



BRIDGEHAMPTON SCHOOLS

Winter 2019
Newsletter



BUSY AS BEES

As Long Island, and especially Suffolk County, continues to be a leader in generating agricultural products in New York State, the Bridgehampton School District moves ahead in providing opportunities for students to develop an awareness of the scope and importance of the agriculture industry through the study of its basic principles and concepts, technical education and the necessary personal development. Throughout the grade levels, they gain the knowledge and skills essential for success in making connections between plant sources and end products and explore career opportunities in food systems.

This newsletter will highlight just some of the unique programs and activities that take place in our school as our students develop agricultural leadership awareness, technical and employability skills, and meaningful learning and work experiences.

WHOLESOME *New Offering*

The District is providing a multifaceted approach to education with a new Career and Technical Education program. This unique and comprehensive offering for students has been several years in preparations, approval processes, and support and input from many stakeholders. Now, with interactive classes, including agribusiness and entrepreneurship, hands-on projects, guest speakers, field trips and expansive work opportunities, students who enroll in the program learn the skills to be better prepared for both the workforce and post-high school education and gain the experience necessary to succeed in the fields of business, agriculture and graphic design.

There are very few school agricultural programs on Long Island. When the district developed an initial plan, they questioned many aspects of its advantages and sustainability and

came away with all positive responses. From having the professional resources and the infrastructure to knowing it was supported by the greater community, the undertaking would be a fruitful project.

Bridgehampton School's extensive endeavor includes several CTE program applications that have been approved by the New York State Education Department. The three programs are Agribusiness (entrepreneurship), Food Production and Processing Systems (Culinary Arts), and Plant and Natural Resource Systems (environmental science, landscaping and horticulture). These pathways encompass a wide range of skills and knowledge necessary to feed and sustain future generations.

"With advances in organic practices in horticulture, food production

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Message *from the* SUPERINTENDENT

Dear Bridgehampton Community:

This school year has been a bright one to date, with so many academic activities within our classrooms, interest in our after-school clubs, success for our student-athletes, moving forward with our expansion projects and an overall continuous buzz of good things happening.

Some of that buzz is highlighted in the pages of this newsletter. We are pleased to roll out this updated, easy-to-read design and look forward to using each edition to zone in on a specific theme.

When we walk the halls of our school, students are engaged in innovative ways of learning about the natural world, how

crops are formed and cultivated, healthy eating ideas and so much more. As so much of what our students at all grade levels learn in the classrooms often extends to the outside of our building – to our greenhouse and farmstand, where among other things, they learn the facets of how to construct and operate a hydroponic system and microgreen production – we remain proud and constant in providing opportunities in the environmental, agricultural and technical fields that serve as the foundation that define our school and surrounding community.

As we move into the winter months, I extend a thank you to all our families and local supporters. It is with gratitude that our students continue to advance in their academic potential and – with our continued partnerships we have with you, our community champions – receive an outstanding education in an ever-evolving, nurturing school environment.

Sincerely,

Robert Hauser
Superintendent of Schools

WHOLESOME *New Offering*



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and environmental stewardship, our program brings an element of innovation to more traditional professions to help our graduates to be prepared for future trends in the marketplace,” Superintendent of Schools Robert Hauser said.

A Self-Study Committee was formed and went right to work reviewing the Department of Labor’s data for careers within the proposed pathways and found that the favorable employment trends ranged from culinary and horticulture jobs to environmental engineering and robotics careers. Committee members also consulted with several regional industry groups in landscaping, environmental stewardship and culinary arts – which are abundant in Bridgehampton and the surrounding communities – to determine what local businesses are seeking from the workforce.

Fast forward to an External Review Committee being put into place, consisting of district administrators, business/industry leaders, Board of Cooperative Educational Services/ Local Education Agency teaching staff and a CTE advocate, postsecondary educational institutions – including

Farmingdale State College and Stony Brook University’s Food Lab – and numerous committed community members. They recommended an upgrade to Geographic Information System design software, which is more current in the industry for landscape design and architecture. They also suggested providing opportunities for education outside of normal school hours so that community members could learn technical skills and gain knowledge of current industry practices. Just a year ago, the committee approved the academic and CTE content of the program and the growth began.

Formal two- and four-year articulation agreements are in place with Suffolk Community College and Farmingdale State College, respectively, (with SUNY Cobleskill still in progress) that will provide students with college credit, advanced standing and reduced tuition.

“Agricultural careers are diverse and widespread, which means that the opportunities provided to our students can allow them to graduate and move into related higher education pathways or pursue agricultural jobs directly after high school,” Mr. Hauser said.

Scholarly Success

The CTE program is already experiencing success. Bridgehampton High School senior James Fairchild was named a Borlaug Scholar by Cornell University for his efforts in addressing food insecurity in Liberia. (The scholarship is named for agronomist and humanitarian Norman Borlaug, a leader in initiatives worldwide that contributed to considerable increases in agricultural production, especially in developing countries).

James recently attended the Global Youth Institute in Iowa, sponsored by the World Food Prize Foundation, to defend his research in front of a panel of international experts. His life-changing experience with scientists, global leaders, innovators, entrepreneurs and the next generation of hunger fighters around the world was an opportunity to explore the issues, current research and opportunities to identify solutions for these key global challenges.

