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## DATES TO REMEMBER

### February

- 1 Board of Education Budget Work Session
- 15 Board of Education Regular Meeting & Budget Work Session
- 20-24 Schools Closed—Mid Winter Recess
- 27 Schools Reopen

### March

- 8 Board of Education Budget Work Session
- 22 Board of Education Regular Meeting & Budget Work Session

## 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.

## South Side High School's Open House

On November 9th Principal John Murphy hosted an Open House at South Side High School and invited the community to tour the newly renovated building. The renovations and upgrades at South Side High School were made possible by voter approval of the School Improvement Bond in March, 2013. Visitors had the opportunity to tour the building and meet the faculty and students who make South Side a world-class school. Representatives from each department were available to discuss academic offerings and programs. The event also showcased the High School's many clubs, groups and extracurricular activities.

Upon entering the school, those who attended were greeted by members of the National Honor Society and were given a map of the building. Some of the classrooms featured included the z-Space Lab, where visitors had the chance to virtually-dissect a human heart, the gymnasium where they could play a game of badminton, the Science Research Lab where they participated in a hands-on science experiment, the art studio where they had the opportunity to sketch a live model and the cafeteria where they listened to live music. Visitors experienced the integration of technology and craftsmanship in the outdoor structures classroom, which was updated with a CNC machine that can cut objects according to the specifications that students program on a computer. Attendees also watched as a 3D printer brought student-designed art to life and explored the many clubs that were setup in the library, including Habitat for Humanity, The Sportsman Newspaper, Context Literary Magazine and Coding Club. These were a few of the many activities that had community members buzzing through the building.



## Hewitt Kindergarteners Learn About Fire Safety

During Fire Safety Month, the Rockville Centre Fire Department visited kindergarten students at Hewitt Elementary School. Firefighter Frank Colon, Jr. brought a fire truck to the school and spoke to the students about fire prevention tips. Students learned about the different parts of the fire truck and were permitted to sit inside.

Firefighter Thomas Price spoke to students about what to do in case of a fire, the importance of having fire drills and why it is crucial to have a meeting place outside of the home in the event of an emergency. Mr. Price also taught students about the different parts of his fire safety suit, giving them an up-close look at the ensemble. When asked what he learned, kindergartener John Nardella said "to stay away from things that could make a fire," while his classmate Emmy Iandiorio said she learned to "stop, drop and roll."

Hewitt Teacher Michelle Ebel said, "Throughout the month we do our best to emphasize the importance of fire safety in school and at home. With the help of the Rockville Centre Fire Department we teach the children not only what to do in case of an emergency but what they might experience if the fire department does come to their home. Children learn not to be afraid of a fire fighter dressed in full gear and never to hide. We practice fire drills in school and encourage parents to have a 'meeting place' outside of their home in case of an emergency."



## Watson Pajama Night

Recently, Watson School hosted its annual Pajama Night for kindergarten and first grade students. Children returned to school in the early evening dressed in their pajamas to listen to bedtime stories and share their love of reading with teachers and parents.

Kindergarten students listened to four bedtime stories, including Goodnight Moon and The Little Owl. They decorated pillow cases with pictures of the things they dream about. Then they sang and used sign language to perform the song "The Animal Alphabet."

The first graders shared a Power Point presentation they created illustrating what they dream about at night. Next, they performed a bedtime song for their parents and listened to the story Splat the Cat Dreams Big. They discussed how the character in the book overcame his fear of going to sleep all alone in his bedroom. When the students returned to their classrooms, they had cookies and milk. The first graders worked with their parents to create their very own dream catcher craft to hang in their bedrooms to help catch bad dreams.

The importance of reading at home and school was reinforced throughout the evening for these young Watson students. The night was an overwhelming success!





## Celebrating National Inclusive Schools Week

Schools throughout the District celebrated National Inclusive Schools Week, an annual event that celebrates the progress schools have made in providing a supportive and quality education to an increasingly diverse student population. The event provides an important opportunity for educators, students and parents to discuss what needs to be done in order to ensure that schools successfully educate all children.

