



April 2019

SPECIAL HAPPENINGS



Hello and welcome to the third 2018-19 issue of *Special Happenings*! Here, you will see just some of the many great things going on in Special Services.

Celebrating Black History

South Middle School students celebrated Black History Month with a musical celebration throughout the years, celebrating music from Africa's past to modern day. Students demonstrated their talents in dancing, singing, and poetic readings. Special guests, including Brentwood alumni, performed musical selections. We enjoyed performances by a fraternity and sorority from Stony Brook University. Brentwood's very own African hip-hop artist, Parrish Smith from EPMD along with Green Bay Packers Super Bowl winner, Gary Brown were honorees at the event.

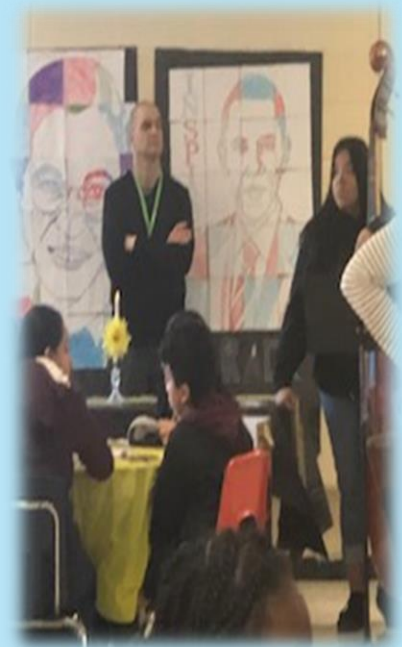
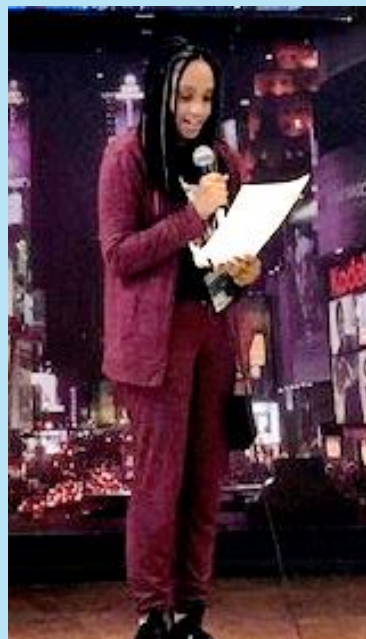


