



SMITHTOWN CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

DIGEST

SCHOOL & COMMUNITY

SPRING 2016



COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS CONNECT HOME AND SCHOOL

Based upon the community's feedback to the Board of Education's 2015-16 goals, the district developed its spring Wellness Fair and Parent University to support proactive parental communication. Recognizing the link between leading a healthy lifestyle and success in the classroom, the March 21 event focused on drug awareness, social media and online safety, and stress reduction.

During the Wellness Fair, 39 informational booths were set up, each of which offered a wealth of information and hands-on activities. Throughout the program, attendees sampled a variety of healthy foods, participated in basic yoga instruction and took part in health screenings. The goal of the fair was to bring awareness of the importance of good nutrition, healthy living and physical exercise to the Smithtown community.

During the Parent University component, the district offered six workshops geared toward parents of students in grades K-12. Presenters spoke on topics such as homework and daily stress, social media, cyber safety, substance abuse trends and support resources within the community.

The Mind-Body Skills and Stress Reduction for Parents workshop taught parents mind-body practices and mindfulness skills for stress reduction. Making Homework Less Stressful for You and Your Child reviewed how parents could effectively communicate with their children about homework. Social Media: Pitfalls and Positive Uses supplied parents with a comprehensive look into several popular social media apps and websites. It also explained the various ways young users are utilizing the platforms to communicate with their peers. Cyber Safety and Sexting Prevention addressed the dangers associated

with smartphone apps and other electronic communication device usage, as well as the digital trail left once a photo and/or message is sent. Current Drug Use Trends and the Modern Day Family discussed current trends in teenage substance use, focused on risk factors, and provided parents with proactive strategies they can use with their children, as well as with information about community resources. The Substance Abuse Issues and Resources in Smithtown workshop focused on adolescents and how a team approach can best be used to support teens and preteens at home and at school for a drug-free lifestyle.

"Tonight was the result of an incredible partnership," said Jennifer Bradshaw, assistant superintendent for instruction. "These events showcased students and the community promoting protective factors alongside parents and staff. I am proud to be part of such a caring and motivated community."

A Message from Your *Superintendent*

Dear Residents,

As the weather begins to turn to spring, and then quickly into summer, our students and staff have been continuing to impress me with their talents inside and outside of the classroom. I am particularly proud of the ongoing collaboration between our schools and our community. It is through this strong school-community relationship that our district is able to afford opportunities for students to explore their interests and succeed now and in the future.

In order to continue to provide those opportunities, our administration and Board of Education have been responsible for making tough financial decisions, one of those decisions being to close Branch Brook Elementary School following the 2016-17 school year. The decision to close Branch Brook was a difficult one that took months of analytical research and community input into consideration. We understand that this decision emotionally impacts our community, but it is important to know that the district must act with the best interest of our students and staff in mind, while maintaining its fiscal responsibility to taxpayers.

Another decision currently being made by our Board of Education is the proposed 2016-17 budget. Over the last few months, we have been diligently reviewing items in order to prepare a financially sound budget that provides opportunities for our students while remaining cognizant of the financial impact on our community. Please see page 8 of this newsletter for information on voting locations and times, as well as how to register to vote. Remember to vote on Tuesday, May 17.

As the weather warms up, I look forward to celebrating the numerous student accomplishments to come, including year-end concerts, academic award ceremonies and graduations. I hope you'll join me in honoring these student achievements.

Sincerely,
James J. Grossane, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools



WELCOME TO THE *Wellness Corner*



Is your child having trouble concentrating or sitting still? Is he or she easily distracted, fidgety or forgetful?

These signs may indicate that your child is acting like a regular child, and consistent, patient parenting skills may adequately address these behaviors over time. If the behaviors become a serious concern, however, then the topic of ADHD may come up, and parents should consider seeking additional guidance and support from professionals.

Attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder, or ADHD, is a behavioral condition that makes focusing on everyday tasks, routines and responsibilities challenging. Currently, about 11 percent of U.S. children are diagnosed with ADHD. It is the most common chronic behavioral disorder in children.

ADHD is characterized by attention deficit, impulsivity and sometimes overactivity. It often begins in childhood and can contribute to low self-esteem, troubled relationships and difficulties with school or work. The exact cause of ADHD is unknown; however, it is suspected that genetics, intolerances and adverse reactions to additives and foods, as well as sensitivities to environmental chemicals, molds, fungi, and exposure to neurodevelopmental toxins such as heavy metals can cause the behaviors described above.

