

It's Elementary



VALLEY STREAM DISTRICT THIRTEEN NEWSLETTER

Hitting A High Note

Dedication, practice, and perseverance are the character traits that enabled nearly 60 talented student-musicians in the district to be selected to perform in the 2008 Nassau County Music Educators Association Division I West and Division II All-County Music Festival in January at the Tilles Center on Long Island University's C.W. Post Campus.

Congratulations to the following students:

Howell Road

Chelsea Alexander-Taylor
Bensky Belizaire
Briana Bolasingh
Aaron Chiang
Victoria Deleva
Vincent Donato
Kara Filippi
Maleeka Holdson
Tianna Irving
Zavier Jean-Charles
Jasmine Passade
Randi Ruderman
Cain Ruiz
Rajendra Singh

James A. Dever

Athena Amentas
Tina Rose Echeverria
Jeanette Freeman
Addison Gettenberg
Kimberly Jelich
Samantha Leone
Michael McGreevy
Patrick McGreevy
Marcella Micillo
Chase Mulato
William Paraszczuk
Chelsea Polanco
Timothy Sarro
Ariana Ward
Peter Wilk

Wheeler Avenue

Alyssa Belmonte
Lauren Bennis
Nicole Borman
Zachary Bua
Jessica D'Elia
Daniel Egan
Sarah Goldberg
Madeline Grunin
Peter Marin
Jessica Massiah
Ryan Milano
Brian Murray
Joseph McGee
Allison O'Brien
Amanda Picillo
Joseph Picillo
Antonia Roth
Michael Sanky
Samantha Sancho
Colleen Sullivan

Willow Road

Michael Antonucci
Michelle Cinnamo
Gina Ellul
Rita Karapatakis
Jonathan Kwan
Amanda Maniscalco
James Mattone
Jonathon Nosowitz
Sabrina Roy

Democracy in Full Swing

In District 13, the first Tuesday in November isn't the only election day. Each year, district students at each of the district's schools have the opportunity to campaign and seek to hold an officer position on their school's Student Council. Congratulations to this year's elected officers:



James A. Dever: Bridget Fasciani – *President*, Victoria Valdes – *Vice President*, Morgan Foster – *Secretary*, Sara Balsamo – *Historian*

Howell Road School: Kara Filippi – *President*, Cain Ruiz – *Vice President*, Jehron Pura-Bryant – *Secretary*

Willow Road School: Danielle Evangelista – *President*, Nicholas Graziano – *Vice President*, Samantha Cornetta – *Secretary*

Wheeler Avenue School: Peter Marin – *President*, Michael LaBarbera – *Vice President*, Nicole Borman – *Secretary*, Steven Borman – *Sergeant at Arms*

District Launches New Website in New Year

The district is pleased to announce the launch of its newly redesigned website. The site contains educational resources and information, including upcoming district events, school news, and announcements.

The site displays a fresh design, is easily accessible from any computer that has an Internet connection, and contains a wealth of educational resources and information. Community members will enjoy learning about the exceptional programs the district offers, viewing new articles from recent and archived events, as well as having access to important documents and district forms. The site will be regularly updated in order to keep information current and up-to-the-moment.

The district invites the community to frequently visit the newly designed district website at www.valleystream13.com.



Valley Stream Union Free School District Thirteen

585 North Corona Avenue, Valley Stream, New York 11580-2099

(516) 568-6100

www.valleystream13.com

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A Special Note From Your Board President & Superintendent of Schools

Dear Residents:

We are pleased to report that the first few months of the 2007-2008 school year have been very successful for the Valley Stream UFSD Thirteen. As we reach the halfway point of the school year, it brings us great pride to say that many of our students have spent the past several months helping others in need, both in our local and global communities. During the holiday in each one of our schools, students were busy helping others. Whether through food and coat drives, to performing concerts at community events, hospitals and nursing homes, our students reached out their helping hands to warm people's hearts.

We applaud all of our staff members who model the importance of helping others and who work tirelessly to develop our students into well-rounded young adults. While academic achievement continues to be a top priority, we must also take the time to commend our students' interests in our community. We look forward to sharing more of our district's continued success and students' achievement as we progress through the second half of the school year.

