



THE OFFICE OF SPECIAL SERVICES

SPECIAL HAPPENINGS



Better Speech & Hearing Carnival

Each May, Better Hearing & Speech Month (BHSM) provides an opportunity to raise awareness about communication disorders and the role of ASHA members in providing life-altering treatment. The Speech Department did a phenomenal job of raising awareness, cheer, and thousands in scholarships funds. Thank you to all involved. This event created memories and smiles that will last a lifetime.

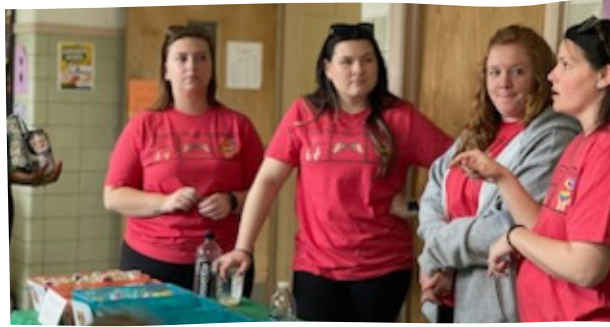
<https://www.bufsd.org/specialservices>



Autism Walk & Mental Health and Wellness Fair



SEPTA, Special Services, District staff, students, dozens of community organizations hosted a comprehensive experience for students and their families on April 13, 2024. The day kicked off with "walking for a cause" as part of our 2nd Annual Autism Walk at approximately 10:00AM. Followed by the Health and Wellness Fair which included close to 100 community organization and BTA tables. Highlights were a special keynote presentation by Kym Laube and dance performances by the COPA club. Additionally, participants enjoyed raffles, prizes, food donations from Island Harvest, activity tables, and much more. A great time was had by all.



Press Release

HISPANIC HERITAGE, COMMUNITY EVENT, PARADE,
BRENTWOOD, BAY SHORE

Senator Martinez Joins Thousands for Annual Puerto Rican-Hispanic Day Parade

June 4, 2024



SJPP @58th Annual Puerto Rican Day Parade

Sharing another marvelous experience that SJPP members (including our alumni) had marching along with members of Teatro Yerbabruja at the 58th Annual Puerto Rican Hispanic Day Parade. We were honored to be invited by parade organizer Margarita Espada



DID YOU KNOW?

It has been reported that over 50,000 participants attend the Puerto Rican Hispanic Parade each year.



Annual Brentwood HS Tree Lighting Ceremony



December 2023 marked the 10th anniversary of the Tree Lighting Ceremony. An event inspired by the inclusive ambiance of Rockefeller Center's tree lighting gathering people from diverse backgrounds, Ms. Young proposed a tree lighting ceremony on October 15, 2014. Her vision extended beyond a mere event—it encompassed an evening filled with activities. Clubs would sell or give out hot chocolate and cider, and the music department would contribute performances, fostering a vibrant community atmosphere of joy and giving.

The first year witnessed a remarkable turnout, reflecting the success of Ms. Young's idea. However, by 2015, concerns emerged regarding the separation of church and state. A heartfelt email raised questions about cultural sensitivity, sparking a community conversation. Resolute in their commitment, Mr. Loeschner and legal counsel affirmed that the tree lighting was an evening event and the tree itself was not a religious symbol, allowing the tradition to continue.

The resilience of the tradition shone during the 2020 pandemic when a drive-thru tree lighting offered a safe yet festive experience. In 2021, secured funding elevated the event with a grand 14-foot commercial tree. Beyond the tree lighting, the celebration expanded to include diverse activities such as candy cane giveaways, Toys for Tots, raffles, book giveaways, fundraising, animal farms, letter writing, fun activities, and talent showcases.

Thank you to all contributors who have played a pivotal role in preserving and enhancing this rich and meaningful tradition. The Annual Tree Lighting Ceremony is all about bringing the community together.

High School Field Day

Field Day for the students in our Life Skills Program. The general education student volunteers were amazing! They were interactive, caring and nurturing. All of the students not only participated, but had smiles on their faces.



1st Annual Carnival



Ms. Trimboli, Ms. Alfano, and Ms. Miller and the Staff of South Middle School rallied to create an amazing opportunity filled with games and fun activities at South Middle School during the First Annual Carnival. Smiles and laughter were plenty at this event.







On May 16, 2024, Ms. Ortiz and Janissa Lloyd walked the runway at the The Colorful World of Down Syndrome event! This event aims to raise awareness and promote inclusivity for individuals with Down Syndrome while promoting a world of joy, creativity, and positivity. Lots of unique talents and abilities were on display. Everyone walked away inspired.