Due to the complexity of ADHD, a thorough medical evaluation is necessary to diagnose and effectively treat it. Because ADHD impacts many areas of a child's development, an integrative treatment approach that addresses the whole child should be considered. These treatments

may involve the short-term use of psychostimulants, addressing nutritional deficiencies, making dietary changes, treating allergies, detoxification and correction of intestinal imbalances. Additionally, family counseling and behavior therapy can reduce symptoms and create the conditions for a child diagnosed with ADHD to lead a normal and productive life.

Simple lifestyle changes can have a significant impact on maintaining focus, whether or not a person has an ADHD diagnosis. Maintaining a healthy and balanced diet, as well as exercise and physical activity, are recommended as part of an overall healthy lifestyle. Ensuring your child is getting a restful night's sleep can also help manage the symptoms of ADHD. According to a Pediatrics paper published in 2012, even just a half-hour of extra sleep can keep kids from being restless at school and improve their behavior.

Speak with a school or medical professional if you are concerned that your child's behaviors are negatively impacting their academics, interpersonal relationships, well-being or safety. Additionally, seek out support for yourself and your family if dealing with ADHD is creating stress. Mindfulness, meditation and yoga have all proven helpful to managing stress as well as symptoms of ADHD.

Sources: American Academy of Pediatrics, American Journal of Psychiatry, American Psychiatric Association, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Environmental Health Perspectives, The Lancet, The National Resource on ADHD, Project Presence, www.additudemag.com, www.mindful.org

COMMUNITY Connections

Understanding the role that the local community plays in education, the district is committed to broadening students' experiences by helping to forge those connections. Using the resources available in Smithtown and the surrounding communities, the district's schools are working to support community involvement.

For example, two district efforts – International Business Career Day and a middle school fundraiser – have allowed students to connect to the local community.

INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS CAREER DAY

High Schools East and West team up with members of the business community to enhance education and prepare students for the real world. This unification is called the

Smithtown Industry Advisory Board. Earlier this school year, more than 20 local businesspeople in a variety of fields came together to speak with students about their career options at International Business Career Day.



Select business and foreign language students from both high schools spent the day speaking with the professionals during round robin-style sessions. Networking opportunities such as these give students a chance to explore different career options, possibly through future internships.

NESAQUAKE GIVES BACK

Service-minded students understand the importance of giving back to those in need, specifically by supporting local community organizations. Matthew Reidlein, a Nesaquake Middle School student, spearheaded a community service effort this school year by starting a fundraiser for America's Vet



Dogs, a local organization that trains and places service dogs with veterans and the visually impaired.

Matthew, who is visually impaired and has an older brother who is legally blind, set out to raise \$6,000 to sponsor a puppy through online fundraising and the sale of bracelets and lollipops. Thanks to the help of the school community, Matthew has upped his fundraising goal to \$30,000, of which he now has raised more than \$26,000.

DECA Members Take *Top Honors*

HSE and HSW DECA students continued their winning streak, as 118 competed in the New York DECA State Competition in Rochester, New York, in March. Eighty-one students received medals and trophies, and 33 qualified to attend the International Career Conference in Nashville, Tennessee.

In addition, HSE was awarded chapter recognition for Advocacy, Community Service, Global Entrepreneurship and Promotional Campaigns. HSW was awarded chapter recognition for Community Service and Promotional Campaigns and for its contributions to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital.

The following students were inducted into the 2016 New York DECA Honor Society: HSE: Kaila Cerbone, Jacquelyn Keegan, Tara Korkus, Ryan Micozzi and Tarabeth Moon; HSW: Michael Friedman, Tiffany Holtje, Darian Kane-Stolz, Christina Marcisak, Nicole Sancillo and Victoria Tiranno.

The following DECA students from HSW qualified for the International Competition: Cole DeMarco, Danielle Fay, Michael Friedman, Robert Grasso, Tiffany Holtje, Darian Kane-Stolz, Christina Marcisak, Gina Marcisak,

Julia Peragallo, Nicole Sancilio, Sophia Santos, Ryan Scheinberg, Allison Schuchman, Alexa Speciale and Victoria Tiranno.