South Middle School Celebrates Music Throughout the Years



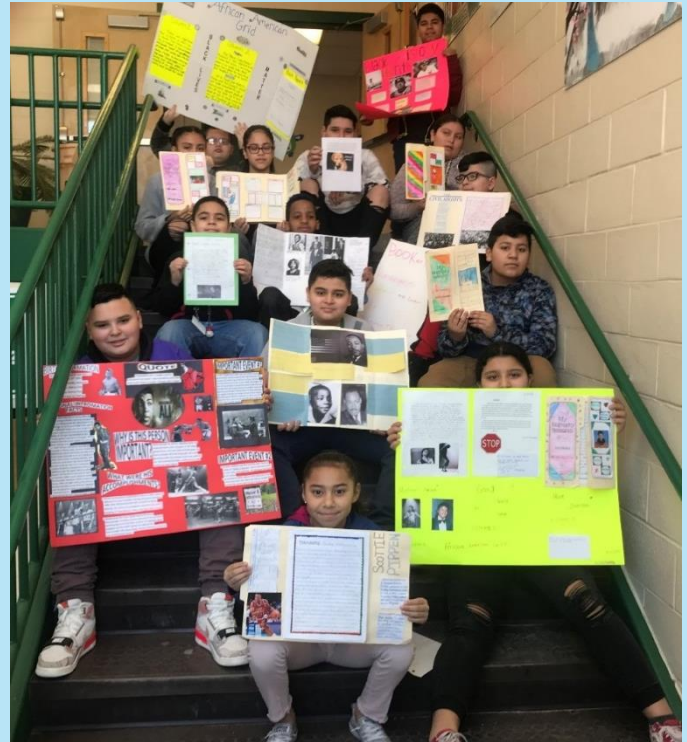
North Middle School Black History Café

North Middle School students in Ms. Lindsay's class help to create a special event for all to enjoy. They crafted centerpieces, collected and organized student work and decorated to create a historical café. Art, poetry, project board biographies, movie reviews, historical diary entries and PowerPoint projects were all on display. Groups of students participated in performances including jazz band, select choir, poetry readings and various skits. Students enjoyed food and beverages while engaging in a thoughtful and meaningful appreciation for our history.



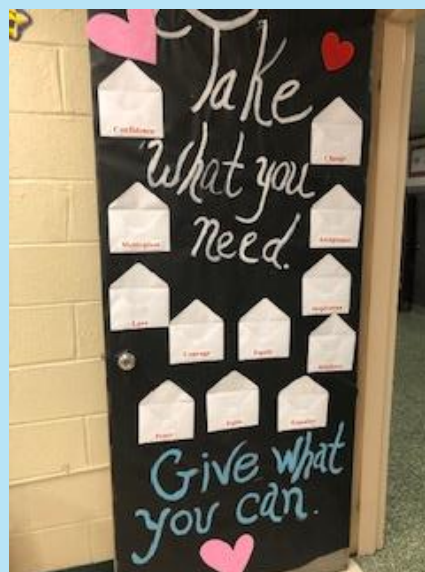
Research-Based Learning

In recognition of Black History, **East Middle School** students in Ms. Sigety's class researched historical and popular figures. Students created biography posters and shared what they learned with their peers. Posters were proudly displayed.



North Middle Door Decorating Contest

North Middle School student, Anna Alfaro-Ortega lent her artistic skills to Ms. Lindsay's and Ms. Leone-Martin's door contest entry, "Take what you need, give what you can." This interactive door provided African proverbs and inspiring quotes from influential black Americans to students and staff.



Social Justice Peer Program



Freshman Center members of the SJPP Team were given a tremendous opportunity to attend the *Culturally Responsive and Sustaining Education Forum*. Throughout this wonderful day, students attended two major workshops: *Culturally Responsiveness: A Peace of Hate*, presented by Dr. Nichelle L. Rivers and *Bridging the Gap Between Culture and Education in the Classroom*, presented by ERASE Racism Student Task Force. They participated in both morning and afternoon introductory and wrap-up discussions with various speakers. Our students engaged and contributed to the rich discussions on ways to sustain culturally responsive practices. We have a lot to be proud of with this group of students and we are very thankful for the support of Dr. Akil and the Freshman Center administrative team for making this experience possible.



A Special Meet and Greet



In recognition of Black History Month, Anaise, a student at **East Middle School** was assigned a Wax Museum project. She researched and became the live version of a pioneer of her choice. Anaise chose boxer Claressa Shields for her project.

Claressa Shields is a two-time Olympic Gold Medalist boxer. Winning her first Olympic Gold Medal at the age of 17. Claressa is the most accomplished amateur boxer in U.S. history - male or female. Shields's boxing gloves are enshrined at the International Boxing Hall of Fame. A trailblazer for women in the sport, she headlined the first women's boxing main event for premium television in just her second professional fight. Growing up in poverty in Flint, Michigan, Claressa represents a beacon of hope for a working-class city that has struggled with violence and everyday essentials. As a vocal advocate for social causes, including the ongoing water crisis in Flint, women's rights, and campaigning against sexual assault, Shields was given the Key to the City in 2012. Among her many awards and accolades include *Sportswoman of the Year (2016)* by *Women's Sports Foundation*, founded by Billie Jean King. She was recently named to the Board of Directors of the GENYOUth organization.

