

# HOPKINS HILL AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM HAS KIDS **LOOKING FORWARD TO STAYING AFTER**



Kendra Leigh Miller/Daily Times

**ABOVE:** Coventry High School senior Mikayla Marchessault helps students create their pom-poms in arts in crafts at the after school programs at Hopkins Hill Elementary School in Coventry. **BELOW:** Hopkins Hill teacher Rob Guillemette guides his group through coding as part of a different activity offered in the program.

## Principal, PTA President say program is a smash

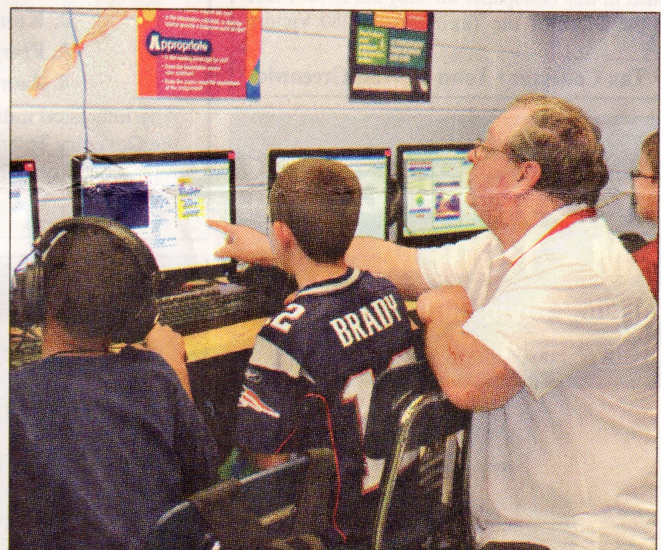
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**COVENTRY** — The after school program at Hopkins Hill Elementary School is a huge success with fun, educating activities that keep kids engaged.

The program is in its eighth week and will wrap up next week with the hope of having a summer session, according to program coordinators Hopkins Hill Principal Kathy Tancrelle and Marissa Eisner, Coventry PTA president.

The program, with 60 students taking part, offers yoga, arts and crafts, Taekwando, forensics and computer coding.

"All instructors are volunteers and the program has gone off without a hitch," Tancrelle said. "It's been very well organized. We have students



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Kayden Fargnoli practicing his skills in Taekwondo with instructor Doug Crawford at Hopkins Hill after school.

# Program could expand next yr.

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from kindergarten through grade five taking part and we have student volunteers along with parents and local officials and the kids love it and we have a great, supportive PTA.”

“There was a need for it, so I spoke to Kathy and I happen to be at a school event where I spoke to some parents about it, so from there, we got a letter out to the Hopkins Hill School community and high school so we were able to get our volunteers,” Eisner said.

She admits she was unsure of how big the response was going to be.

“Now that we see it’s a success, we can continue it next

year,” she said.

School Committee Vice Chairman Dave Florio is an advocate for the program and said it’s a wonderful PTA initiative.

“I help out because I feel all the children and their parents or guardians deserve it and I hope to see the program expand to Tiogue and Blackrock,” Florio said. “It’s a great thing to see these kids get so involved in these activities and the volunteers from the different types of activities are truly giving of their time for these kids.”

He recalled being a volunteer in an after-school program when he was a college student and then another program in Providence for a year, which

was also expanded to include seniors as mentors.

“Here I am, 40 years later, volunteering at the same thing,” he said.

Former District 29 Representative Lisa Tomasso credited Eisner on the wonderful job she’s done of engaging the community at Hopkins Hill.

“After school programs are an important part of every community,” she said. “They help students get excited about what they learn in class, build character, get physically active and develop healthy eating habits.”

Tomasso believes all students should have access to after-school programs, regardless of where they live.