A Love of Learning Beyond the Classroom

With a focus on establishing healthy, engaged, safe and challenging learning environments, the Shoreham-Wading River School District continues to strengthen support for whole-child programming. While we progress in the guiding principles of our newly adopted Strategic Plan, we are working to refine and review our extracurricular programs to further cultivate student participation. From developing self-esteem and social opportunities, to exploring interests and creating wide-ranging perspectives, extracurricular offerings for our students are vibrant and innovative ways to help improve academic performance and bolster our already high-quality education.

Starting at the elementary level, students are learning the fundamentals of coding and developing cultural and linguistic awareness with Wading River School’s World Languages Club. In addition, they are championing abilities and strengths with the new Best Buddies program at Albert G. Prodell Middle School and embracing the mental and physical benefits of yoga at the High School. Throughout the District, students are being empowered through programming experimentation, boosting intelligence, expanding their social circles and embracing healthy choices.

This newsletter showcases a few examples of the many opportunities available to District students, before and after school, that help them to learn beyond the classroom.
Voices of the Student Body

When Miller Avenue School organized a student council for second graders last year, the enthusiasm was evident in the projects and initiatives that the students developed – not only to create positivity throughout the building, but also beyond the school walls. Headed by second grade teacher Mr. Robert Korchma and school psychologist Ms. Mary Anne Benz, their efforts included helping families and organizations in the community – from collecting items for the Brookhaven Animal Shelter, to raising money and awareness for the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society’s Pennies for Patients program and coordinating a gift and toy drive for children at Stony Brook Children’s Hospital.

This year, as the group organizes its calendar of projects, Mr. Korchma has stated that there has been more interest in students joining, and plans will include another humanitarian trip – this time to visit the residents of the Long Island State Veterans Home in Stony Brook. He added that the club is a wonderful addition to classroom learning, helping students understand and practice responsibility, integrity, empathy and a genuine concern for others.

The Miller Avenue Student Council serves as a springboard to Wading River School’s Student Council, headed by fourth grade teacher Mrs. Alison Quenzer, where students in grades 3-5 learn to build leadership skills, conduct campaigns of awareness and raise funds for causes close to their hearts. School spirit, a sense of structure and concern for community welfare continue as students are introduced to the Middle School and High School student councils, headed by Ms. Christine Bradley and Ms. Maria Lovasco, respectively. There, they move forward on a path of positive influences, teamwork and developing respectful relationships.

Did You Know?

The numerous clubs that Shoreham-Wading River students participate in offer essential life skills, including decision-making, creative thinking and communication. In the left column are some other skills, principles and practices and in the right column is just a handful of our clubs.

Choose One:
- Problem-Solving
- Creative Thinking
- Strategic Thinking
- Abstract Reasoning
- Critical Thinking
- Building Mastery
- Altruism
- Compassion
- Teamwork
- Time Management
- Research
- Perseverance

Match It:
- Chess Club
- S.A.D.D.
- Best Buddies
- Art Club
- Natural Helpers
- Bell Choir
- Student Council
- Quartetones
- Newspaper Club
- Technology Club
- National History Day
- Science Olympiad
Moving Forward with New Administrators

The District welcomed two new administrators over the summer. Mrs. Claudia Smith was appointed Principal of Miller Avenue School and Mr. John Holownia was named Assistant Principal of Shoreham-Wading River High School.

Mrs. Smith joins the Shoreham-Wading River school community from her most recent position as Assistant Principal at both Edna Louise Spear Elementary School and Port Jefferson Middle School. Her comprehensive experience with students, staff and parents from the pre-K through eighth grade level aligns with Shoreham-Wading River’s commitment to the intellectual, physical, emotional and social growth of our students. She has extensive experience in the development of school goals and action plans to achieve success, and has participated in a multitude of professional development opportunities to support teacher instruction, maximize student achievement, and increase awareness of best practices.

Mr. Holownia’s most recent role of 13 years was as a high school special education teacher for the Comsewogue School District. Throughout his professional career, he has had a strong focus on student achievement at all ability levels. He has been instrumental in implementing SEL programs, 1:1 Chromebook programs, project-based learning and mentoring new teachers. His varied interests include stints coaching football and lacrosse at the junior varsity and varsity levels, and he has extensive experience with the most up-to-date technology.

