



# The Sousa Notes



Home and School Association Newsletter – October/November 2017

## A Note from Dr. Meoli

I have been an educator for quite some time, but I am still in awe when an idea or project that involves a child's voice comes to fruition. Recently, we had an event that brought twin blessings, and a good deal of pride, to Sousa Elementary School—our namesake's 163rd Birthday Celebration.

On Monday, November 6, 1854, John Philip Sousa was born; on that same day this year, we had a whole school assembly that included a visit from the Superintendent, Dr. Mooney, a collection of Sousa's personal items, on loan from the Cow Neck Historical Society, and performances by the Schreiber Band. What a thrill it was to hear the high school students, many of whom got their start at our elementary school, play three of Sousa's most famous marches so gloriously for their younger peers. There is a freshness and joy in such performances which the maestro would no doubt have loved to hear and this first blessing—hearing Port students play for all assembled—was something of which our district can be very proud. Many thanks to Shane Helfner for preparing the students so well, to Dr. Mooney for her words of wisdom on this occasion, and to Schreiber Principal Dr. Ira Pernick and Director of Creative Arts Kevin Scully for making the band's appearance here at Sousa so easy to manage.

The second blessing was the unveiling of our River of Kindness project. With the planning and support of our Sousa HSA, as well as our newly formed Sousa RULER committee, every student and adult in the building was able to paint a rock to be included in the installation—a veritable "river" of images and quotes reminding us all to be *Sousa Strong* every day. The students had brought their completed rocks to the Unity Day "SOUSA" picture on October 25, and a team of parents worked diligently to complete the "river" by

November 6 (who knew there was a thing called a sodcutter?!)

Special thanks to Jen Biblowitz, Steve Moore, Mara Sarchese, Jillian Lundberg, Athena Perry, Josh Speisman, Kate Walz, our custodians Al and Chris, and Buildings and Grounds Director Jim Ristano for going above and beyond on this beautiful, and touching, addition to the Sousa landscape. It is really a remarkable testament to our home/school partnership.

Sometimes, when I see the innocence of the contributions of children, I worry that we are making things artificially "nice"—is a river of kindness really going to make a difference in how we, and the students, interact with each other over time? It can feel a little naïve. But then I see the work, as I did coming to school this

morning, and I am reminded of the beauty of such simplicity, and the necessity of keeping children's voices loud and strong, especially as the world becomes more complex. Perhaps Picasso said it best:

"Every child is an artist. The problem is how to remain a child when he grows up."

As we approach the holidays, this is a good lesson to remember—and a good River to have.

Dave Meoli



## John Philip Sousa's Birthday Celebration

November 6th marked John Philip Sousa's 163rd birthday - what better way to commemorate our school's namesake than with a school wide celebration. The kids all learned a bit about Maestro Sousa's history and were given the chance to view some of his personal belongings on loan from the Cow Neck Peninsula Historical Society. They were also treated to a special visit from the Schreiber High School band which, under the direction of former Sousa Band leader, Shane Hefner, played three of Sousa's most famous marches, including the ever popular Stars & Stripes Forever. Our very own Dr. Meoli & Mr. Viavatine accompanied the band as well. Ms. Biblowitz talked about further strengthening our Sousa Strong initiative (Being Kind, Confident & Compassionate) with a new school wide RULER Charter.



## Unity Day 2017

Sousa Students and staff showed their Unity Day spirit by spelling out "SOUSA" because of course - We Are Sousa Strong! Decked out in orange, they all got together to say the Pledge of Allegiance and dedicated themselves to being united for kindness, acceptance and inclusion. They also dedicated the inspirational rocks they all painted which are now part of the Sousa River of Kindness. A special thank you to the Sousa fifth grade Helpers who came to school early to help prepare for the day and who greeted each bus load of children as they arrived at school.



## Students Learn About Allergies

During the first week of October, Sousa students and staff participated in the District's Food Allergy Awareness week. Each class was involved in activities geared to their grade level and everyone had the chance to visit a new, interactive bulletin board in the lobby. Some classes also had the opportunity to learn about allergies in the context of RULER, the social and emotional program the school is utilizing. To highlight what the younger students learned, Kyle Dine, an allergy awareness performer, came to Sousa to entertain grades K-2 with his catchy songs and fun puppets. Thank you to the parents and faculty on the Allergy Awareness Committee who organized the week's events and to the Sousa community for taking the time to learn about food allergies! This is just another example of how Sousa students act with Kindness, Confidence and Compassion!