Those who qualified for the International Competition from HSE are: Allie Adams, Samantha Agnoli, Kathy Anderson, Savannah Augugliaro, Samantha Cheng, Kyle DiPietrantonio, Christopher Favazza, Brian Femminella, Jaine Gabrielsen, Austin Jacks, Tara Korkus, Victoria Lombardi, Christopher Maloney, Victoria McKee, TJ Menchini, Ryan Micozzi, Tarabeth Moon and Kayla Rickles.

A Brush of Creativity



Developing and Enhancing Creativity

Aside from providing fundamental academic skills, the district's goal is to afford students the opportunity to develop their interests and abilities to the fullest extent according to their individual potential.

Looking beyond the state-mandated requirements, students are given the opportunity to delve into a wide array of creative outlets. From course offerings to clubs to musical opportunities, the arts are helping students grow and excel in their educational careers.

"The newly revised federal Every Student Succeeds Act states that children should be exposed to a well-rounded education, with arts integrated into current STEM [Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics] subject matter," said Director of Fine Arts K-12 Michael Mastrangelo. "To succeed in the future, students must possess necessary 21st-century skills. This includes integrating creative thinking into STEM projects and stimulating students' creativity and imagination through the arts. Recently, an increased number of articles in the media have focused on the need for our country to increase innovation and the fact that businesses are placing a greater emphasis on finding artistic-minded individuals who use creative thinking to find alternative solutions. It is my hope for the program to evolve and grow so that Smithtown children continue to be exposed to exceptional opportunities in the arts."

Nurturing Innovation

By the time they reach high school, students have been offered opportunities to build a solid foundation in the arts. Course offerings help nurture high schoolers' creation and innovation of design. Studio in Art focuses on basic principles and design elements as they relate to two and three-dimensional art. The course offers a survey of many different media and techniques, providing an excellent foundation for other art classes.

Studio in Digital Media Arts emphasizes 21st-century learning skills such as communicating and expressing ideas in an artistic manner through multimedia technology. Students use industry-standard applications to create digital media focusing on design, production and function. The students have been working in Meshmixer, a 3-D design program, to design creatures, which are brought to life with a 3-D Makerbot printer.

Digital Media Art students learn the many aspects of editing and composing through the use of Adobe Photoshop. Most recently, using their own photos, they designed a photomontage. The digital paintings were printed on acrylic to enhance the vivid colors and are now on display outside the surgical unit at Saint Catherine of Siena Hospital in Smithtown.

Both the Film and Video and the Photography courses provide techniques and training methods that allow students to apply their knowledge to the digital world. Membership in the National Art and the National Art Media honor societies further build upon the study of media, film, photography and digital art.

Sixteen student-artists from High Schools East and West took home 31 awards in the Scholastic Art and Writing Awards Program.

HSE art teacher Tim Needles is the recipient of the National Art Education Association's 2016 AET Outstanding Teaching Award.

Laying the Foundation

The laying of the foundation starts in kindergarten, when students begin receiving exposure to various resources and materials used to express their artistic side. Elementary programs aim to inspire creativity, provoke thought and improve fine motor skills. Fundamental concepts are introduced, and paint, pencil, clay and other media are used to mold and shape the children's talents.

As they progress through the grades, students further their knowledge of art by learning about art history and different media and connecting different types of art to their culture. By the end of their elementary experience, they have the ability to understand the cultural dimensions and contributions of the arts. They learn about the cultural forces that shape artistic communication and how the arts have in turn shaped the cultures of past and present society.

Students are also offered the opportunity to participate in the National PTA Reflections program, which supports student success at both the elementary and secondary level, and celebrates arts education in the school community. Every year, student participants reflect on a common theme and create original works of art in the categories of dance choreography, film production, literature, music composition, photography and visual arts.

St. James students took part in a schoolwide mosaic project. The students spent their art classes working alongside local artist Esther Tollen to create a one-of-a-kind tile mosaic of their historic school building.

Exploring Interests

At the middle school level, students begin to collaborate and experiment with art in other subject areas. Projects based in STEAM – science, technology, engineering, the arts and mathematics – give students the ability to be creative outside of the art room. For example, an eighth-grade art class recently added LED circuits to their Oaxacan clay sculptures.

Middle schoolers can further explore the arts by joining clubs formed around different specialties, such as sewing, arts and crafts, movie making, painting, knitting and crocheting, and woodworking, as well as the school's literary/art magazine.



Pair Scores National Win

Using their business skills learned through years of DECA membership, two High School East students brought home a national title in the Herff Jones Marketing Challenge in January. After competing in the finals in California, students Ryan Micozzi and Jainee Gabrielsen were named the overall winning team.