“We are very excited to have these two seasoned educators join our leadership team,” Superintendent of Schools Mr. Gerard Poole said. “Their combined skills as both educators and administrators will continue to propel our students into becoming self-confident, responsible, independent and adaptable lifelong learners.”

Mr. Gerard Poole, Superintendent of Schools

It’s in Their Nature

Shoreham-Wading River High School Natural Helpers are exactly that – students who are recognized among their peers as being natural leaders and ones who they gravitate to for emotional support or just a listening ear. A nationally recognized program for students, it was formed on the basis that teenagers are more likely to turn to a peer before an adult, so students learn how they can effectively assist others on various life issues and when to advise that they could seek additional support. In early December, students will take part in a Natural Helpers Retreat to further develop their social and emotional leadership skills and help make a difference in the school community.

Something For Everyone!

The Shoreham-Wading River School District offers a number of community programs that are available to all residents. With enrichment opportunities, including chess for kids, health-centered classes like tai chi and meditation, and adult courses such as men’s over-35 basketball, co-ed volleyball and line dancing, there is something for everyone in our school community. Visit http://www.swrschools.org/departments_and_programs/community_programs for a full schedule.
Reinforcing Protective Factors With S.A.D.D.

The High School’s Students Against Destructive Decisions club was organized last spring, with many students dedicating their time and talents to creating an anti-tobacco video and a distracted driving video, participating in the national TextLess Live More awareness campaign and organizing a successful community car wash. The school community looks forward to these student leaders continuing to share and promote their values and advocacy for positive life decisions.

Power and Potential for Prodell Best Buddies

With inspiration from the success of the High School’s Best Buddies program, Alfred G. Prodell Middle School is now offering the student-run friendship club, where a place of belonging, fellowship and fun are highlighted. The program matches students who have intellectual or developmental disabilities with a peer to help them become integrated into the school community.

“The ultimate goal is to eliminate social isolation and provide integrated events and activities,” said Principal Mr. Kevin Vann. Under the guidance of sixth grade teacher Ms. Adrian Gilmore, the students will work together to strengthen their friendships throughout the year.

Computer Science Concepts

Elementary students have an opportunity to learn computer science and coding based on Google’s computer science First curriculum. They follow step-by-step instructional videos that introduce them to fundamental computer science concepts and build computer programs using Scratch, a block-based programming language.
Sparking Creativity

As the District continues to enhance its Fine Arts program, Wading River School students are expanding their school day with two offerings that help to enhance their creative efforts. The Art Club aids students in practicing and developing their techniques with art teacher and adviser Ms. Rosemarie Petruzzellis. Collaborating with other artists on group projects, the District looks forward to seeing their artistry as they beautify the school and community.

Another exciting – and musical – opportunity is the Bell Choir for fifth graders, where students are working under the guidance of music teacher Mrs. Jenilyn Smith and in harmony with their peers, learning the techniques that create the beautiful sounds of these unique classic instruments.

Newspaper Club

An opportunity for younger students to develop their speaking, listening and writing skills in a setting that simulates the work of a reporter is the basis for the Wading River School Newspaper Club. Under the leadership of Mrs. Jacqueline Margraf, students are learning about teamwork, time management and responsibility. Projects will include interviewing teachers, staff and peers about school and community activities as they develop their stories for the newspaper.

Checkmate!

Patience, thoughtfulness and rational thinking are just a few of the benefits that students discover in the new Chess Club at Wading River School. Developing mental prowess and learning the tactical motifs in the centuries-old game are giving students an opportunity to learn the challenges of the competitive game of skill. According to fifth grade teacher Mr. Jeremy Impellizzeri, who oversees the dozens of students who are involved in the club, they will develop strategic thinking, pattern recognition and abstract reasoning skills as they challenge one another in one-on-one competitions in a fun, supportive environment.

“The game will also teach them to win – or lose – with style and grace,” Principal Mr. Louis Parrinello said. “They are encouraged to stay and play all year long, growing in their expertise as much as they would like.” The club is open to students in grades 3-5 and takes place weekly after school throughout the year.

Continuing the Creativity

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Shoreham-Wading River High School was one of 362 schools recognized nationally as a Blue Ribbon School for 2019. The distinction is the second time the school has been honored, being one of the early honorees in the 37-year-old program as a U.S. Department of Education 1987-88 Blue Ribbon School.

The Department recognizes all schools in one of two performance categories – exemplary high performing schools and exemplary achievement gap closing schools – which are based on all student scores, student subgroup scores and graduation rates.

