



SCHOOL & COMMUNITY

# DIGEST

## PARTNERS IN *Education*



A goal of the Board of Education and administration has been to prioritize and strengthen the relationship between community and schools. Several initiatives during the 2021-22 academic year have further cemented those bonds.

Among the burgeoning partnerships:

- The Suffolk County Police Department has partnered with the district to provide important information to our students that will help create a safer school environment and community.
- The Town of Smithtown shared behind-the-scenes access to its facilities and the expertise of its personnel with science students as part of its ongoing STEM partnership with the district.
- The community has been heavily involved in shaping the district's upcoming strategic plan, including through its participation in a detailed survey conducted Nov. 15 through Dec. 12 that will help set the district's priorities.

"It is important for us to establish partnerships with our greater community," Superintendent of Schools Dr. Mark Secaur said. "We all recognize the importance of these partnerships. It has been a joy to work with the Town of Smithtown and the Suffolk County Police Department as we collectively emphasize important values such as safety and the effective stewardship of our beautiful town."

In November, officers Ryan Doherty and Lynn Volpe from the SCPD's Crime Scene Investigation unit visited biomedical science students at High School East and West to offer a hands-on forensics lesson that included a tour of the county's crime-scene van.

Meanwhile, throughout the spring, other SCPD officers will visit each elementary school for

age-appropriate sessions on topics including violence and bullying as well as internet safety. SCPD personnel will visit middle schools to discuss alcohol, cyberbullying and over-the-counter and prescription drugs, and high schools for sessions including vehicle survival and drug awareness. Additionally, SCPD recruiters will do a career presentation during a March 24 college fair that also will include representatives from nearly 100 colleges.

The Smithtown Central School District similarly has been engaged with the Town of Smithtown.

STEM students from High School West, through a continuing partnership, received an inside look at the town's recycling and solid waste process at the Smithtown Municipal Services Facility in December. Sanitation Supervisor Neal Sheehan and Smithtown Solid Waste Coordinator Mike Engelmann led an experiential learning trip with marine biology teacher Kimberly Williams' class. Students observed what happens to waste once it leaves the curbside, the different materials that Smithtown recycles, challenges of fluctuating recycling markets and the harmful impacts that can occur without personal awareness and responsibility.

Among the other local partnerships: Teen librarians Kaitlin Brand from the Smithtown branch and Colleen Navins from the Nesconset branch of the public library visited High School West and Accomsett Middle School students on Dec. 14. While also distributing library cards, the librarians noted that students can make appointments for volunteer opportunities that fit their particular schedules. The students were encouraged to visit [www.smithlib.org](http://www.smithlib.org) for more information about offerings at the library, including free museum passes.

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# A RETURN TO *Live Performances*

Performers feed off energy from their audiences, so musicians throughout the district were enthralled that a series of concerts returned to in-person performances this winter.

"All day I was walking around saying, 'We have a concert tonight!'" Great Hollow Middle School band director Anthony Dazzo told an in-person audience in December that kicked off the concert series among the middle and high schools. "We're back. We're here."

That sentiment was echoed by Mr. Dazzo's band, orchestra and chorus colleagues throughout the district last month.

Several of the middle school concerts were held at High School West, taking advantage of the spacious auditorium.

High School East moved its concerts to the gymnasium, allowing for increased spacing – with musicians recalibrating their performances to account for the different acoustics from the school's auditorium.

It had been two years since most musicians from the middle and high schools performed for spectators.

"It felt great to see students performing in concerts, and parents experiencing the music-making efforts of their children together once again," said Michael Mastrangelo, the district's director of fine arts.



Accompsett Middle School



Great Hollow



Smithtown High School East



Nesaquake



Smithtown High School West





# ATHLETIC *Accolades*

The Smithtown Central School District has enjoyed unprecedented athletic success during the 2021-22 academic year.

Varsity high school teams delivered one Long Island championship and five county titles in the fall. Two other teams produced league crowns.

Coordinator of Physical Education, Health, Athletics and Nurses Patrick Smith, who presented the championship teams at the Dec. 14 Board of Education meeting, beamed with pride as he recounted the High School West and High School East girls soccer teams meeting in the county finals a month earlier. It had marked the first time the two schools had ever met in any sport with a county title on the line.

“It was a magical moment you kids were able to bring to our community,” Mr. Smith proudly told the student-athletes.

West, which topped East for the county title in girls soccer, also finished with a 3.8 team GPA and was ranked 23rd in the nation.

The success reached unprecedented heights throughout the athletic program:

- High School East boys golf won the league title.
- Boys cross-country, a combined team, won its league title and finished as county runner-up. The team has won 34 straight league meets spanning the past five years.
- Girls swimming and diving, a combined team with Hauppauge, went 8-0 en route to the county title. The team won every meet by more than 100 points and finished third in the NY State championships. Additionally, they set six school and two county records.
- High School West girls volleyball, which won its second straight county championship, finished undefeated in league play and was ranked in the top 10 in the state.
- Girls gymnastics, a combined team, won the county team championship.
- High School West boys volleyball won the Long Island championship, its second straight county title, and finished as state runner-up.

Meanwhile, at the middle school level, Accomsett and Great Hollow both went undefeated in football.

“It was just a really, really great fall for our athletes and coaches,” Mr. Smith said.



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SMITHTOWN CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

# DIGEST

SCHOOL & COMMUNITY

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