The budget planning season is well underway. Over the course of the next several weeks, the Board of Education and administration will be working in tandem to develop a fiscally sound and financially stable budget for the 2008-2009 school year. Our primary goal throughout the budget process, as always, is to provide essential programs and services

to our students while remaining sensitive to our taxpayers.

We value the input of our community members and invite all residents to become involved in the budget process by attending upcoming Board workshops and community forums. The Budget Meeting is scheduled for 6:00 p.m. on Wednesday February 13th in the Board Room. Additionally, residents can be part of the process by becoming a Budget Ambassador. For more information or to sign up, please contact Dr. Lison at 568-6100 or by e-mail at elison@valleystream13.com.

In the coming months there will be several Education Committee Reports at Board of Education Meetings as follows:

February 26: K-6 Science Program

March 25: Professional Development Update

April 29: Focus on Technology

May 27: Nutrition/Physical Education

Thank you for your past support. We look forward to the remainder of the school year and continuing the high-level of student and community involvement for which our district has become known.

Sincerely,



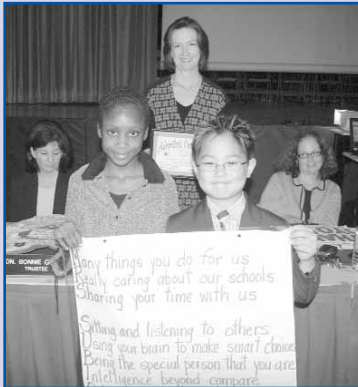
William P. Stris
Board of Education President



Elizabeth Lison, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

Thanks For All You Do

Members of the Valley Stream School District Thirteen Board of Education received a pleasant surprise during their November Board of Education meeting. In conjunction with National School Board Appreciation Week, Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Elizabeth Lison, on behalf of the school district and community, acknowledged the tireless efforts of the Board of Education and expressed appreciation for the work Board members do on behalf of the students and the district. "It is an honor and a privilege to recognize you this evening," stated Dr. Lison. "You keep alive our community's vision, which places a high value on education for our children." Each member of the Board of Education was recognized for their commitment with a certificate from Dr. Lison.



Students at the Howell Road School had a very special presentation for the Board of Education. On behalf of the Howell Road family, Principal Frank Huplosky presented each member of the Board with an adoption certificate. Each grade level formally adopted a Board member and invited them to participate in grade level activities throughout the year. Students also presented poems and artwork for members of the Board. A special presentation featuring students' responses to the question, "What is a School Board member?" followed, while providing several interesting and humorous responses to the delight of the Board and those in attendance.

Taking on Project Adventure

The sixth-grade students at James A. Dever Elementary School had the chance to participate in the community-building activity Project Adventure during their visit to the BOCES Outdoor Educational Center in Old Brookville.

The program, which is based on an educational model, not only teaches skills that allow the ability to communicate and interact positively with others, but also teaches one to be a productive member of society. Cooperation, communication, trust, support, problem solving, sportsmanship, and respect were just a few of the character-building traits the students learned and demonstrated during their participation in the program.

Project Adventure activities engage participants in a manner that evokes and develops these skills and qualities. The sixth-grade students enjoyed learning and working together during the team challenges presented to them. They look forward to other challenges in the future.



WELCOMING THE CLASS OF 2015

Valley Stream District #13 provides a full-day kindergarten to all eligible district students. Registration for the program was conducted this past November at each of the district's four elementary school buildings. If you have not yet registered your child and he/she meets the required registration criteria, please contact the District Office at 568-6100.

In order to help make the transition into school a smooth one for the incoming kindergarten class, the district has scheduled four visitation programs during the second half of the school year. Please be sure to check the district calendar for the dates of your building's visits.

CREATIVE CARD EXCHANGE

As the district moves forward with its implementation of its wellness policy, teachers and students at the Howell Road School embarked upon an exciting and creative way to celebrate the season and their writing curriculum.

First grade classes participated in a unit of study on letter writing, which implemented creative writing techniques as the basis for these festive holiday cards. Students and teachers enjoyed their holiday card exchange with smiles on their faces and warm feelings in their hearts from the kind words shared by their fellow classmates. What a nice way to spend the holiday season with their classmates – celebrating the gift of learning.



