

YOUR SCHOOLS

NEWSLETTER OF THE ROCKVILLE CENTRE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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DATES TO REMEMBER

October

- 3-4 Schools Closed—Rosh Hashanah
- 5 Board of Education Public Work Session
- 10 Schools Closed—Columbus Day
- 12 Schools Closed—Yom Kippur
- 19 Board of Education Meeting

November

- 2 Board of Education Public Work Session
- 8 Schools Closed for Students — Election Day
- 11 Schools Closed—Veterans' Day
- 21 Board of Education Meeting
- 24-25 Schools Closed—Thanksgiving

South Side High School Named School of Opportunity

South Side High School has been selected as one of eight high schools to receive 'Gold' recognition as a School of Opportunity by the National Education Policy Center, in partnership with the University of Colorado School of Education. The Schools of Opportunity Project conducted a national search to recognize high schools that have "demonstrated an extraordinary commitment to equity and excellence by giving all students the opportunity to succeed." After an extensive application and a four-level screening process that included in-person interviews of faculty, students, and community members, South Side was singled out for the creation and maintenance of a healthy school culture, broadening and enriching school curriculum, the variety of assessments used to respond to student needs, and exemplary professional development, all of which are evidence of South Side's commitment to equity and excellence for all students. The selection committee was especially impressed by the fact that all South Side students complete at least one IB class.

For more information about Schools of Opportunity visit opportunitygap.org.



Welcome to the 2016/2017 School Year

STELLAR Program at Watson Elementary

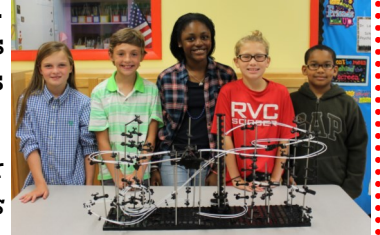
The STELLAR Program is enriching the lives of every child at Watson School. This year the program is diving into STEAM education and offering students in all grades opportunities to collaborate, problem-solve, think logically, sequentially and creatively in the domains of Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Mathematics.

This exciting initiative is already underway at Watson. Fifth grade students have been working in cooperative groups to design and construct marble runs. Students were introduced to the scientific principles of motion and energy and are presently applying that knowledge to create parallel tracks with inclines, loops, and even working elevators! When this unit is completed, all fourth and fifth graders will move on to the study of robotics and will learn how to code and program with robots. Inspired by a short film, entitled *Caine's Arcade*, third and fourth grade students are participating in the 2016 Global Cardboard Challenge, to build arcade games using their imaginations, cardboard boxes, and recycled materials. STELLAR plans for third graders include the investigation of electronics with interactive circuit boards and the use of *Makey-Makeys* to turn everyday objects into computer touch pads. Students in kindergarten through second grade will have hands-on opportunities to write simple computer code using iPads as well as design and build structures with Legos.

Students will have the opportunity to show off these enriching endeavors to their families on Wednesday, October 26, 2016 during Watson's *Evening of Endless Possibilities*.

The purpose of this STELLAR initiative is to better prepare children for the future by exposing them to academic and career orientated opportunities related to science, mathematics and engineering. More importantly, it serves to promote the development and fine tuning of skills such as creativity, collaboration, communication, inventive thinking and problem solving; skills required for success in the 21st century.

Watson School is appreciative of the support it has received from the Rockville Centre Education Foundation and the Watson School PTA.



School Improvement Bond Update

Over the summer all District buildings received some level of construction or renovation as part of the School Improvement Bond Project. All buildings were ready to receive students on the first day of school.

At South Side High School, the south addition was completed. It holds modernized science labs, a spacious Commons Room, available for use by both students and staff, a new science research room, a greenhouse, additional bathrooms, and a state-of-the-art Library that's similar to what might be found on a college campus. The Library features desktop computer stations for research and dedicated spaces for students to work both individually and collaboratively. In the main building, the kitchen was remodeled and outfitted with new appliances, while the cafeteria was rejuvenated with modern grey wall tiles and new red chairs that add a pop of color to the space. The updated cafeteria was also expanded to almost double its capacity. This beautiful new space allows students ample room to use during their free time. At South Side Middle School, the Library was completely renovated. The new room was designed with bright new furniture set on wheels, allowing students to easily reconfigure their workstations to create many different instructional settings. The auditorium rehab included restoration of balcony seating, new lighting and sound systems, a fresh coat of paint and a new carpet. The updates improved the space functionally and restored its original beauty.

