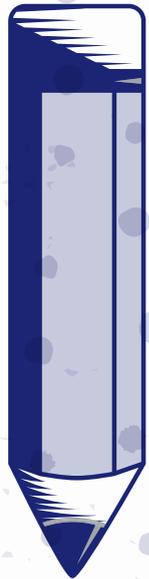




SMITHTOWN CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

DIGEST



Building Blocks of Literacy



One of the many goals of the Smithtown Central School District is to create lifelong learners. Helping to establish a strong set of literacy skills can build the foundation for these young learners. From English language arts instructional coaches, to library media specialists who help showcase digital literacy, to classroom teachers, literacy is built from the ground up and incorporated into almost every aspect of daily learning.

● ELA instructional coaches provide professional development opportunities for K-6 teachers, who can collaborate with colleagues, instructional coaches and the consultant before and after demonstration lessons. The

coaches continue to strengthen embedded grammar instruction by visiting all K-6 classrooms to model lessons, collaborate with teachers and create additional instructional resources.

Last year, K-12 ELA Director Tina Mangano, K-12 Social Studies Director Bryan Frank and ELA Literacy Coaches Alyson Cronin and Patricia Gallery joined together to merge social studies curriculum into ELA instruction. Under their direction, teachers in grades 3-5 gathered to identify and include the natural connections between ELA and social studies, creating integrated units of study wherever possible.

During the 2018-19 school year, ELA coaches have been supporting the new ELA/social

studies integrated curriculum by teaming up with teachers to collaborate, model teaching strategies and work with students on their nonfiction writing skills.

Also new for the 2018-19 school year, the English department has implemented the AP College Board's SpringBoard curriculum in all grade 6-12 classes. Teachers were introduced to the curriculum in a three-day training program that showcased texts from grade level to grade level, advised teachers on best practices and developed teachers' knowledge on SpringBoard's digital platforms. The SpringBoard curriculum encourages students to think critically, work rigorously and produce quality work both independently and collaboratively (see pages 2-3 for more on this program).

Now in its second year at High Schools East and West, the AP Capstone Seminar class offers a hands-on course which serves as a fitting complement to the district's Project Lead the Way program. AP Capstone Seminar

emphasizes 21st-century skills, with a specific focus on self-direction, information literacy, collaboration, organization and presentation skills, proficiencies that lie at the heart of the AP Capstone Seminar course.

"Enrollment continues to increase, allowing us to serve both our traditional AP population as well as students new to the AP program," Ms. Mangano said. "As we saw from last year's scores and continue to see in this year's successful start to year two of the course, AP Capstone Seminar truly is AP for all."

In 2018, the first cohort of the new AP Research class began their independent projects. More than 150 students from High School East and West have individually chosen topics of inquiry, expanded their collective body of knowledge by reading scholarly sources in their field and crafted a research plan to investigate an original hypothesis. This spring, these students will actively research their findings, write their 5,000-word papers and create a 20-minute oral defense.

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All AP Capstone Seminar students at High School East and West participate in an engaging, hands-on workshop with the Alan Alda Center for Communicative Science at Stony Brook University. Through active, theater-based exercises, AP Capstone Seminar students internalized the importance of audience-centered presentations that emphasize clarity, concision and context.

This fall, to enhance the design of the AP Capstone program, High School West piloted a Research Boot Camp. Local research professors from Adelphi, LIU Post and Stony Brook universities visited with research students to run small lectures and workshops on a variety of topics and methodologies.

This fall, the district hosted its Parent-Student University: Family Connect Night. All Smithtown CSD school families were invited to participate in the event, which featured three workshops: mindfulness for families, drug/vaping awareness and prevention, and school safety and security.

The new SpringBoard program incorporates collaborative discussions within the classrooms, and many teachers have been challenging their students to express themselves through multimodalities.

Mills Pond teachers Kristen Quail and Kristi Hoenes are doing a workshop, Get on Your Feet, for colleagues through the Teacher Center. It highlights literacy activities that get students moving.

The College Board's SpringBoard program is a well-developed spiraled curriculum for grades 6-12. English teachers and special education teachers worked together to implement the program.

Elementary and middle school students are enjoying book tastings to pique their reading appetites. Students walk around the tables, checking out the front and back covers of books, reading the inside flaps, and developing first impressions. Students are encouraged to read the first few paragraphs, jot down observations and add the book to their wish reading list.

Elementary professional development initiatives focus on strengthening grammar instruction by using an invitational, hands-on, technology-integrated process for teaching and learning. Elementary teachers present students with specific grammar principles such as parts of speech, conventions and sentence structure.