## Patti Wood Visits Sousa

The Sousa Green Committee invited Patti Wood, Executive Director of Grassroots Environmental Education and longstanding member of the Port Washington community, to come to Sousa to speak to the kids about the importance of the three R's: Reduce! Reuse! Recycle! She brought her life's passion and abounding knowledge (and trusty mime Dana) to all grades by demonstrating how we can handle our waste responsibly and, most importantly, produce less waste in general.

Did you know this? Your kids now do!

- 60 million plastic water bottles are used per day in the US (that is 2.5 million per hour!), and only 10% of these bottles are recycled.
- 1/3 of all of our generated waste is from packaging and a large portion of this ends up in "plastic continents" called GYRES out in the Pacific, Atlantic and Indian Oceans.
- 1 billion trees are cut down each year for paper. If we recycled even 10% of the paper used, we would save 25 million trees each year.

Patti's Parting Message: Reduce! Reuse! Recycle! & RETHINK!



## CyberStars Is Back!

After a successful launch last year, this after-school workshop is growing. With a grant from the Ed. Foundation Ms. Johnson and Mrs. Cangialosi are introducing Computer Science to Sousa. With the help of Sousa parent Stephanie Yardeni and CyberStars alumni, students are learning kid-friendly code writing. They are creating algorithms and running programs to solve problems, control robots and create digital stories. CyberStars alumni were invited back for a 4-day course where they sharpened their tools to grow as technology engineers.



## Nassau County Museum of Art

This fall, fifth graders visited the Nassau County Museum of Art, which is a former residence of the Frick family. On the first part of the tour, the children experienced two different sculptures by the same artist. One experience was weaving through a sculpture to see the many different perspectives through positive and negative space. The other experience was enjoying the beauty of a site sculpture, which is a piece specifically designed for a particular landscape, in a lovely pond surrounded by geese and vegetation. Moving inside, the children viewed an exhibition about New York City's history, reality and atmosphere as the city evolved through many cultural progressions. Through sketches and discussion, children compared and contrasted how the artwork evolved and the feelings that the art work created in the children. The children enjoyed the familiarity of New York City as the subject matter and the outdoor sculpture garden which transports you far away from busy suburban life.



## Omegaman Comes to Sousa

Who can rip phonebooks in half, bend metal rods and break wooden baseball bats while teaching children how to be their best self and stand up against bullying? Omegaman of course! That's exactly what happened last month when all the students participated in an interactive assembly learning how everyone can be a H (helping) E (everyone) R (respect) O (others). Our special superhero left a strong impression that good choices are better than making poor choices. **We are SOUSA Strong!**



## Dads' Night Out

Sousa Dads did it again! This year's event raised more than \$7,000. This money will help the Sousa HSA fund meaningful and diverse educational and enrichment programs for our children throughout the year. The HSA looks forward to presenting cultural arts performances as well as hosting the annual Family STEAM Night for all Sousa students. Special thanks go to the members of the Dads' Night Out Committee for organizing another record-breaking event!



## Geography Takes Shape

Third Graders at Sousa are learning about world geography as the beginning part of their social studies curriculum. To help understand the different hemispheres, continents and oceans, each student created a paper mache globe, using newspaper and lots of flour and water. The globes were then hand painted and all of the details were glued on. This fun hands-on project will help them all to understand the world just a little better.



## Learning about Engineering at the Hall of Science

Fifth graders recently visited the Hall of Science in Corona, Queens. Prior to visiting the museum, the students began their engineering unit. Students learned about what engineers do as well as the engineering process. Once at the museum, students were able to work together in a hands-on STEAM workshop where they were tasked with creating ramps that would allow a ball to hit a target, pinball machines to navigate a ball to a designated point, or tools that astronauts would need in space. Students also had an opportunity to watch a 3D documentary entitled Dream Big: Engineering Our World about engineers around the world.