After hearing about the project, Anaise, her teacher Jeanine Rotolo, and her mother, Ana were invited to the Shields vs Hammer press conference in New York City. Special thanks to GENYOUth, Claressa Shields, and her manager Mark for this amazing opportunity.



Keeping an Eye on Technology

Freshmen Center students in Ms. Gruenberg's class with help from Ms. Kobel, Library Media Specialist and Ms. Fordham, Technology Integration Specialist participated in Virtual Reality Expedition.



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Meet the Professional

Brentwood School District has partnered with Joelle Kronberg from CEO School Business Partnership. Our special education students met with local business representatives from PSEG, Panera Bread, United States Postal Service as well as with United States Military Personnel.



SAVE THE DATE: On May 15th our district is hosting a career fair for our high school students.



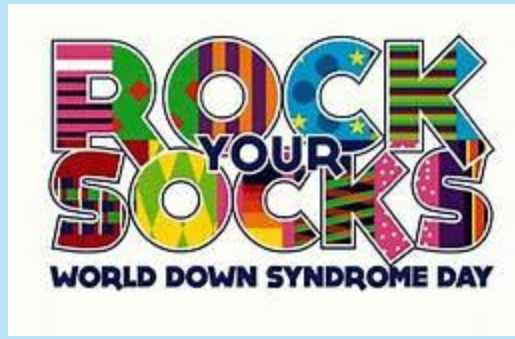
Autism Awareness Month!

We are always excited to spread awareness about Autism in the month of April. All staff and students were encouraged to wear something blue every Tuesday in April to help spread awareness. This year, **West Middle School** students in Ms. Kuhn's class and Ms. Rottmund's class made and sold magnets, bracelets, and pins at our Curriculum Night event. We are very proud of our students for their hard work and dedication to a great cause. Students raised more than \$50.00!



Rock your Socks!

Sara Claudio-Vega, North Middle School is showing off her unique style in support of World Down syndrome Day.



Students in Ms. Liji's class rocked their socks to show that being different is a great thing!

Special Olympics Polar Plunge at Tobay Beach Brentwood Plungers 2019

"FREEZIN' FOR A REASON" at the 6th Annual Town of Oyster Bay Polar Plunge
Saturday, March 16, 2019



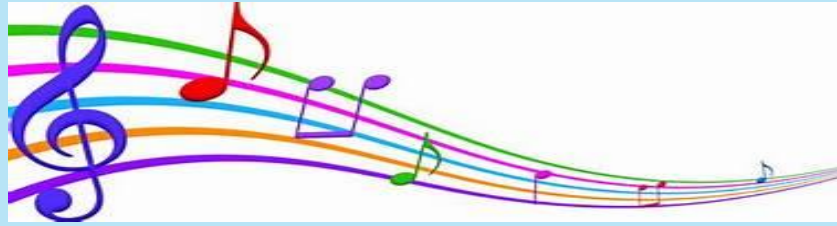
This year, a group of teachers, retired teachers, students, graduates, families and friends attended the plunge.

Special Olympics New York has 66,835 athletes and unified partners training and competing year-round in 22 Olympic-style sports. Our athletes and their families or caregivers are **NEVER CHARGED** to participate! It costs \$400 to support training and competition for one athlete for one sports season. Next year, set your Plunge Goal at \$400 and you'll have sponsored an athlete for an entire season!



**"FREEZIN' FOR A REASON" at the 6th Annual Town of Oyster Bay
Polar Plunge Saturday, March 16, 2019**





The Concert Closet is Open Again!

Spring is here! Music is in the air! The Brentwood faculty has been busy cleaning out their closets in search of white button-down shirts and black slacks to donate to our music department. Under the guidance of Ms. Murphy, the life skills students in the Activities of Daily Living (ADL) classes have prepared the spring concert clothes (sorting, washing, drying, folding, distributing) that were collected to be utilized by our band, chorus and orchestra students. These hands-on activities teach the practical skills of doing laundry while helping the students apply the skills to their independent living needs.