The Story of the Monet Garden

Inspired by the story *Linnea in Monet's Garden* by Christina Bjork, several years ago Willow Road Elementary School teachers Fran Achtziger, Sue McKenna and Jessica Beyer wrote a grant with the goal of raising funds to create a garden in a small corner of the Willow Road School. It was their hope that the students and community would come together to enjoy visiting a place filled with the beauty and tranquility of nature. With the collected efforts of the school staff and community, the dream became a reality. The French artist Claude Monet loved to paint flowers, and so the garden was named after him.

Recently, the garden was in desperate need of some tender loving care. It came to the attention of Debbie Blyskal, an avid gardener and a classroom aide at the Willow Road School. Last spring she enlisted the help of the Student Council to raise money to restore the Monet Garden. By selling tasty treats during their lunch periods, the students raised over \$500, which was used to purchase azalea and boxwood bushes, as well as a variety of perennials for the garden.

Debbie Blyskal and her family worked hard over the summer, along with Ruth Palazzolo and son Ben, to prepare the ground for planting. Once school began, the third graders pitched in and helped out by planting lots of tulips so that by next spring, the garden will really come alive with color! They were eager to help and dug right in to get the job done.

Once again the Monet Garden has come to life. Hopefully by the spring it will be a place where students will enjoy sketching, painting, reading or just relaxing and enjoying the beauty of nature; a place that Monet, himself, would love to capture on his canvas!

Fire Safety is Their Top Priority

Each year, students throughout the state pause to recognize an important educational activity – fire safety and prevention month. In an effort to equip students with the tools necessary to stay safe in the event of a fire, members of the Valley Stream Volunteer Fire Department presented a fire safety enactment for the second grade students at Wheeler Avenue Elementary School.

Prior to the enactment, all the second-grade classes viewed a video entitled “Fire Safety”. During the fire department’s visit, the students had the chance to visit a “mock” house to learn about fire safety, take a tour, and check out a real fire truck.

“We’re trying to spread fire safety awareness at Wheeler,” stated Principal Christine Zerillo. “It is important to help students understand what to do so they can always be safe.”



MATHEMATICS *Update*

$1+2=3$ $3 \times 3=9$ $4+6=10$ $6 \times 2=12$ $5+2=7$ $7 \times 4=28$

Mathematics for the 2007-2008 school year continues to focus on the “Professional Development” of teachers, with the goal of broadening their understanding of the “big ideas” in mathematics and how they are developed. While “big ideas” are being developed, strategies emerge and “models” are used to represent students’ thinking. The district’s young mathematicians are finding ways to make sense of their reality by setting up relationships, quantifying them, and proving them to their peers. Mathematics taught using this method deepens a student’s mathematical understanding of the “big ideas” being taught.

The following professional development opportunities are being provided during the 2007- 2008 school year to further enhance

teacher knowledge:

- Teachers who were trained in the Mathematics in the City (MITC) philosophy during the summers of 2006 and 2007 continue to be supported both in district and at the City College of New York. The MITC philosophy encourages teachers to become facilitators and questioners instead of transmitters, to use manipulatives, and to foster collaborative learning and discussion in order to support learners’ construction and acquisition of knowledge.
- District Math Specialists and MITC participants are working with teachers to promote the MITC philosophy. This is done through the “modeling” of lessons, in-service workshops, and grade-level discussions.
- Kindergarten teachers and grade one teachers

will receive five days of in-house professional development from a MITC staff developer.

- Grade two teachers are working with one of the district’s Math Specialists. In their work together, they are exploring units from the “Context for Learning,” a supplemental resource developed by Cathy Fosnot, MITC director.
- Data is analyzed on a continuous basis. The analysis of data informs instruction and ongoing professional development opportunities.
- Four grade six teachers are currently piloting the Holt Mathematics program. This program will be considered for possible adoption in the 2008-2009 school year.
- The District Mathematics Committee will be previewing two New York based mathematics programs (K-5) for possible “piloting” during the months of April, May, and June. It is the hope of the committee to recommend a mathematics program for possible implementation during the 2008-2009 school year.