Projects at the elementary buildings included painting of the Auditorium at Covert, building a cafeteria storage area at Hewitt, fire escape repairs and fire alarm replacement at Riverside, field drainage installation at Watson and replacement of the public announcement system and repair of stage rigging at Wilson.



School Improvement Bond Update



Demolition of the Last Portable at SSHA



Science Labs at SSHA



Science Research Room at SSHA



Cafeteria at SSHA



Lunch Room at SSHA



Library at SSHA



Library at SSHA



Library at SSMS



Library at SSMS



Auditorium at SSMS



Character Day at South Side Middle School

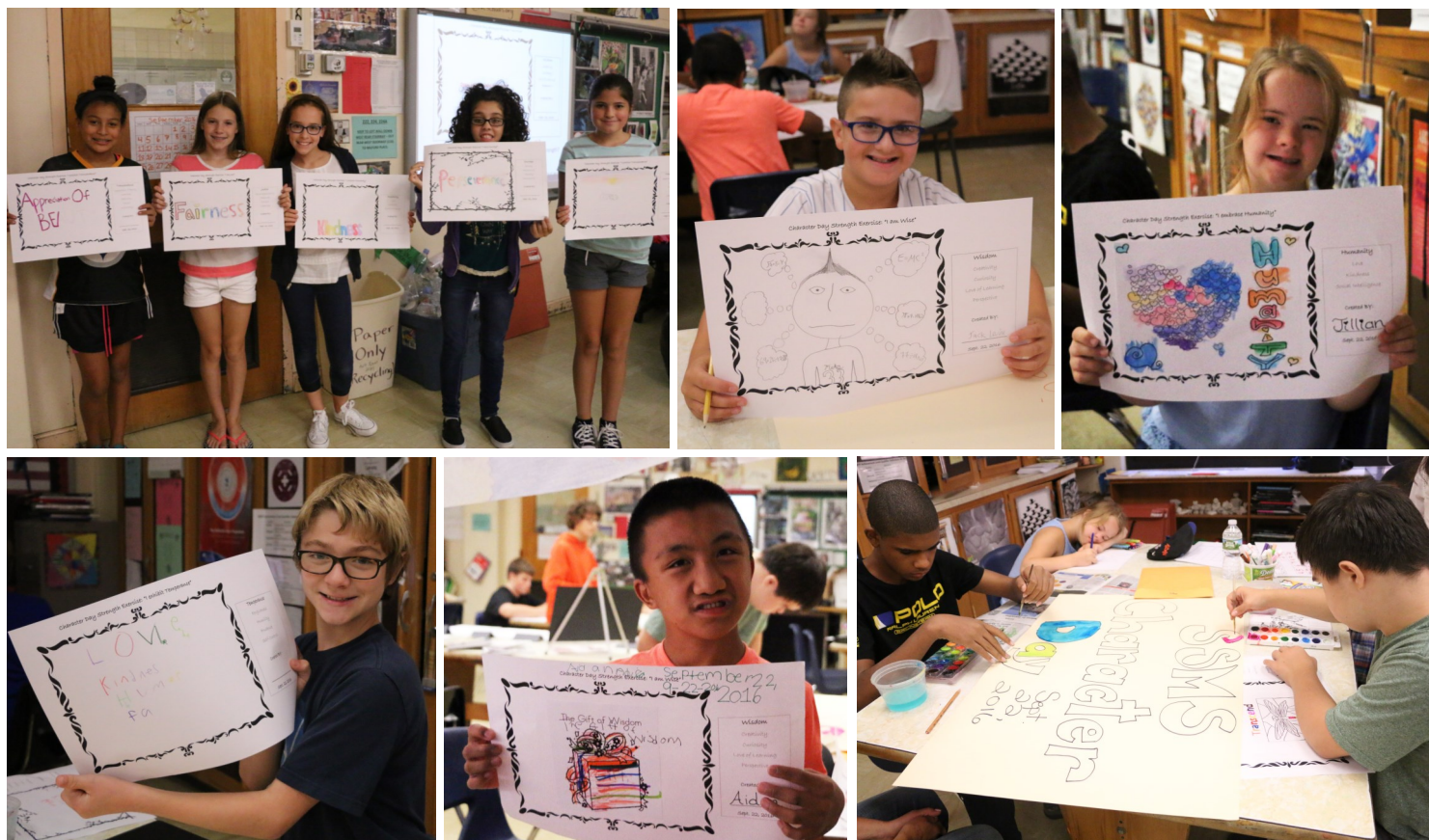
South Side Middle School participated in Character Day which aims to teach students about the science of character development, how it is looked at from different perspectives and the importance of developing resilience, grit, empathy, courage and kindness as character strengths. The Middle School partook in this initiative as a way to give students the necessary tools needed to develop and nurture these essential character traits.

