

# SMITHTOWN BULLETIN



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**FEB 2024**



# SUPERINTENDENT Message

Dear Smithtown CSD Community,

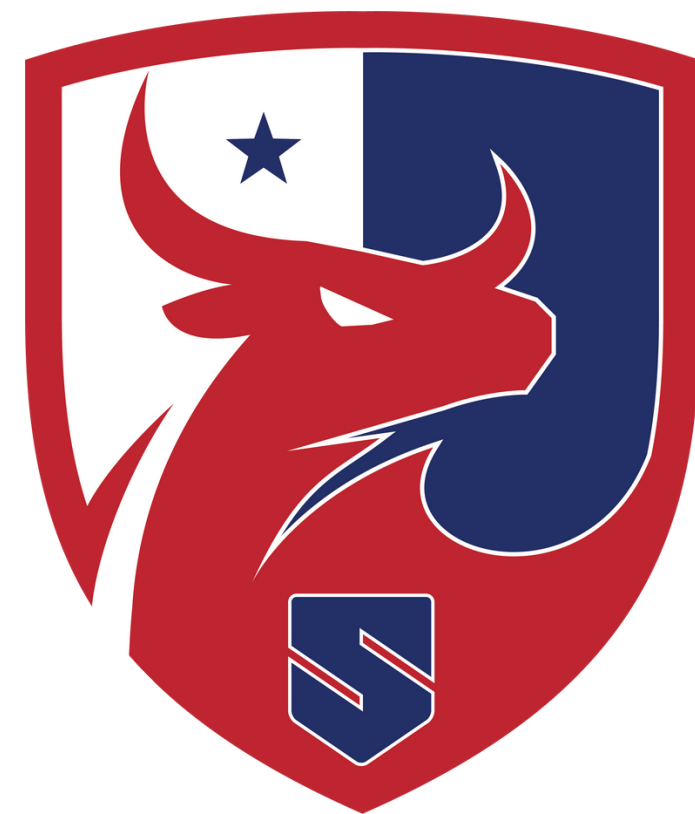
I hope that you all had the opportunity to enjoy the recent snow day as well as the winter recess. These are wonderful opportunities to enjoy the winter season and spend quality time with your friends and family. Whether you went somewhere far away or had a staycation, I hope you enjoyed the recess immensely as we enter March. As you know, March can come in like a lion and out like a lamb, so we will continue to keep an eye on the weather and notify you if there will be any impacts to school.

Just before the recess, I had an opportunity to spend quality time in each of our schools and am consistently impressed with the offerings we provide our students. Whether it was the PARP reading program, Virtual Enterprise or Robotics, I enjoyed my interactions with our students very much. I look forward to more of these opportunities in the weeks to come.

This weekend, I will be attending the New York State Council of School Superintendents Winter Institute in Albany. During the conference, I will be joining Kevin Camson to conduct a workshop titled “Improving District Communications and Student Engagement: Strategies for Success!” I look forward to sharing our work (including this Bulletin) with my colleagues. We will also receive updates on the state's 2024-2025 education budget and I will certainly advocate for a full return of the state aid I wrote about in a recent letter.

We hope you enjoy this month's edition!

Sincerely,  
Dr. Secaur



# CURRICULUM CORNER

## POLAR BEARS & PENGUINS AT TACKAN!

How does blubber keep an animal warm?

How tall is a penguin 🐧?

These questions and more were answered by kindergarten students at Tackan Elementary School.

Students had been studying several animals, and wrote/illustrated facts about polar animals including penguins, polar bears, snowy owls and more. During the Polar Animal Centers, the children tested how blubber works in ice water, conducted an estimation math center, measured "how many penguins" tall they are.

They also had a penguin "egg" relay race, created their own polar animals and went ice fishing.

Thank you to kindergarten teacher, Sharon Weissman, for organizing this fun and educational event!



## PARP FUN!

PARP (Pick A Reading Partner) week was a big hit throughout the SCSD. At St. James Elementary School, students enjoyed a book fair, bookmark contests for each grade, and author visits along with many community readers.

Some of the guest readers included police officers, high school seniors who were SJE alumni, librarians, former St. James Elementary Principal, Mrs. Lynch, and SCSD Superintendent, Dr. Secaur! At Mills Pond Elementary, students experienced a fun reading "reunion." Students walked to their teachers from last year and read to them!



# CURRICULUM CORNER

## TACKLING EIGHTH GRADE SOCIAL STUDIES HONORS

Students taking the new eighth grade social studies honors classes at Great Hollow Middle School have been working on a research project focusing on 1920s changemakers.

Michaela Riviello, Richard Restifo, and Francesca Casale's Eighth Grade Honors social studies classes completed the two week intensive research project with the help of GH Librarian, Deanna Jakubowsky and Library TA, Caroline Conte. Students were given a historical changemaker from the 1920s and researched them using library resources including databases, websites found through Destiny Webpath Express, and books.

Students had to research the life of their changemaker, and prepare a 90 second "Elevator Pitch."