The Freshman Center Friendship Club

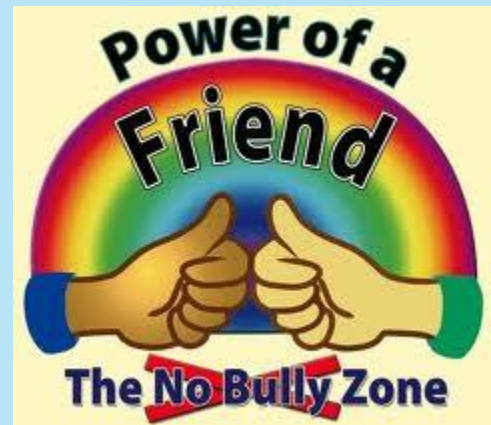


Building social skills and friendships

FC Friendship Club Advisors, Dr. M. Solano, Ms. T. Murphy and Ms. M. Gregory



Friendship Club Poster Submission for the ANTI-BULLYING FASHION



The Freshman Center Friendship Club joined the High School Student's Anti-bullying Movement to help bridge the social gap. Just a small way to combat bullying. It was fantastic to see our students talking, sharing, and making new friends. A special thank you to Mr. Autera, Principal for his support, as well as Mrs. Cordero, parent advocate, and the high school students who dedicated time to spend with our Freshman Center students.

It's Beginning to All Add Up



Southwest Elementary School's second graders in Ms. Amisano's and Ms. Chester's class learned how to count coins. Teachers Federal Credit Union came to visit the 2nd grade classes to teach students about a bank and about savings accounts. Each student received a piggy bank and a dollar certificate for when they are ready to open their very own account!



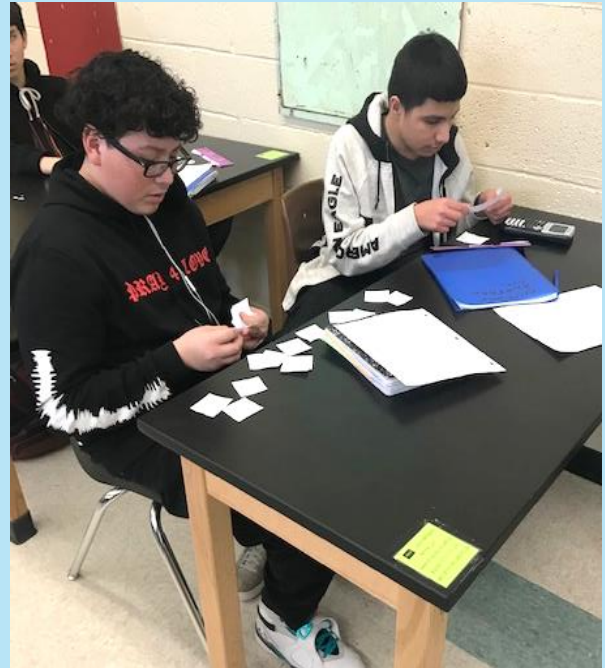
Second Annual Pi Day Contest

West Middle School students competed in the 2nd Annual Pi Day Contest. Brian Portillo, an eighth-grade student from Ms. Rottmund's Life Skills class, placed in the top ten during last year's competition by memorizing 100 digits of Pi. This year, Brian was determined to beat his past score. With a lot of practice and hard work, Brian was able to memorize and recite 150 digits of Pi, taking home second place this year! Way to go Brian!



Kinesthetic Learning

Ross High School students in Ms. Mears's class participated in a kinesthetic learning experience. They solved systems of equations prior to answering Regents questions.



Touchdown!