Students watched a short film, *The Science of Character*, which explored the neuroscience and social science behind character development, and how it is possible to shape who we are and who we want to be. After defining what Morals and Character are, teachers introduced the Periodic Table of Character Strengths and asked students to discuss which strengths they possess and which ones they want to develop.

“It is important for students to participate in Character Day and reflect upon the mental and moral qualities they possess and would like to develop. South Side Middle School strives to create a climate that enables students to develop a sense of self-worth and have compassion and respect for others by valuing individual differences. We facilitate a caring learning environment where students feel safe, important and engaged. Our students demonstrate responsible global citizenship, and are cognizant of their place within the school community,” said Middle School teacher and Middle Years Programme (MYP) Coordinator Ms. Christy Silecchia-Ferrone.

When asked how Character Day ties in with the MYP Ms. Silecchia-Ferrone said, “the International Baccalaureate and Middle Years Programme aim to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect. At South Side Middle School all students are encouraged to become active, compassionate and life-long learners who celebrate their strengths and differences.”

For more information about Character Day, and to watch *The Science of Character*, visit www.letitripple.org/character-day.



Students create drawings based on their greatest character strengths during Ms. Silecchia-Ferrone's Art class

Meet The New Staff 2016-2017

Nicole Bisignano earned her Bachelor of Arts degree at Hofstra University and her Master of Science degree at Touro College. Ms. Bisignano will be teaching special education at South Side High School. *Kelly Brandstadter* earned her Bachelor of Science degree at Adelphi University. She will be teaching music, part-time, Districtwide. *Kevin Downey* earned his Bachelor of Science degree at The University of Scranton and his Master of Science degree at St. John's University. He will be working as a guidance counselor at South Side High School. *Julie Duignan* earned her Bachelor of Music degree at Michigan State University and her Master of Education degree at William Paterson University. Ms. Duignan will be working as a special education teacher at Hewitt Elementary School. *Peter English* earned both his Bachelor of Science and Master of Arts degree at Mount Saint Mary's University. Mr. English will teach business at South Side High School. *Christina Ferrara-Muter* earned her Bachelor of Arts degree at the University of Massachusetts and her Master of Science degree at Hunter College. Ms. Ferrara-Muter will be teaching special education at South Side High School. *Robert Frampton* earned his Bachelor of Science degree at SUNY Stony Brook and his Master of Science degree at CUNY Queens College. He will teach science at South Side High School. *Erica Gentile* earned her Bachelor of Science degree at Towson University and her Master of Arts degree at Hofstra University. Ms. Gentile will be a part-time special education teacher at St. Agnes. *Latoya Lamb* earned her Bachelor of Arts at Hunter College and her Masters in Social Work at Adelphi University. Ms. Lamb will be working as a social worker at South Side High School. *Maureen Murphy* earned her Bachelor of Arts degree at Molloy College and her master of Arts degree at Hofstra University. She will be teaching speech at Hewitt Elementary. *Jennifer Norton* earned her Bachelor of Science degree at SUNY Cortland and her Master of Science degree at Molloy College. She will be working at South Side High School as a math teacher. *Louis Petersen* earned his Bachelor of Science degree at St. Joseph's College and his Master of Arts degree at SUNY Stony Brook. Mr. Petersen will be teaching math at South Side High School. *Richard Petrone* earned both his Bachelor of Arts and Master of Science degrees at Hofstra University. He will be working as a third grade teacher at Hewitt Elementary. *Victoria Reicherter* earned both her Bachelor of Arts and Master of Science degree at Adelphi University. Ms. Reicherter will teach special education at Wilson Elementary. *Patricia Selinger* earned her Bachelor of Arts degree at Hunter College and her Master of Science degree at Touro College. She will be teaching special education at South Side Middle School. *Claire Silghigian* earned her Bachelor of Arts and Master of Arts degree at Molloy College. She will be teaching special education at South Side Middle School. *Michele Stegman* earned her Bachelor of Arts degree at the University of Maryland and her Master of Science degree at Queens College. She will be working at Hewitt Elementary as a school psychologist. *Corinne Stimpfl* earned both her Bachelor of Arts and Master of Arts degrees at Adelphi University. Ms. Stimpfl will be working as a second grade teacher at Riverside Elementary. *Angela Tornincaso* earned both her Bachelor of Science degree and Master of Science degree at Molloy College. She will be teaching special education at South Side High School. *Benjamin Moss* was named the new assistant principal at South Side High School. Mr. Moss has worked as a guidance counselor at South Side High School since September 2006. He earned his Bachelor of Arts from Emory University and his Master of Science from Hunter College.