Herff Jones executives traveled to HSE to present the pair with a \$5,000 check. In April, Micozzi and Gabrielsen will travel to DECA's 2016 International Career Development Conference in Nashville, Tennessee, where they will be recognized.

Participants in the Herff Jones Marketing Results Challenge assisted

Herff Jones in testing an array of promotional messages delivered to potential yearbook buyers through various channels. DECA members analyzed yearbook-buying patterns and attitudes at their own schools, then created and implemented marketing campaigns to increase yearbook awareness and sales on campus.

For the first round of competition, they created a 10-minute video explaining their market research, findings and sales. They competed in the finals by delivering a 30-minute presentation, along with 15 minutes of questions from 25 Herff Jones executives, who acted as judges.



Celebrating Literacy

To further enhance the home-school connection while reinforcing the importance of literacy, district elementary schools participated in Parents as Reading Partners programs. The daily activity of reading together strengthens reading and communication skills in students and also supports the parent/child relationship.

PARP is a program that cements the bond between the home and school to encourage the love of reading by reading together for at least 15 minutes per day. This year's theme was "Cosmic Connections:

May the Reading Force Be with You." Guest readers, including school district administrators, parents and community members, visited the schools to introduce students to a variety of genres. Local authors made surprise appearances at several elementary schools to speak to students about their careers and share their favorite books.

There was no shortage of fun activities to coincide with the PARP program. Elementary schools held bookmark contests, as well as Bingo Day, Intergalactic Crazy Hair and Hat Day, and Book Swap Day.



Middle Schools Abuzz with Bees

Middle school students put their knowledge to the test earlier this school year when they competed in spelling and geography bees against their classmates.

The top spellers in each school completed a number of challenge rounds against their classmates in the schoolwide bee before moving on to the next level of competition. At Accomsett, Victoria O'Connor took first place. Great Hollow's winner was Jack VanDeusen, and Nesaquake's was Matthew Zodda. The three students competed in the Long Island Regional Scripps Spelling Bee at Hofstra University on March 13.

Continuing the buzz of knowledge, the three schools each held a National Geographic Geography Bee. Prior to the schoolwide round, all of the finalists successfully completed the individual classroom and academic team rounds. Great Hollow seventh-grader Muizz Chattha, Nesaquake seventh-grader Brian Dowling and Accomsett eighth-grader Jacob Chodrow came out on top in their schools' bees.

Athletic *Recognitions*



Throughout the past two athletic seasons, Smithtown student-athletes have brought pride to themselves and the community they represent.

During the fall sports season, all 20 of the district's varsity teams were recognized as scholar-athlete teams. Continuing the fall sports achievements, HSE's field hockey team was the division champion and girls volleyball took league champion

honors. At HSE, the boys soccer and golf teams both won the league championship. Individual athletes also received honors at the state level. They included HSE girls tennis players Olivia Faulhaber and Mikayla Gorla, girls cross-country runners (combined team) Catherine Farrell and Gabrielle Schneider, and girls swimming team members (combined team) Hayley Beutel and Elizabeth Gallagher.

The athletic accomplishments continued through the winter season. Sixteen of the 17 varsity teams were named scholar-athlete teams. HSW's boys basketball team was named league champions. HSE girls winter track runners Kylie Strzelczyk and Gabby Schneider and HSE boys winter track runners Daniel Claxton and Dominik Oramas competed in states.

NATIONAL CHAMPIONS



The High School East varsity Whisperettes kickline team took home their 17th national championship title when they won the small high kick division at the Contest of Champions Nationals in Orlando, Florida, on



March 5-6. The team also placed first for best in category for high kick.

The High School West varsity Whisperettes kickline team competed in the 2016 NDA Nationals High School Dance Team Championships

from Feb. 26-28 in Orlando, Florida, and were crowned the 2016 NDA Small Kick National Champions. The team also placed 17th in large varsity pom and seventh in medium varsity team performance.

RECORD BREAKERS



It has been a high achieving few months, as members of the track and cross-country teams landed themselves in the record books. High School East junior Daniel Claxton won the high jump at the Hispanic Games with a leap of 6 feet, 9 inches, breaking his previous school record of 6 feet, 8 inches. He is currently ranked No. 1 in New York and No. 2 in the United States.