He was one of only 200 exceptional high school students chosen from around the world and one of only six students chosen from New York State to attend the conference. James penned a five-page research paper on the reasons why people in Liberia are hungry or malnourished and outlined a proposal that included providing solar-powered internet stations, a microfinancing system and infrastructure investments to solve



the problem. His comprehensive research included the status of the African nation's infrastructure, such as its roads, electrical grid and water supply, and noticed that much of the country has ideal conditions for growing crops. His participation at the institute opens numerous doors for James, from internships and fellowships to international research opportunities and career paths in agriculture and related fields. He will also be among the first Bridgehampton students to graduate with a diploma that includes the school's new agricultural certification.

Food for Thought

What is food? Where does it come from? How does it grow? These questions are what sparked the beginnings of The Bridgehampton Edible School Garden Project a decade ago. This garden space is a place where students and their families go to learn food literacy. Each year the program digs deeper, creating more opportunities for growth and learning: a 5,000-square foot garden and greenhouse was built and a community garden was started. Growing organically has allowed district educators to introduce the concepts of environmental stewardship and food literacy to students. From the youngest students learning to respect worms and bees to the older ones thinking about how to help feed the future world population, the garden has become a very important classroom at Bridgehampton.

One of the more unique courses offered in the CTE program is Greenhouse Management and Technology, in which students learn principles of greenhouse operation and management for commercial production of plants. With the recent addition of a cement floor, courtesy of Board member Douglas DeGroot, students can install technological innovations to improve the operation of the greenhouse. From constructing and operating a greenhouse to controlling the environment and applying practices that affect plant processes and influence plant growth, aspiring botanists now have a world-class foundation complete with drainage holes to help their plants take root.

Cooperative Collaboration

Cornell Cooperative Extension has long had a welcome connection with the Bridgehampton School District. The unique nutrition education service works with the students to help promote healthy eating habits and prevent obesity in fun and interactive ways. Students in Jenna Pluta's elementary-level Health and Wellness classes work for several weeks each year with Marta Blanco, a nutritionist from the extension. The Eat Smart Nutrition Education lessons she teaches focus on nutritional values and activities, such as introducing healthy fruits and vegetables by creating seasonal decorative objects out of them.

"Many of the students have worked with Ms. Blanco in the past, so they love when she comes to visit," Mrs. Pluta said. "It is definitely an enthusiastic and welcomed visit."

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Learning by Doing

The bright red building that sits east of the Bridgehampton School is Sprouts, a farm and flower stand that rivals many commercial establishments on the East End. Sprouts stands out as the success of Bridgehampton students who are the power and muscle behind much of what goes on here. A three-year lease on the property was gifted to the school district in 2016 by the Hampton Classic. The site has evolved from a small-crop farm to a treasured hands-on educational laboratory for students that incorporates skills in horticulture, science, math, technology, business management, organic vegetation, local sustainability, decision-making, leadership and communications skills.

Under the leadership of teacher Judiann Carmack-Fayyaz, the colorful and wholesome variety of items includes herbs, cucumbers, tomatoes, cherries and flowers – and this year even pumpkin and peanut butter dog treats. These items are offered for sale and money raised is earmarked for future farm-related projects. During the summer growing season, students take their leadership skills to a higher level with their volunteer efforts, nurturing and maintaining the garden.



Culinary Concepts

Nutrition and Culinary Arts students can aspire to become chefs, nutrition consultants, food writers, dieticians, public health specialists and so much more with Bridgehampton's foundation course. As they learn how to follow a recipe and prepare a dish, they also learn good nutrition practices to create well-balanced meals. They are also eligible each spring to receive a Suffolk County Food Manager's certification, an important document that enhances the county's food safety education efforts. It also gives Bridgehampton students an advantage as all Suffolk County food establishments are required to have an employee with a valid Food Manager's certificate on site during all hours of operation. The advanced course digs deeper into culinary techniques and international cuisine, with much of the ingredients coming directly from the school's garden.

Future Fruitful Development

Bridgehampton educator Judiann

Carmack-Fayyaz serves as the director of CTE and the coordinator of work-based learning. Her responsibilities include recording actual work hours in supervised work experience placement for students. Ms. Carmack-Fayyaz is also taking an online work-based learning certification class at Buffalo State College with instructor Susan Gubing, in which, among other things, she is learning about the role of the 21st-Century work-based learning coordinator and preparing students for workplace readiness.

Bon Appetit, Bridgehampton Style

The menu offerings include apple slices topped with peanut butter, almond butter, chocolate chips and granola; vegetable omelets; apple cheddar paninis; avocado toast, mini pudding pies topped with fresh berries; and butternut squash soup with coconut milk.

Sound like a healthy, trend-setting bistro?

No, just the sixth-grade Culinary Club after-school creations.

Along with Family and Consumer Science teacher and adviser to the club, Jenna Pluta, the students have a fun environment to socialize, be creative, learn cooking skills and the importance of good nutrition, and choosing healthy options.

A special thanks to Lindsey Morris for the use of her photos that capture the true essence of the Bridgehampton Schools!

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