

Superintendent's Report
December 15, 2015
Board of Education Meeting

Elementary

K-KIDS

The K-Kids Clubs at both elementary schools are conducting a mitten decorating fundraiser which are on display in the lobbies of each elementary school. Each mitten represents one dollar that will be donated to support a local family in need this holiday season. The K-Kids Club of Centre Avenue is funded by the East Rockaway Kiwanis Club and is the elementary version of Kiwanis.

Rhame Avenue held elections for this year's inaugural officers on Thursday afternoon. President, Emily McLaughlin; Vice-Presidents, Clare Acuti and Kiera O'Neil; Treasurer, Kristen Carman; Secretary, Lily Stern; and Sergeant at Arms, Michael Watson were all voted into office.

The officers for the Centre Avenue K-Kids Club are: President, Anthony Desano; Vice-President, Nick Dilapi; Treasurer, Jason Miller; Secretary, Stephanie Lynch; and Sargent of Arms, Dylan Monaco.

ACHIEVE 3000

The professional developer from Achieve 3000 (a new software based differentiated reading program) will be working in classrooms this week across both elementary schools in Grades 3-6. She will be conducting model lessons and helping teachers plan accordingly to help facilitate the program's implementation. Students need daily practice with text at their independent reading level to develop reading strategies and to provide access to grade-level content. Achieve 3000's 5-Step Literacy Routine is designed to build the skills for close reading of informational text with the explicit purpose of finding the evidence necessary to respond to a written prompt.

REFLECTIONS

This years' Reflection Contest theme is "Let Your Imagination Fly." The National PTA Reflections Program welcomes students of all grades and abilities to explore and be involved in the arts. Students reflect on a theme, create original works of art in the categories of dance choreography, film production, literature, music composition, photography and visual arts and earn positive recognition for their achievements. At Centre this was the first PTA Reflections contest. Judging was held last week in both elementary schools and the judges were hard at work deciding which pieces will be selected to move onto the next round. Thanks to the PTAs for their efforts, once again, this year to help support "the arts" across both elementary schools.

The Centre Avenue PTA sponsored a BMX Bike and character education assembly to motivate students to make responsible decisions. Verizon Fios was at Centre to film the event.

Centre Avenue fourth grade social studies students are demonstrating their knowledge of Native Americans in New York State by completing a unit assessment. Students are writing an essay comparing and contrasting the Iroquois and the Algonquian using details from lessons taught in the unit. This will take place over two days: Day 1 - creating a graphic organizer and planning their response; Day 2 - using their plan to write their essay.

Centre Avenue sixth grade students are learning to analyze the concept of justice by discussing two cases using modern scenarios as discussions. Is the outcome fair to the accused? Victim? Is the outcome best for society? Students will complete graphic organizers about U.S. laws in small groups. Each group will cite evidence from passages and report to the larger group about laws, equal justice and punishments.

Rhame Avenue Students were recently treated to a Prismatic Laser Assembly that focused on the science of lasers with a Patriotic Theme.

The Rhame Avenue PTA and school social workers organized a Thanksgiving Food Drive to support local families in need. A special thanks to parent, Billy Quaranto, for helping to coordinate. Contributions were received from families and staff. Food baskets were made and went directly to families within the East Rockaway School District and the additional donated items were given to the food pantry at St. Raymond's.

At Rhame, Dr. Parker was back in the building this past Tuesday conducting Fall Progress Monitoring Meetings with individual teachers to discuss student progress and services being provided. It was a day filled with rich conversation about teaching and learning.

East Rockaway Jr. /Sr. High School

A consultant from Thinking Maps visited East Rockaway High School last Friday to work with teachers and administrators as part of the ongoing rollout of the initiative. Students have been working with the maps for several weeks and will continue to be introduced to other components of the program in the following months. Many staff members and students have been inspired by the maps and look forward to their continued implementation.

Progress Reports are being worked on by teachers through Wednesday, December 16th. Please visit the portal to view the report or call Guidance for a copy.

PSAT score reports are expected to arrive in the coming days. Students should check their email accounts for more information from the College Board. The Guidance Department is working with groups of students to better understand the reports and develop strategies for improvement.

Please be reminded that students continue to work on the research initiative introduced this year across all grade levels. Please see the December mailing for more information and reach out to Mr. Spero with any questions.

Eric Graves and Jennifer Dalton were honored at the Outstanding Physical Education Student Award Dinner hosted by the Nassau Zone of the New York State Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance on Monday, December 14, 2015 at the Crest Hollow Country Club.

In the spirit of giving, East Rockaway High School is hosting a blood drive for families in need. The drive is taking place on Saturday, December 19th, 2015, from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. in the small gym.

On December 3, 2015, the East Rockaway School District Prevention Task Force hosted a Substance Abuse Forum in the auditorium. The forum was organized by Assemblyman Todd Kaminsky and Ms. Guggino-Hastings. It was very well attended by East Rockaway and surrounding community members. Many compelling personal stories were shared regarding substance abuse. The message delivered inspired hope for families impacted by this serious health issue. Many thanks to Assemblyman Kaminsky and Ms. Guggino-Hastings.

On December 8, 2015, I attended a community education forum at the Oceanside Public Library entitled "Diploma Options for Students" hosted by Assemblyman Kaminsky. Joining me were Ms. Ochtera, Mr. Gamache, Ms. Guggino-Hastings, Ms. Peterson and Ms. Hernandez. Representatives from the State Education Department as well as NYS Regent Roger Tilles were present. They heard first-hand the issues facing families whose children with disabilities cannot pass certain Regents exams and the lack of diploma options for these students. It is hoped that the message will be brought back to Albany and changes made.

There were some changes passed by the NYS Regents this week regarding teacher evaluations. Mr. Piccarella reported that the change eliminates the use of state test scores in teacher evaluations for the next four years. There is no final plan yet and further guidance will be forthcoming.