BRENTWOOD UNIFIED



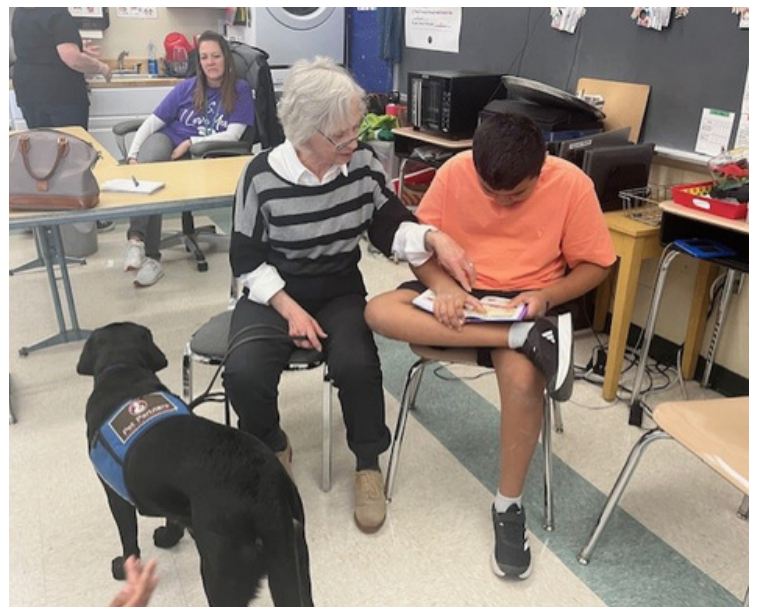
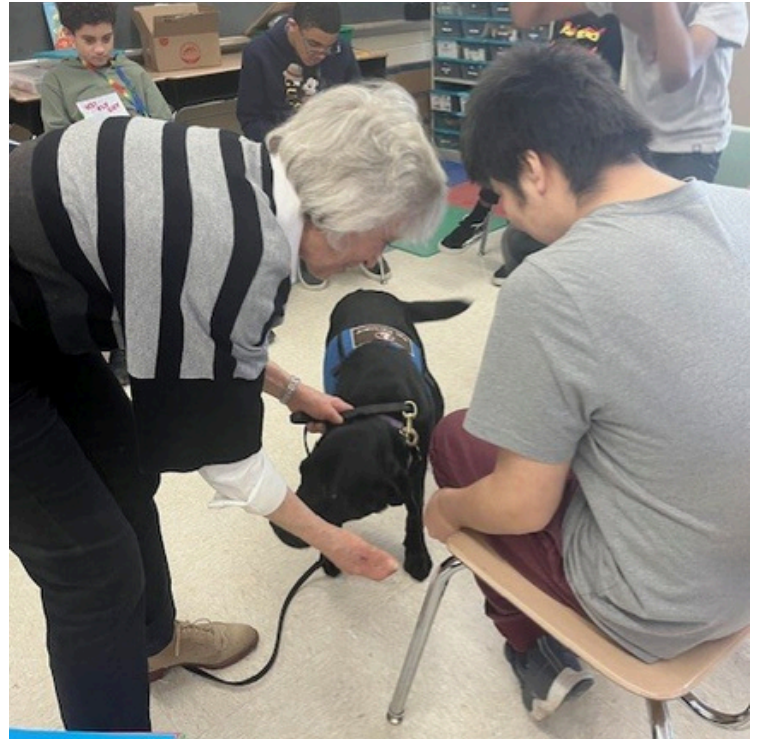
Congratulations



Congratulations to Emely Sarabia. She was recognized as Student of the Month during the month of March 2024 by Sammy Gonzalez and the South Middle administration.



Learning to Ease with Eve



Congratulations



One of our 6th grade students at West Middle School, Andrew, joined the Spelling Bee Club. Then trained like a champ to make it to the final round of the Spelling Bee, placing 2nd! Can you spell winner?



PAES LAB



The ribbon cutting ceremony for the Practical Assessment Exploration System, or PAES® for short, marks a significant milestone in our efforts to empower individuals with the necessary skills and abilities to thrive in a community-based employment setting. PAES® is a research-based assessment system that aims to identify one's aptitude for employment, functional skills, interests, work behavior strengths, and barriers to success.

PAES® is designed to tap into those strengths and help individuals find their place in the workforce by providing training and support to individuals that will help them develop the necessary skills to succeed in an inclusive and supportive work environment.

Congratulations!



Congratulations to Board of Education President Eileen Felix, special education Anita Krumholz, and Maria Lopez on being recognized by SCOPE for your outstanding contributions and commitment to the Brentwood Union Free School District. Support Staff Service Award.

