



DIGEST

SCHOOL & COMMUNITY

From CARD CATALOGS to CODING:



Redefining the Role of the School Library

The role of Smithtown's 12 school library media specialists and three library media specialist teacher assistants has transformed significantly across our K-12 buildings. What was once viewed as a role centered on "just books" has evolved into one focused on information literacy, technology integration and critical thinking.

Today's K-12 library media specialist is a proactive instructional leader, guiding students as they learn to navigate an increasingly complex digital world. Our libraries are now commonly referred to as Learning Commons – flexible, dynamic and collaborative spaces where students create, explore and connect. The modern teacher-librarian serves as a school leader in both pedagogy and technology.

This role continues to expand into new frontiers, including:

- Makerspaces and STEAM learning.
- Lego robotics and 3D design.
- Digital citizenship and artificial intelligence.

Library media specialists are increasingly serving as ethical guides,

teaching students and staff not only how to use emerging tools, but how to use them responsibly, safely and thoughtfully.

The Smithtown Central School District Library Program is dedicated to fostering a lifelong love of learning while equipping students with the essential skills needed to thrive in the information age. Through a diverse collection of print and digital resources, our libraries empower students to become independent learners, critical thinkers and skilled users of information.

Our librarians collaborate closely

with classroom teachers to integrate library instruction seamlessly into the curriculum, ensuring students develop strong research, literacy and inquiry skills. Engaging programs – such as author visits, book clubs and technology workshops – encourage students to explore new ideas, challenge their thinking and cultivate a passion for reading.

By providing equitable access to information and maintaining welcoming, inclusive learning environments, our libraries ensure that all students can reach their full potential.



MILLS POND ELEMENTARY



Mills Pond Elementary students in grades K-2 were immersed in the magic of “The Polar Express,” complete with visual and sound effects, courtesy of Mills Pond school media specialist Meghan Dycikova.

After the interactive book reading, students took part in festive activities by grade level. Kindergarten students created reindeer puppets using lunch bags. First graders wrote about what they would want to see if they traveled on the Polar Express, then colored, cut out and assembled trains on construction paper – adding snowy details with chalk. Second graders colored and cut out shapes and used them to design their own train creations.

Kindergarten students engaged in a collaborative engineering activity inspired by the book “How to Catch a Snowman” by Adam Wallace and Andy Elkerton. Using Keva Blocks, students worked in teams designing and building snowman traps. They developed a plan, constructed their designs, tested the traps and revised their plans as needed to ensure success.



SMITHTOWN ELEMENTARY



Third grade students at Dogwood Elementary School are learning about using code to give directions to computers and robots. Led by library media specialist Mrs. Charumaneeraj, students worked in groups to build a code for their robot dog to make it through a maze.

Students incorporated the coding technique If/Then to give their robot dog directions to follow throughout the maze and back to its doghouse.

Elementary Matters

ACCOMPSETT ELEMENTARY



Under the guidance of library media specialist Jillian Cersosim, students at Accomsett Elementary are engaging in creative, real-world problem-solving through hands-on and student-centered experiences.

Students participated in a STEAM design challenge by creating Thanksgiving parade floats using cardboard and everyday materials, fostering creativity and collaboration.

DOGWOOD ELEMENTARY

The students at St. James Elementary were encouraged to practice their independent reading and critical thinking skills by reading to the “Library Elves.”

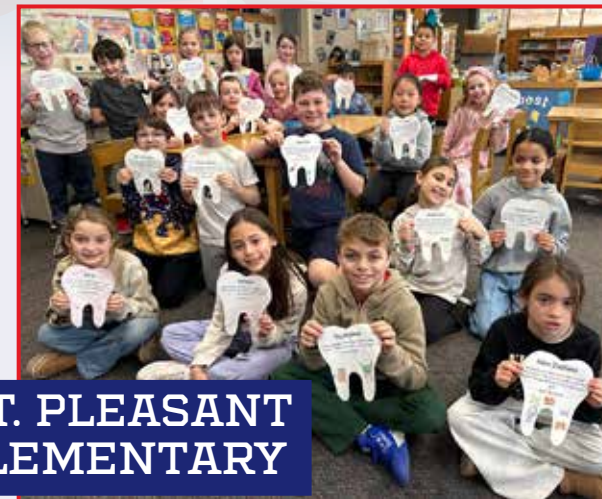


ST. JAMES ELEMENTARY

Third graders at Mt. Pleasant Elementary have been researching tooth traditions around the world in the Library Media Center with Ms. Lutz. Students took notes on a chart, wrote sentences, and then typed what they wrote. They will present their projects to the class and locate their countries on a world map.



MT. PLEASANT ELEMENTARY



TACKAN ELEMENTARY

Kindergarten students use coding robots in Library class to learn basic coding skills such as sequencing and loops, as well as problem-solving skills and teamwork. These robots are coded using colors, directions and emojis. Students rotate in small groups to a different robot each week.



****ECRWSS****
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Secondary Scenes



HIGH SCHOOL EAST

At High School East, library media specialist Laura Bishop focuses on collaborative research and creative learning. Every Friday students participate in Capstone Research classes to guide them through their research projects. Bishop provides class instruction as well as one-on-one research assistance. Throughout the year, students learn research skills, information literacy, media literacy and AI literacy skills.



HIGH SCHOOL WEST

Podcasting has evolved into a cornerstone of the High School West Library program. This year featured the debut of the brand-new Makerspace podcasting room, a transformative space that has boosted video production, school, community and student engagement across the entire building. The library currently hosts three student-led podcasts.

The Great Hollow library has been bustling with activity over the past few months. Students have been working on elevator pitches and escape puzzles and enjoying “library lunches” where many different makerspace activities and challenges are offered each day.



GREAT HOLLOW MIDDLE SCHOOL

Nesaquake Middle School students are enjoying their new 3D printers and bringing some iconic characters like Darth Vader to life!



NESSAQUAKE MIDDLE SCHOOL

Tuesdays are for tails at the Accomsett Middle School Library! Each week, students welcome a special four-legged guest and offer a well-deserved treat, enjoy some calm petting time or practice their literacy skills by reading aloud to a nonjudgmental canine listener.



ACCOMPSETT MIDDLE SCHOOL

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DIGEST

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