High School West varsity track team members John Barone, Chris Quilla, Ethan Scully and Tyler Scully ran 1:33.82 in the 4x200-meter relay, shattering the previous record of 1:34.1 set in 1997. Ethan Scully also broke the school records in the 200-meter and 300-meter dash.

Cross-country runner Gabrielle Schneider broke the 5K course school record at Goddard State Park, the 1.25-mile course record at Van Cortlandt Park, and the 1.7-mile and 2.8-mile course school records at Sunken Meadow. Catherine Farrell broke the course record in the 2.8-mile at Sunken Meadow.

HSW girls winter track runner Emily Bernabeo broke the record for the 300-meter dash. HSE girls winter track runner Kylie Strzelczyk broke her own record in the pole vault, beating her record of 9 feet, 6 inches set last year with a vault of 10 feet, 6 inches this season.

ZONE WINNERS

This year's Suffolk Zone Award winners from High Schools East and West were John Boyzok (HSE), Antonina DeStefano (HSE), Natalia Lynch (HSW) and Nick Peragallo (HSW). Presented by the New York State Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance, the award was given to one senior female and one senior male from each school district in Suffolk County who demonstrated outstanding character, physical education and scholastic achievement, leadership and role model qualities.



****ECRWSS****

SMITHTOWN POSTAL CARRIER

IMPORTANT VOTER INFORMATION

Where to Vote on Tuesday, May 17, 2016

ELECTION DISTRICT No. 1

West of Hauppauge Road (Route 111), south of Jericho Turnpike, and west of Fifty-Acre Road South and Fifty-Acre Road, north of Jericho Turnpike, west to the boundaries of District No. 4.

VOTE AT:

Smithtown Elementary School, located at 51 Lawrence Avenue in Smithtown (Gymnasium).

ELECTION DISTRICT No. 2

East of Fifty-Acre Road South and Fifty-Acre Road, north of Jericho Turnpike.

VOTE AT:

St. James Elementary School, located at 580 Lake Avenue in St. James (Gymnasium)

You can also check your voting district by using the "Voter Location Tool" on the district's website at www.smithtown.k12.ny.us

**Please note that although Nesconset Elementary is not being used as a school, the building will still be used as a polling place.*

ELECTION DISTRICT No. 3

East of Hauppauge Road and south of Jericho Turnpike.

VOTE AT:

*Nesconset Elementary School, located at 29 Gibbs Pond Road in Nesconset (Gymnasium).

ELECTION DISTRICT No. 4

West of the Long Island Railroad and north of Jericho Turnpike and Creek Road.

VOTE AT:

Accompsett Elementary School, located at 1 Lincoln Street in Smithtown (Gymnasium).

Are *You* **Vote?** Registered to

Only registered voters can participate in the budget vote and Board of Education election on Tuesday, May 17, 2016. If you have not voted in any political or school district vote within the past four years, you will need to register. Residents vote at the elementary school in their election district. If you meet the following requirements, you are eligible to vote:

- 18 years of age or older;
- A citizen of the United States;
- A resident in the district for at least 30 days prior to the vote, and
- A registered voter with the Suffolk County Board of Elections.

You may download a voter registration form from the district website, www.smithtown.k12.ny.us; however, you must return the completed form in person to the district's central office at 26 New York Ave., Smithtown, during regular business hours, from 8 a.m.-4 p.m., Monday through Friday. Please call the District Clerk's office at 631-382-2012 for further information.

**The last day to register to vote:
Tuesday, May 10, 2016.**

Application for Absentee Ballot

To obtain an absentee ballot, a person must be a qualified and registered voter of the Smithtown Central School District on the date of the election.

The person seeking the absentee ballot must be approved by the District Clerk and/or the board of registration by filing an application with the District Clerk. Applications are available at the district's central office at 26 New York Ave., Smithtown or on the district website at www.smithtown.k12.ny.us.

The application must be received

by the District Clerk at least seven days before the election if the absentee ballot is to be mailed to the voter, which for this election will be May 10, 2016, or the day before the election if the ballot is to be personally delivered to the voter, which will be May 16, 2016.

Any questions concerning the application procedure for absentee ballots should be directed to the office of the District Clerk at 26 New York Ave., Smithtown, N.Y. 11787 or by calling 631-382-2012.

SCHOOL COMMUNITY DIGEST

Published by the Smithtown Central School District

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Smithtown Central School District does not discriminate on the basis of handicaps or on the basis of sex, race, or ethnic background in the educational programs or activities which it operates.