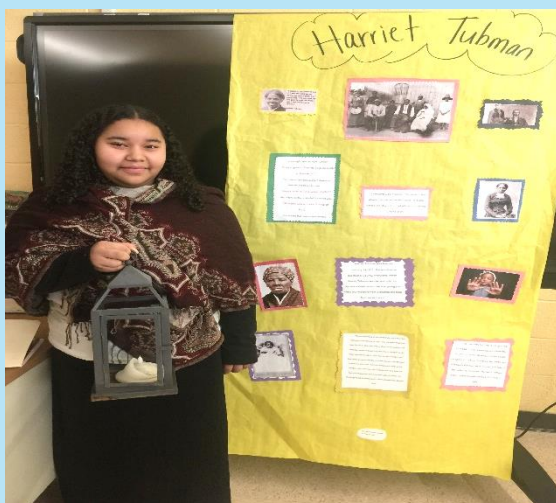
East Middle School Play 60 Flag Football won a \$250 gift card from Fuel Up to Play 60 for this photo showcasing Teamwork, Unity and Fun! The students featured in this picture are all from Mrs. Rotolo's class. The gift certificate will be used to buy each student who participated in Flag Football and 5K Teens a water bottle!





Madame Rotolo's Wax Museum

East Middle School students in Mr. Huguenin, Mr. Budnik, and Mrs. Rotolo's classes participated in Madame Rotolo's Wax Museum, featuring African American pioneers. Students researched a person of their choice, dressed as the person, and in 1st person shared their point of view. To prepare, students analyzed character traits and famous quotes that the pioneer either penned or lived by. Classes throughout the day visited the library to learn information about the "Wax Figure". This year we had a few new additions to the wax museum from our Brentwood family. Dr. Akil and former East Middle Student, and recent Emmy Winner Shadrack Boayke to name a few. Students gained insight and an appreciation for all that was displayed. This was certainly an exhibit of knowledge and talent!



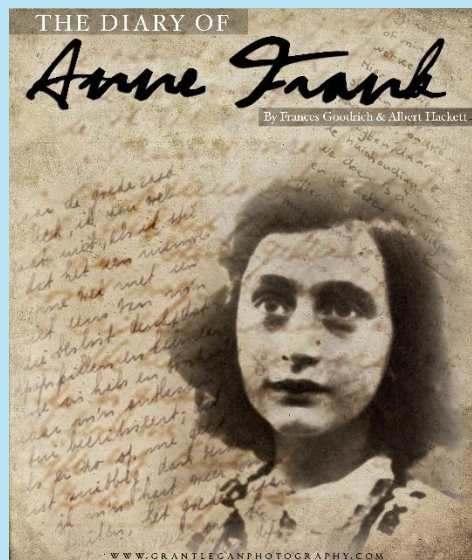
Student of the Month

Sonderling High School student, Melanie Jairam and Ross High School student, Aaron Andrade along with North Middle School student, Manuel Chicas-Andrade were recipients of the Student of the Month Award. We are very proud of these students' accomplishments, character and work ethic. Keep up the great work!



A Visit to the Broad Hollow Theater

North Middle School students in Ms. Lindsay's class saw the production of *The Diary of Anne Frank* at the Bayway Arts Center. Students were moved by the performance and had the opportunity to discuss what they learned with cast members.



What's Next for IEP Students?

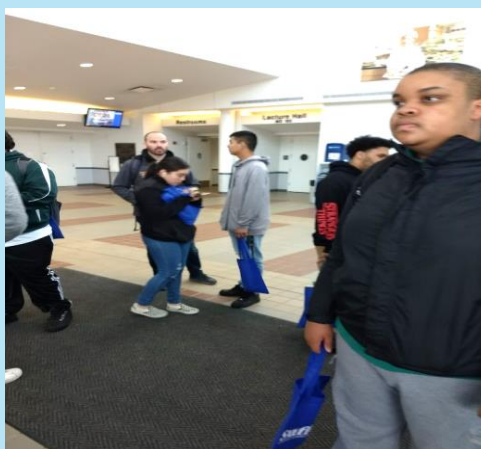
College, Careers, and Transition



The Special Education Department hosted a discussion panel that included Suffolk Community College, Nassau Community, ACCES-VR, and BOCES Special Career Education for 10th and 11th grade students. The representatives from each agency discussed the services that are offered and the skills that students should focus on in order to experience success in their programs. Barbara Porrini and Greg Skillman moderated the discussion.