This year's theme, "Champions of Inclusion," focused on the concept of being a hero. This theme is particularly fitting because the definition of a hero, a person noted for courageous acts of nobility of character, resonates with all of the students, parents, teachers, principals and community leaders who take courageous steps forward each day to promote acceptance for all.

The elementary schools shared the message of inclusion in various ways. Some events included reading about different disabilities and participating in activities that required students to think about how to be inclusive.

At the Middle School, students participated in "Hands of Commitment", an activity that asked students to write a personal commitment of how they could be more Inclusive in school. Members of the "No Place for Hate" committee read resolutions of respect each morning during the announcements and at the end of the week, in each advisory, students discussed those resolutions and signed a pledge to accept them. Additionally all advisories participated in a poster contest using their creativity to incorporate words of "No Place for Hate" and "Inclusivity."

The High School participated by displaying the artwork of special education and general education students in the lobby showcase. Students and staff were also encouraged to illustrate a superhero logo that included who their hero was and what qualities made that person their hero. Finally, Brittany Maier, a savant pianist who is blind and autistic, performed a concert that was free for all to attend.

To watch the video of Ms. Maier's performance click [here](#).

## Education Foundation Grant Brings Dash & Dot Robots to Students

After Coding activities such as "Hour of Code" sparked a huge interest in students of all grades at Hewitt Elementary School, STELLAR teachers Jim Duffy & Kristen Clancy wrote an Education Foundation Grant to introduce Dash & Dot Robots to all classes in their building. Dash & Dot are a pair of robots that can be used together or separately to teach Coding and challenge students in all grade levels.

In order to introduce the robots to kindergarten students, Ms. Clancy and Mr. Duffy requested that fifth graders work collaboratively with their younger "buddies." Together the students used the "Blocky App" to program Dash & Dot to turn on lights and make sounds. Fifth graders were asked to take a leadership role and teach new skills to the Kindergarteners. The students built and applied real-life problem solving skills to reach solutions. Ms. Clancy said, "having the 5<sup>th</sup> Graders work with the Kindergarteners was perfect! The older students were able to lead the Kindergarteners who loved having role models to guide them."

Dash & Dot respond to voice commands, can be programmed using computer codes and are controlled through an iPad or iPhone. Students use this technology to develop coding skills, solve problems, foster team work and develop computational thinking. Mr. Duffy said, "the Dash & Dot Robots have definitely added excitement to STELLAR this year. They are fun, educational and really add another dimension to our program."

Thanks to the Rockville Centre Education Foundation, Hewitt Elementary School was able to purchase 10 Dash and 10 Dot Robots. Additionally, the Hewitt PTA funded the purchase of a charging station, launching kits that will be used with science curriculum and Legos that can be used to add elements of creativity and design to the robots.





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## *South Side High School Athletes Sign Letters of Intent*

Some of South Side High School's most talented athletes signed National Letters of Intent (NLI) on November 14<sup>th</sup>, committing them to play their sport at a Division 1 (D1) college or university. D1 schools are typically larger universities, and compete in a minimum of 14 sports for both males and females. They often have world-class facilities and attract the top athletes in the country. By signing the NLI these students, who have excelled both on and off the field, agreed to play for the designated school and in turn are assured athletic financial aid.

District Athletic Director Carol Roseto said, "I am incredibly proud of these athletes for all of their effort and dedication over the past 4 years and I have no doubt that they will all be successful in their collegiate, academic and athletic careers."

Congratulations to the following students:

Bridget Considine, Stony Brook University-Lacrosse

Ally Diez, Dickinson College-Soccer

Juliana Klaum, Sacred Heart University-Soccer

Ryan Langdon, Air Force Academy-Lacrosse

Joe LiCalzi, Georgetown University-Lacrosse

Allison Mahoney, Marist College-Lacrosse

Ryan McCarthy, Highpoint University-Golf

Alex McNicholas, University of Louisville-Lacrosse

Katherine Parker, University of Connecticut-Lacrosse