Board of Education President Eileen Felix received the SCOPE School Board Service Award, special education teacher Anita Krumholz was the recipient of the SCOPE Community Service Award, and food service worker Maria Lopez was awarded the SCOPE Support Staff Service Award.

Thank you for all you do. You have meant so much to so many.

Congratulations!



Superintendent Wanda Rivera-Ortiz received the Distinguished Leadership Award at the 8th Annual Women's Empowerment Celebration hosted by Flutterflies Corp. Ms. Rivera-Ortiz is truly deserving of this accolade, she has made powerful and positive changes in the community while inspiring others. Congratulations!

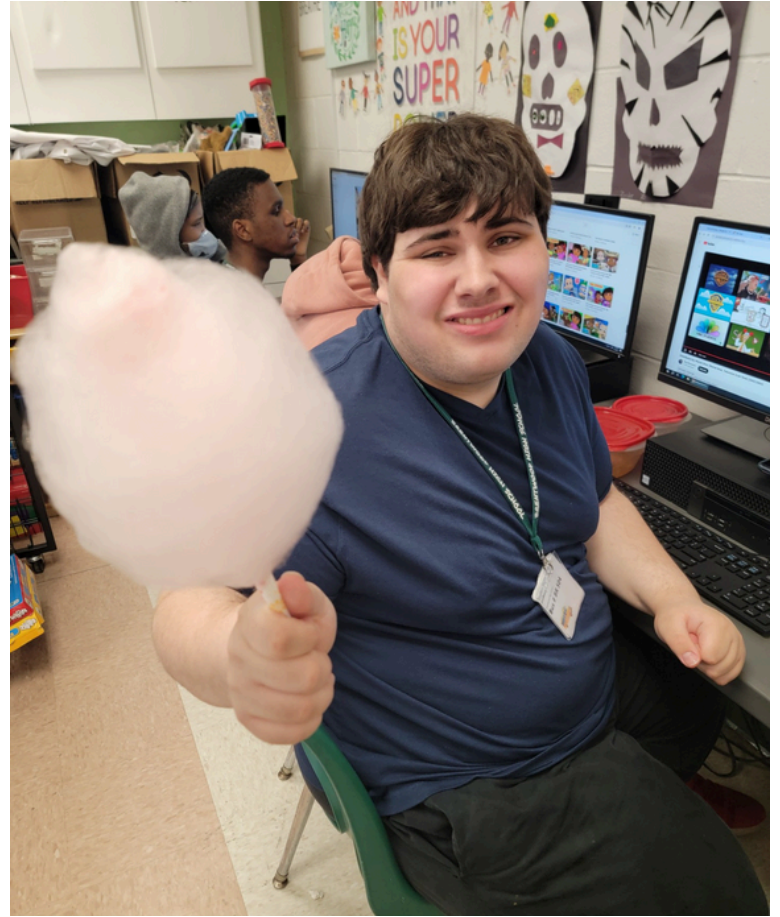
Congratulations!

Keep Smiling Therapy presented the Impact Award to Ms. Rhonda Young at their Annual Mental Health Gala in May 2024. Ms. Young was honored for her efforts to create change and an everlasting impact in the lives of those in the Brentwood School District.
(on the left)



The Mid-Island Club recognizes Ms. Young as Educator of the Year in May 2024. This recognition is a testament to Rhonda Young's dedication, hard work, and outstanding contributions to the field of education.
(on the right)





Brian Portillo holding a Luna Moth as part of the life cycle of moths and butterflies in Science lesson. Anthony L. holding cotton candy as part of the What is Sugar? lesson. Congratulations sign for Andrew Whittingham for graduating top in his class at the Sonderling Center.



At the Level one Kindergarten Graduation and Level one/E Parent Tea/ Concert on June 12th, our scholars got to show all they have learned and all the ways they have grown this school year.



SCCC College Tour



Congratulations!



Ms. Lisa Ponce, Social Worker at Sonderling High School, who was awarded a Governors citation this past Friday, March 8th, celebrating her work and leadership in the districts Latina Mentoring Program. Ms. Ponce has distinguished herself as one of only five women across the state honored by Governor Hochul for their respective work and leadership as mentors. As a Brentwood High School graduate herself, Ms. Ponce takes great pride in giving back to her community, serving as a role model to young Latina girls and providing them with guidance, mentorship, and support.



Congratulations!



Congratulations, Ms. Sheree Sibilly on being selected as the 17th Legislative District 2024 Champion of Diversity. Established through legislative resolution in 2022, this honor is annually bestowed upon only one person in each of Suffolk County's 18 legislative districts. She was chosen because of her tireless efforts as a community leader, advocate, and activist exemplify your commitment to promoting diversity and advocating for those who face discrimination and marginalization. You are eminently deserving of this honor and I am proud to represent you.