Laying the Foundation: Preparation for College and Vocational Training Success!!!

An interactive day of workshops, facility tours, resource identification, and demonstrations of vocational training programs for students and youth with disabilities was held at Suffolk County Community College. This event focused on identifying services, tools, and resources that will assist college or vocational training program bound students to achieve success while attending those programs.



Keep Calm and Scribble On



Freshman Center students engaged in Self-Care workshops in March for National Professional Social Work Month. Dr. Solano, School Social Worker and Intern, Ms. Ponce, facilitated mindfulness-based techniques and provided skills needed to create a calmer learning environment for students and teachers. Ms. Gregory and her amazing group of students participated in the calm classroom exercise, Music Scribble. The students benefited greatly from this activity.

Wear It Proudly!



West Middle School teachers, Ms. Pollock and Ms. Spahn designed and organized an IEP t-shirt order to acknowledge the Annual Review season. Students were happy to give a t-shirt to our wonderful director, Rhonda Young. When we say, "I Expect Progress," we expect nothing less!

May is BETTER HEARING & SPEECH MONTH!



Speech and Language Disorders Are Experienced by Many Children—But Are Treatable

BUFSD parents are encouraged to learn the warning signs and seek help early during “May Is Better Hearing & Speech Month.”

With speech and language disorders ranking among the most common disabilities in children, parents and caregivers are encouraged to learn the signs—and seek an evaluation—if they have concerns about their child’s ability to communicate. **Brentwood Union Free School District** *speech-language pathologists* offers timely guidance for families because May is recognized nationally as Better Hearing & Speech Month.

Good communication skills are critical, helping with behavior, learning, reading, social skills, and friendships. It is much easier, more effective, and less costly to treat speech and language disorders early—and May is a great time to educate parents on this important point.”

Speech and language disorders are evaluated and treated by speech-language pathologists. *Speech* is the ability to produce speech sounds using the mouth, lips, and tongue. A child may say sounds the wrong way, repeat sounds and words, or be otherwise difficult to understand. *Language* is the ability to use and put words together—and to understand others’ words. A child may have trouble understanding questions, following directions, or naming objects. Early speech and language treatment sets a child up for future school and social success.

Although treatment ideally begins early—in the toddler years—it is never too late to get treatment. The large majority of parents report significant improvement after treatment. Families can learn more and find help at <http://IdentifytheSigns.org> and www.asha.org/public. BUFSD parents or community members who would like more information may contact Dr. Garvin P. Romane at 631-434-2215 or Garvin.romane@bufsd.org.

Save the Date



Join us for our 3rd Annual Movie and Game Night!

BHSM & SEPTA Event

May 20, 2019

Location: East Middle School Auditorium

4:00p.m. - 8:00p.m.

Raffles!

Refreshments and games provide by

BUFSD Speech & Hearing Department & SETPA



All proceeds benefit SEPTA's Scholarship Fund

Contact Ms. Jill Wolynetz at Jill.Wolynetz@bufsd.org for information.



SEPTA

Special Education Parent Teacher Association

President: Ms. Jill Wolynetz

Recording Secretary: Ms. Beth Law

Treasurer: Ms. Rosanna Mendola

- Contact Ms. Jill Wolynetz at Jill.Wolynetz@bufsd.org for information or questions.
- Join our Facebook group "SEPTA of Brentwood" for parent information, meetings and events for the 2018-2019 school year.

https://www.bufsd.org/parent_guardian/ptsa_septa



Volunteers Needed!



Be sure to check out this great community resource.

<http://brentwoodnylibrary.org>



Serving the Brentwood Community Since 1937