

**GREENWICH PUBLIC SCHOOLS & GREENWICH ALLIANCE FOR EDUCATION  
Greenwich, CT**



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**For Immediate Release**

**Greenwich Alliance for Education Supports Growth of eSports Club at Greenwich High School**

**Greenwich, CT – Thursday, April 22, 2021** – With the support of the Greenwich Alliance for Education, students in the recently created eSports Club at Greenwich High School are thriving in the world of competitive gaming.

The eSports Club was spearheaded by three sophomore students in 2018 who wanted to have a formal program at GHS that supported competitive gaming and that was sanctioned by the Student Activities Office. According to eSports Club Advisor Mr. Richard Baxley, “The club offers students a chance to connect to school and to develop interpersonal relationships amongst students with a shared interest in an organized extracurricular activity.” Over 50 students are currently registered for the club and more than 20 have been meeting weekly on Google Meet to play casual matches and to connect. Club meetings have been held virtually all year due to COVID-19 safety protocols.

Greenwich Alliance for Education Executive Director Ms. Julie Faryniarz shared, “It is exciting for the Alliance to invest in the technology needed by the eSport’s Club to expand participation for students who want to be part of a GHS team and share interest in competitive gaming. Additionally, the cultivation of the wide array of skills associated with competitive gaming is giving student’s experience to explore the possibilities of this growing field.” Currently, the Greenwich Alliance for Education has awarded \$12,000 to eSports through their Reaching Out Grants program. The program has applied for additional grant funding for the 2021-2022 school year and their request is currently under review by the Grants Committee.

There are two leagues in the Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference (CIAC) state tournaments for competitive gaming: League of Legends and Rocket League. GHS has teams who compete in each of these state tournaments. League of Legends competition is a 5v5 team set up and a best of two games to win and advance. In the League of Legends game, two teams battle in player versus player combat, each team occupying and defending their own half of the map. Each of the ten players controls a character, known as a "champion", with unique abilities and differing styles of play. During a match, champions become more powerful by collecting experience points and purchasing items to defeat the opposing team. The Rocket League structure is 3v3 player structure and teams must win 5 games. Rocket League players use rocket powered cars to work with their team to advance the ball down the field, and score goals in their opponents' net. It features a competitive game mode based on teamwork and outmaneuvering opponents.

An advantage of having an organized club is that after tournaments, Mr. Baxley coaches students to review their games and shares insights on how to practice to improve outcomes. He works with students to manage disappointments and creates a safe space for the students to be gaming. A goal of the eSports Club is to become a fully recognized varsity sport in the Greenwich Public Schools.

Mr. Baxley shared, “Club members are also gaining skills in graphic design and I plan to recruit a variety of other student roles to include casting, video editing, managing, coaching and more. This is a booming industry with many career paths including coding and web development, game analysis, logistics, legal services and production. Over 150 universities have recognized the popularity of eSports and now have game and/or media design degrees and award scholarships to the athletes who demonstrate skill in the sport.”

### **About the Greenwich Alliance for Education**

The Greenwich Alliance for Education was launched in 2006 as the local education foundation supporting students in the Greenwich Public Schools. Since our founding we have dedicated \$3.4 million to funding innovation, expanding opportunities, and inspiring educators. While progress has been made, our schools are still challenged by a diverse population, a persistent opportunity gap, and constraints on the ability to respond to a rapidly changing world. We believe it is our shared community responsibility to leverage resources and build partnerships to guarantee all students achieve academic success and a promising future.

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