Great job by all involved!

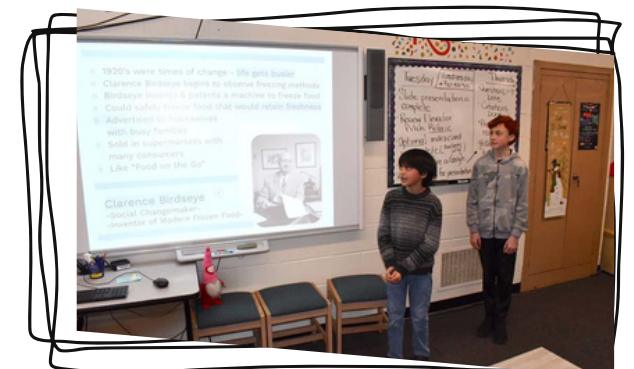
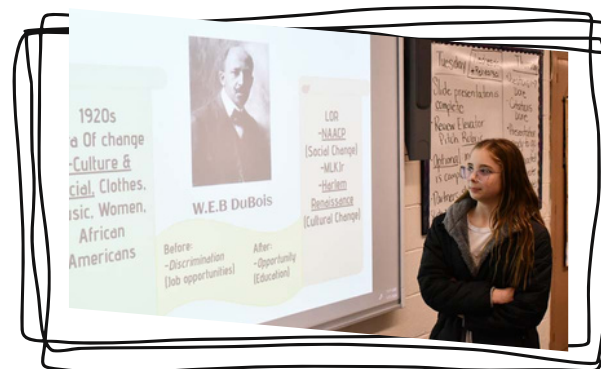
## VIRTUAL ENTERPRISE OPEN HOUSE SHOWCASE

The High School East and High School West libraries were the site for the annual Virtual Enterprise Open Houses.

HSE firms ALLTag and DogGO, and HSW firms SpiritBoost and R&R Solutions were on hand to promote their businesses and the program.

The Virtual Enterprise program is offered by the School of Business in the CTE Department, facilitated by Stephen Costello, Patrick Rosa, Stefanie Torlentino and Christine LoFrese, CTE Director.

After an introduction and explanation of the program, firm partners mingled with the students to share their experiences!



# SCSD ACHIEVEMENTS

## WOMEN IN TECHNOLOGY

Congratulations to High School West technology student Ashley Bittner, and High School East technology student, Abigail Brennan, for graduating from the BAE Systems Women in Technology program!

Ashley and Abigail received hands-on training from BAE engineering in mechanical, electrical, software, manufacturing and process engineering.

Ashley and Abigail are both members of the Smithtown Robotics Team. Ashley is the team's Smithtown IAB student ambassador and Abigail is the current team president.

Mr. Costello and Mr. Savage, Technology Education Teachers/Robotics Advisors, as well as Mrs. Christine LoFrese, CTE Director, are very proud of both Ashley and Abigail for their hard work and dedication to the program.



## STEM STAR



Congratulations to High School West's Sudarshan Padmanaban on being named a finalist in the National STEM Challenge! Of the 280 finalists in the national competition, Sudarshan is one of five who are from Long Island!

His work focused on the relationship between poor air quality and the transmission of Covid 19 viral particles. Sudarshan studied the number of people that tested positive for Covid 19 in America's most polluted cities after periods of particularly bad air quality and found that more people tested positive under these conditions.

Sudarshan's work shows that air quality is another factor that is related to the transmission of viral particles.



# SCSD ACHIEVEMENTS

## VOICE OF DEMOCRACY!

Abigail Jung, a senior at Smithtown High School West, won the New York State VFW Voices of Democracy audio-essay contest. The theme was "What are the Greatest Attributes of Our Democracy?"

The VFW contest began in 1947 and provides students with a unique opportunity to express themselves in a democratic and patriotic-themed recorded essay. Abigail will be traveling to Washington, D.C. in March to compete for the national prize, which is a \$35,000 college scholarship.

Way to go!

## SPELLING STARS

Congratulations are in order to Lyla Groneman (Grade 8) and Elyana Rudolph (Grade 6) for placing first and second in Nesaquake Middle School's round of the Scripps Spelling Bee!

Both students will participate in the next written round in hopes of qualifying for the Long Island contest in March. Good luck, girls!

Thank you to Mrs. Flynn for serving as co-judge and to everyone who attended to cheer our spellers on!



# COMMUNITY NEWS

## YEAR OF THE DRAGON!

Students throughout the SCSD learned about the Lunar New Year this month, with some special hands-on projects. Mills Pond parent, Mrs. Wanling Fahrer, taught fifth graders some Chinese words and phrases and modeled how to make a dragon to commemorate the year of the Dragon.

Mt. Pleasant fifth grader, Candice Li, created a slideshow presentation of Lunar New Year facts and helped her classmates make lanterns.

