multifaceted. For example, we were recently joined by an incredible group of panelists from a variety of professional fields for an engaging technology panel discussion with a particular focus on Artificial Intelligence (AI). We are deeply grateful for their willingness to take time out of their busy schedules to support and inspire SHS students. Opportunities like this highlight the importance of connecting classroom learning to the real world and helping students build essential life and career skills.

During the panel, students had the

chance to ask thoughtful questions about potential career paths and learn how developing their knowledge of AI can give them a valuable advantage in the future. Hearing directly from professionals who work with AI every day made the conversations relevant and relatable.

AI isn't the future — it's the present. From real-world applications to what's next, our panelists brought the conversation to life, sharing their career paths and tackling the big questions. They spoke candidly about the challenges and opportunities that come with working in a rapidly evolving field, offering honest insights into what it takes to thrive in a world increasingly driven by AI. A panelist advised that “Good students get better using AI; better students get best using AI; bad students get worse using AI”. It was an opportunity to listen, learn, and be part of the conversation shaping tomorrow.

Events like this remind us that education doesn't stop at the classroom door — and that when we open doors to the wider world, students rise to the opportunity and expand their perspective. We look forward to continuing to create these meaningful connections and empowering students to step confidently into a future full of possibilities.

PARTNERSHIP SPOTLIGHT

Together with Kids in Crisis, Beyond Limits is dedicated to supporting the whole student—not just the academic component. Beyond Limits takes a holistic approach to create a well-balanced student. Kids in Crisis offers **free and confidential meetings** to listen, provide support, and connect families with community resources. They can help with family conflict, peer relationships, school struggles, coping strategies, and more.

YOUTH LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

Beyond Limits, in collaboration with Kids Helping Kids, hosted a multi-week Youth Leadership Academy for students in grades 6–8. The program focused on building essential life skills, including confidence, leadership, teamwork, public speaking, and goal setting. Through hands-on activities and collaborative projects, participants developed the tools they need to become effective leaders in their schools and communities.



TOGETHER, WE BUILD STRONGER COMMUNITIES

At Beyond Limits, we believe every child deserves the academic and holistic supports needed to truly thrive. That is why we are excited to partner with Hart Magnet Elementary on an initiative delivering high-impact math tutoring—personalized support designed to unlock each student’s full potential. By working closely with Hart’s dedicated educators and leadership team, we are laying the foundation for a strong, sustainable collaboration that drives improved math outcomes, builds student confidence, and strengthens the entire school community. To maximize the impact of this promising effort, we are actively seeking \$5,000 in funding. These funds will allow us to expand the first phase of this initiative to 24 students, ensuring more learners benefit from individualized, research-based tutoring. With ongoing communication and support from the Hart team, we are confident this partnership will yield meaningful results. Through this initial phase, we aim to demonstrate measurable impact and responsibly grow this program to fully scale the math supports.

Scan to donate to Beyond Limits Academics or visit peaceyouthct.org/donate



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Hart Magnet Elementary School faces a critical convergence of academic need and resource scarcity. Historically, we have relied on grant funding to bridge the achievement gap for our most vulnerable students, but recent funding cuts have eliminated our ability to provide essential after-school academic support. This loss strikes a community already facing significant barriers: over 50% of our students qualify for Free/Reduced-price lunch, 30% require English Language Support, and a staggering 63% come from non-English-speaking homes. Furthermore, this year has seen a marked increase in families experiencing homelessness/housing instability.

These socioeconomic factors directly impact academic outcomes. Currently, nearly one-quarter (21%) of our 177 fourth and fifth-graders are performing below grade level in mathematics. Without intervention before they transition to middle school, these students risk falling permanently behind.

We are seeking to partner with Beyond Limits in offering high-impact math tutoring. This partnership will allow us to support struggling students in a smaller setting, specifically designed for our fourth-grade population.

Hart Magnet Elementary leadership is fully committed to this initiative, ensuring it aligns directly with our School Improvement Plan. Our administration is ready to dedicate the necessary facilities, data-sharing protocols, and administrative oversight to facilitate a seamless integration of the Beyond Limits program.

Sincerely,



Principal Sandra Carlton

WE ARE THRILLED TO ANNOUNCE A GRANT FROM NEAR & FAR AID!

We are pleased to share some exciting news – we have once again received a generous grant from Near & Far Aid. This continued support is a true testament to the shared commitment we have in making a difference in our community, and we are deeply grateful for their partnership.

Near & Far Aid is an all-volunteer fundraising and fund-granting organization that makes a positive impact on thousands of people in Fairfield County by granting over \$1 million a year to well-vetted local agencies addressing poverty and changing lives.

We look forward to putting these funds to work and continuing to make a positive impact – together.

SENIOR TUTOR SPOTLIGHT

As our peer-to-peer tutoring model continues to grow, we want to pause and spotlight some of the extraordinary students who make it all possible: our senior tutors. These remarkable young leaders are truly the linchpin of our mission to support and uplift fellow students.

They show up with dedication, empathy, and a genuine commitment to helping their peers thrive academically and gain confidence. Their willingness to share their time, knowledge, and encouragement reflects the best of who we are as a community.

We are incredibly proud of each and every one of them. Below are just a few of the talented seniors who make our program shine and who we will be spotlighting.



Naomi is a senior at Greenwich Academy and has been tutoring with Beyond Limits for three years. This fall, Naomi will attend the University of Pennsylvania to study Biology.

Naomi’s favorite thing about being a tutor is the bonds she makes with students and seeing their improvement. Fun Fact! She can sing in over 5 different languages! Her advice to younger students is to “Trust the process. Even if things don’t click immediately, keep working at it and don’t be afraid to ask for help”. Great advice, Naomi!



Anne is a senior at Westhill High School and has been tutoring with us for three years. This fall, Anne will be attending Dartmouth College to study economics.

Anne’s greatest joy as a tutor comes from assisting others in achieving success and personal growth, both academically and personally. In her free time, she loves playing the piano, a passion she has pursued for ten years. Her advice to younger students is, “Don’t be afraid to ask for help!” Our tutors are always here to support you.

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Empowering every participant to achieve their potential through high-quality, subsidized, non-school-based peer-to-peer tutoring, mentoring, academic advocacy, and enrichment programming.

IN THE WORKS...

We hope you enjoyed our very first newsletter! We are so grateful for your support and are thrilled to confirm we have plenty more program information to share with you.

Looking forward to our next issue with updates on our enrichment programming, additional tutor spotlights, and so much more!

Stay tuned and please share with anyone you think would be interested in learning about our work!

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