DATES TO REMEMBER

FEBRUARY 13

Budget Meeting 6:00 p.m.

FEBRUARY 18-22

Winter Recess – Schools Closed

FEBRUARY 26

Board of Education Meeting 8:00 p.m.
@ Wheeler

MARCH 3-7

Grade 3-5 NYS Math Assessments

MARCH 6-12

Grade 6 NYS Math Assessment

MARCH 20-24

Spring Recess 1 – Schools Closed

MARCH 25

Board of Education Meeting 8:00 p.m.

MARCH 26

Parent/Teacher Day & Evening
Conferences – Schools Closed Half Day

MARCH 28

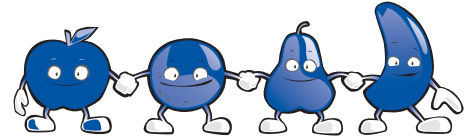
Schools Closed for Students
(Professionals Scoring Assessments)

AMERICAN EDUCATION WEEK CELEBRATED

As they do each year, schools in the district celebrated the National Education Association's American Education Week this past November. The program, which has been in effect for more than 80 years, spotlights the importance of providing every child in America with a quality public education from kindergarten through college, and the need for everyone to do his or her part in making public schools great.

During the week, both students and parents celebrated the educational foundation provided at each of the elementary schools. Parents enjoyed attending workshops, visiting the classrooms, learning about advancements in the district's curriculum, and a variety of other activities.

Heart Links



Cooking with children has many benefits. It is a great learning experience and it can provide wonderful and interactive quality time. However, inviting a child to share experiences in the kitchen requires constant supervision and guidance at any age.

With a little extra planning and caution, the kitchen can become the favorite room in the house and a place to create wonderful memories.

Introducing your child to nutritious foods and how to prepare them is key in establishing an easy and fun dish that both you and your child can make together. Bon appétit!

RECIPE CARD

QUICK SNACKIN' PIZZA

Serves 4

- 4 whole wheat english muffins
- 1/4 cup parmesan cheese
- chopped veggies of your choice
- 1/4 cup tomato sauce
- 1 cup low-fat shredded mozzarella cheese
- 1/4 tsp pepper (optional)

Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
Slice muffins in half and lay open-faced on baking sheet.
Spread sauce evenly over muffins.
Arrange vegetables and top with cheese and pepper, if using.
(This is a great job for small hands)
Bake for 10 minutes or until crust is brown.

A Happy & Heathy New Year From Your Board of Education and Leadership Team



Seated (l-r) Trustee Frank Chiachiere, Vice President Debra Evans, President William P. Stris, Trustee Jeanne Greco Jacobs, Trustee Bonnie Gorham, Trustee Joseph DiSibio, Trustee Cathy Subbiondo; standing (l-r) District's Attorney Florence Frazer, Director of Special Education Lisa Sells-Asch, Willow Road Principal Stephanie Capozzoli, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction Linda Roth, Superintendent of Schools Elizabeth Lison, Assistant Superintendent for Business Meredith Brosnan, Howell Road Principal Frank Huplosky, James A. Dever Principal Darren Gruen, Wheeler Avenue Principal Christine Zerillo, District Clerk Denise Michels.

INTERESTED IN BECOMING A BUDGET AMBASSADOR?

Call or e-mail Dr. Lison at:
560-6100

elison@valleystream13.com

TAX CODE INFORMATION

The New York State Tax Code Number for the Valley Stream UFSD Thirteen is 655. This is to be entered in the appropriate box on your state income tax return. It is used in apportionment of state aid.

SCHOOL CLOSING PROCEDURE

Should it be necessary to close school due to weather conditions or other emergencies, announcements will be made over the following radio stations:

WBGG (1240) WGSN (740)

WHLI (1100) WINS (1010)

WGLI (1290) WNBC (660)

WCBS NEWSRADIO 88 AM (880)

Also on Cablevision Channel 12 and the
District's website: www.valleystream13.com

A delayed opening is 90 minutes.

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BOARD OF EDUCATION

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Elizabeth Lison, Ed.D., *Superintendent of Schools*