At Accomsett Middle School, fifth grader, Jinhan Wang, taught his class about the origins and traditions of the Chinese New Year, helped his classmates make scrolls with lucky phrases (written in Chinese) and had the class sample a few "lucky" foods (dumplings, mandarin oranges)



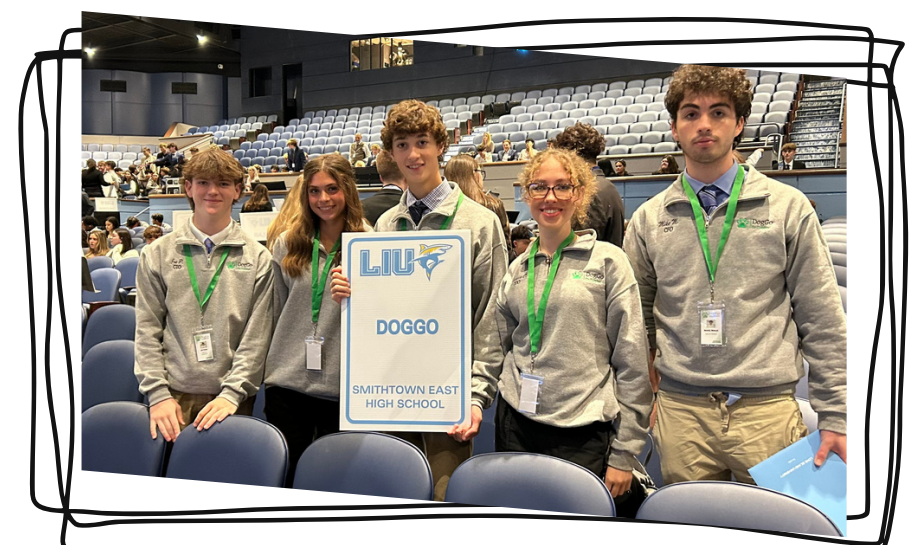
## DogGO IN THE NEWS

The High School East Virtual Enterprise firm, "DogGo" was recently highlighted in the Long Island Press in an article from the recent trade show competition at LIU.

"It is so wonderful that the Virtual Enterprise Community took the time to acknowledge and give recognition to our firm DogGO for their hard work and dedication," advisor Stephen Costello exclaimed.

DogGo, with its slogan, "Go FURther," offered dog collars and harnesses with fitness and security features, such as GPS, vitals trackers, and step counters.

DogGO advanced into the top 40 for their business plan presentation, and took home a silver award for their website design.



# COMMUNITY NEWS

## I HAVE A DREAM, TOO

Students throughout the SCSD learned about the importance of Black History Month.

At Dogwood Elementary, fifth graders created bulletin boards displaying poems that the students wrote entitled, "I Too Have a Dream."

After studying the message of Dr. Martin Luther King, the children composed poems to share their dream for the world, tying in both the powerful ideas of MLK as well as their own wishes for the world they want to live in.

Students in second grade created murals and wrote about a dream for themselves, their community, and the world.



## VALENTINE'S POP-UP SHOP!

Students at High School West joined forces with students from Nesaquake Middle School to work on a Valentine's Day pop-up shop!

Mrs. Peppe's FAMP (Functional Academic Middle Program) students from Nesaquake sat with High School F.A.S.T. (Functional Academics Secondary Transition) students and instructor, Jillian Bianco, to work on amazing clothing and baked goods for the pop-up shop.

The High School students then hosted the Pop-Up shop on two separate days and even included a musical performance to entertain customers!





# SPORTS ZONE

## BACK-2-BACK!



They did it again!

Congratulations to the Smithtown/Hauppauge swim and dive team on an undefeated season and winning back-to-back county championships!!!



## COUNTY CHAMP!



What a great performance by our High School wrestlers, one of whom took home a County title!

Introducing the new Suffolk County champion, TJ Visciano of HSE who took home the crown in the 131 lb class!

Congratulations to EIGHTH grader, Tyler Conzo, of HSW, on an amazing run to the county finals.

Both wrestlers earned All-State honors!



## MIGHT AS WELL JUMP!

HSE sennior Braden McCormick is Jump County Champion! Braden cleared the 6'6 jump and is going to states!



# SPORTS ZONE

## CHEERS FOR US!

What a performance by our High School cheer teams at Nationals!

HSW “Traditional” made it through all 4 rounds and EARNED a spot into finals, placing 11th out of a total of 85 teams.

“Game Day” advanced straight through to finals and did a great job on creativity and difficulty!

Our East girls made it to Division I semifinals out of 108 teams!



## RECORD BREAKERS

Congratulations to High School West’s Laina Friedmann and Anna Diakou for setting new school records!

Laina set the school record in the 1500m with a time of 4:40:52.

Laina resets her own previous school record with the time!

Anna set a new personal best/ school record in the weight throw of 35 Feet 1 1/4” at the Section XI State qualifying meet!

Anna placed second and qualified for the state meet!

Great job!



## MR. 1,000! 🏀

He’s the 1,000 point man! High School East’s Ben Haug reached a major milestone by breaking the 1,000th points barrier!