Pictured L to R:

Front Row:

Kelly Brandstadter, Michele Stegman, Claire Silghigian, Angela Tornincaso, Patricia Selinger, Corinne Stimpfl, Christina Ferrara-Muter, Nicole Bisignano

Back Row:

Peter English, Kevin Downey, Robert Frampton, Louis Petersen, Erica Gentile, Maureen Murphy, Julie Duignan, Latoya Lamb.

Not pictured:

Benjamin Moss, Jennifer Norton, Richard Petrone and Victoria Reicherter



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To All Rockville Centre School District Residents

If you believe that your school-age or preschool child may have a disability, please contact Dr. Noreen Leahy, Assistant Superintendent of Schools for Pupil Personnel Services and Special Education, (516)255-8928, or Dr. Orly Gadon, Chairperson of the Committee on Special Education/Preschool Education at (516) 255-8942.

Reaching Individual Success Everyday (R.I.S.E.) Program at Hewitt

The Rockville Centre School District has introduced an exciting new special education program for students with special needs who require a more intensive learning environment. The R.I.S.E program is located at Hewitt Elementary School, currently serving Kindergarten aged students. The children enjoy spending time with the general education Kindergarten teachers and students during integration opportunities throughout the day. They are looking forward to field trip experiences including the upcoming farm trip and the teddy bear clinic at South Nassau Communities Hospital. The students are striving to Reach Individual Success Everyday (R.I.S.E.) and we welcome them warmly to the Rockville Centre School District.



Assistant Superintendent Dr. Noreen Leahy, Teaching Assistant Timothy Chelius and Teacher Julie Duignan



National Merit Scholarship Semifinalists and Commended Students

Congratulations to the South Side High School Seniors who were chosen as National Merit Scholarship Semifinalists and those selected as Commended Students. Brandon Stein and Matthew Barrett are two Semifinalists out of approximately 16,000 students in the 62nd annual National Merit Scholarship Program. These talented high school students have the opportunity to continue in the competition for some 7,500 National Merit Scholarships worth roughly \$33 million that will be offered next spring. About 1.6 million students in more than 22,000 high schools entered the 2017 National Merit Scholarship Program by taking the 2015 Preliminary SAT/ National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test. The nationwide pool of Semifinalists, representing less than one percent of U.S. high school seniors, includes the highest scoring entrants in each state. Our Commended Students, Liam Chung, Annie Ford, James Ryan, Erin Sherlock and Thomas York, were recognized for their outstanding academic ability. These students placed among the top five percent of students who entered the competition throughout the nation and may become candidates for special scholarships sponsored by corporations and businesses. Congratulations to all!



South Side High School Principal John Murphy, James Ryan, Annie Ford, Thomas York, Erin Sherlock and Liam Chung



South Side High School Principal John Murphy, Brandon Stein, Matthew Barrett, and Supervisor of Guidance and Student Support Services Laurie Levy.