Elementary students use writer's notebooks, which they fill with personal narratives as well as opinion and informational writing. Partners share drafts and support each other through the writing process.

New courses at the high school level are addressing literacy in a number of subject areas. The business department's Competitive Advantage elective helps to further prepare students for postsecondary education and careers. The district also reintroduced its Shakespeare class for grades 9-12 as an elective.

Snapshots of SUCCESSFUL LITERACY INITIATIVES



A Look Inside Our Libraries

HIGH SCHOOLS:

Students have the opportunity to choose independent reading materials from the new ELA SpringBoard curriculum. Allowing students to choose their own reading materials not only empowers them, but also creates a habit that will promote lifelong learning.

Literacy initiatives include database searching, citation styles, keyword identification, website evaluation, academic literature evaluation, reader advisory, research troubleshooting, independent reading, book talks, research modules and embedded assessments.

Librarians help support classes such as creative writing and journalism with author visits, conferences and writer's workshops.

Social studies classes work on initiatives such as project development, use of databases, citation style, thesis development and theme integration.

MIDDLE SCHOOLS:

Students come to the library on a daily basis to create digital media projects and a weekly newscast. They write scripts, rehearse their lines, record and edit each project.

Sixth-graders conducted a "book swap." A variety of books were placed at each table, and students were asked to examine a book by looking at the cover and any illustrations. They also read the first couple of pages and responded to some prompts related to the book. Afterward, they presented their findings to the other students at their table.

Family and consumer science classes visit the library to produce commercials for products they created in class.

Accompsett Middle School and Nesaquake Middle School "genrefied" the fiction section to help students locate books based on interest. All fiction books are in a section determined by their genre: adventure, science fiction, fantasy, historical, etc. Circulation has increased by approximately 33 percent in the first quarter of this school year.

Great Hollow creates video book trailers with seventh-grade English classes and then makes QR codes that lead to the trailers. The QR codes are posted and students can use the iPads to scan the code and preview the book trailers before choosing a book. The book trailers have also been shared via Google Classroom and have been played on the library's smartboard.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS:

Classroom libraries are stocked with high interest, accessible texts for all to enjoy. These libraries include grade level topics to enhance student understanding. Reading partnerships are essential to aid in comprehension as well as to share the joy of reading.

Fifth-grade students at Dogwood Elementary School infused a research

project using the Big 6 Research Method to dig deeper into varied, broad research topics. During their library lesson, students were placed in groups of eight, and each group was given a current yet general research topic to discuss with their peers. The groups had meaningful dialogue while they questioned each other to determine ways to narrow their research topic and to develop a series of well-rounded research questions. Through this collaborative effort, the students were able to refine their topics with meaningful questions and more finite methods for further investigation.

Tackan Elementary second-graders do a mock Caldecott Award exercise every year, where they read wonderful picture books from 2018 and vote on who they think should win the Caldecott for that year. They watch the awards ceremony and are excited to see their picks.

Elementary library media specialists have infused a high level of digital/information literacy into their library spaces such as: coding, internet safety, searching databases, Chatterpix, Photostory, Flipgrid, searching Destiny catalog and creating book trailers using various technologies.



2019-20 Kindergarten Registration: March 6-15

For those who have not already registered their child to begin kindergarten in September 2019, a second kindergarten registration period will be held from March 6-15, 2019. It will be held Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at the Joseph M. Barton Building, 26 New York Avenue, Smithtown.

If you are not sure which school you will be attending, please visit our website, www.smithtown.k12.ny.us, for a map. It is not necessary to bring your child to registration.

Parents must bring the following information with them at the time of registration:

1. Proof of your child's age.
2. Your own photo ID, such as a driver's license or passport.
3. A record from physician with all inoculations listed with a doctor's signature or stamp.
4. Proof of residency.
5. Proof of custody or guardianship.

Transportation Notice

Any returning students who have no changes from last year may fill out the form found on the district's website (www.smithtown.k12.ny.us/district/transportation) and mail it as directed on the application before the April 1, 2019, deadline.

All newly registering students attending private or parochial schools or any returning private and parochial students who have changes to their school or address will need to register in person with the Smithtown Central School District to be considered for transportation, receive textbooks and/or other educational services.

To meet the April 1, 2019, deadline, registration for new private and parochial students is taking place at the Joseph M. Barton Building, 26 New York Avenue, Smithtown, from Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding transportation, please call the transportation department at 631-382-4100. Should you have questions regarding registration, necessary documentation or any other concerns, please call the central registration office at 631-382-2024.

SCHOOL & COMMUNITY DIGEST

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