“This coveted honor proclaims the hard work of our committed educators and students and the high standards that encourage, engage and prepare our graduates for success after high school,” Superintendent of Schools Mr. Gerard Poole said.

Seniors Jacqueline Holden and Wilson Schmalzle are among approximately 34,000 high school students across the country who were named Commended Students in the annual National Merit Scholarship Program.

“This is an exceptional accomplishment for Jackie and Wilson, one that will help broaden their academic opportunities,” Principal Mr. Frank Pugliese said.

After a rigorous process that included more than 6,500 students statewide who prepared for a coveted performance spot, six Shoreham-Wading River High School students were selected to represent the District at the New York State School Music Association All-State Festival in Rochester in early December.

Seniors Ray Colon and Nicolette Tingo and juniors Daniel Julian and Mika Misawa will be among the finest musicians across New York State when they participate in the prestigious event. Senior Sarah Cain was selected as a soprano alternate for both choral ensembles and senior Arianna McMorris was selected as an alto alternate for both choral ensembles.

“With pride, we congratulate these students on this achievement,” Shoreham-Wading River High School music teacher Mr. Dennis Creighton said. “This event culminates their many hours of hard work and commitment to their craft. This is a journey that started in our elementary buildings, and we are thrilled the students have earned themselves a spot in the All-State ensembles.”
As a result of their scholastic dedication and performance, 32 Shoreham-Wading River High School students have been recognized by the College Board as AP Scholars. The designation was given in recognition of each student’s demonstration of exceptional college-level achievement through their performance on national AP exams.

Of the 32 students, 14 were named AP Scholars, nine earned the recognition of AP Scholar with Honor and nine were named AP Scholars with Distinction.

The entire school community congratulates the following students on this exceptional achievement: AP Scholars Joshua Aliberti, Gavin Barone, Kevin Beagen, Mark Costas, Donald Doherty, Owen Donohue, Sara Hobbes, Trevor Kessel, Maya Klatsky, Tyler Magliulo, Gabriella Meli, Sean Reagan, Wilson Schmalzle and Zachary Zeller; AP Scholars with Honor Sarah Cain, Benjamin Carrier, Alison Devall, Nathaniel Donohue, John Erb, Alexander Kravchenko, Emily Mulcahy, Stephanie Searing and William Wells; and AP Scholars with Distinction Tabina Ali, Eilis Casey, Grace Curry, Christina Deluca, Jacqueline Holden, Margaret Panasci, Camden Sisler, Michael Turecamo and Jacob Vogel.

Making the list among the top 12% of all public high schools across the country, Shoreham-Wading River High School has been lauded for its exceptional performance on state-required tests, graduation rates and how well prepared students are for college in the U.S. News and World Report’s annual national rankings.

“We applaud the hard work and dedication of our administrators, teachers and especially students that has resulted in this recognition,” Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction Mr. Alan Meinst der said.

Class of 2019 graduates continue to raise the bar, with 72% awarded Regents Diplomas with Advanced Designation, 11% of which were with High Honors. Ninety-three percent of seniors indicated their intent to continue on to post-secondary study, enrolling in 78 different colleges or universities including such prestigious institutions as Harvard, University of Pennsylvania and Cornell.
Dear Shoreham-Wading River Community,

The 2019-20 school year is off to a great start! So much has been happening in our four schools since the first day of classes: team building and new perspectives with Mrs. Claudia Smith at the helm as Principal of Miller Avenue, Procell students learning about the benefits of healthy choices with informative and proactive programs, and collaboration with our High School, Middle School and Wading River students who are engaged in the Student Spaceflight Experiments Program, which will lead to a group of our student-scientists collaborating with astronauts to have their experiment conducted in the space station.

Our Board of Education recently reviewed our student outcomes for the 2018-19 school year and students continue to excel in all areas. In addition to High School students earning over 1,000 collegiate credits through participation in our robust Advanced Placement program, the number of students graduating with a Regents Diploma with Advanced Designation continues to grow. Read more about this on page 7, where we also congratulate the High School for its recognition by the United States Department of Education as a 2019 National Blue Ribbon School for exemplary student performance, an honor that it has achieved for the SECOND time!

Thank you to all of our stakeholders, residents, parents and staff, as all of these accomplishments are due to the incredible support given to our students from our community.

Sincerely,
Mr. Gerard W. Poole
Superintendent of Schools