## Halloween Parade

Halloween is always an enjoyable holiday at Sousa. The school is fully decorated, everyone is having fun and the annual parade is always a joy to watch. Thank you to everyone for cultivating a great Halloween spirit. A big thank you goes also to all the children who donated some of their candies to the Troops. Treats for Troops is yet another community outreach program that shows great Sousa Spirit and one that also shows our troops that we are thinking of them.



## Trick or Treat for UNICEF

Once again, Sousa students participated in the annual Trick or Treat for UNICEF campaign to benefit disadvantaged children around the world. Over 340 boxes were collected! A special note of thanks to Sousa parents Ute Brodje and Ingrid Dudek for delivering a rousing performance as UNICEF Boxes during the Halloween Safety assembly with Detective Tony.





## Getting Port Washington Our Fair Share of the Pie

The Port Washington Legislative Task Force has put together a presentation on what makes Port Washington unique and what we need to do as a community to make sure Albany treats us fairly. For those of you who were unable to attend the HSA Meeting, please take the time to watch this 20-minute video presentation and make sure to share it! We need every single Port Washington resident to see it. <https://m.facebook.com/groups/supportourpwschools/permalink/818539831650887/>



## Dr. Licato Presents Practices and Strategies from Finland at LIASCD Conference

Sousa's Assistant Principal, Dr. Kimberly Licato, presented at LIASCD (Long Island Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development), a conference for many administrators from around Long Island. The presentation was called "Effective Practices - Mindfulness and Strategies from Finland". The presentation involved a combination of practices observed while Dr. Licato was researching the Finland School System in conjunction with mindfulness practices we can do here in the state of New York. An exploration of the teaching of the "whole child" and meeting the needs of students both emotionally and physically.



## Award Winning Teacher Artist Visit from Brazil

In October, we were visited by Gabriela Sartori, an elementary art award-winning teacher from Brazil. She was referred to Sousa because of all of our student-created art installation projects. While at Sousa, she conducted observations of various art classes with Mr. Moore for the first portion of the academic school day. The second portion of the day consisted of a school tour and explanation of the 5th grade art work both within the school as well as outside on our grounds.



## Halloween Cooking Lab

Ms. Miglietta's fifth grade class enjoyed a Halloween themed cooking lab fueled by imagination. The children decorated freshly made rice cereal treats - Sousa spider bites and Mrs. Miglietta's mini pumpkins. Let your creative side run wild - Have fun!

### Ms. Miglietta's Mini pumpkin

Yield 22 per 10oz box  
1 -10oz boxes rice cereal  
1 and 1/2 bags of mini marshmallows  
1 stick of salted butter  
12 drops yellow food coloring  
5 drops red food coloring  
Wax paper  
Cookie sheets  
Coconut oil  
Candy corn for nose  
M & Ms for eyes and leaf  
Tootsie roll or Rollo candy for stem



Orange icing

### Directions

Melt butter over low heat. Add food coloring. Add 1 and 1/2 bags of marshmallows. Stir until melted. Add rice cereal. Stir until combined. Pour mixture onto wax paper and let cool 10 minutes. Lather hands in coconut oil. Form mini ball shapes from mixture. Decorate!

### Sousa Spider Bites

1- 10oz box of chocolate rice cereal  
1 and 1/2 bag mini marshmallows  
1 stick of salted butter  
Mini stick pretzels for legs  
Orange icing to dip "legs" in  
Chocolate sprinkles for pupils  
White icing or white marshmallows for eyes.

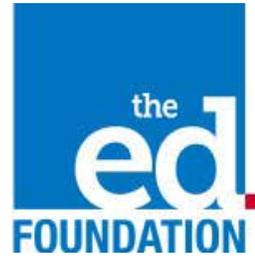


## National Food Day

A huge thank you to the Nutrition Committee for making Food Day 2017 a great success! This year, 1600 pounds (400 more pounds than last year!) of fresh produce was distributed to the local food pantries: Port Washington Senior Center, Our Lady of Fatima, St. Peter's Outreach Center and the INN (Interfaith Nutrition Network) in Hempstead. They were all so happy to receive such a bounty of various fresh fruits and vegetables!

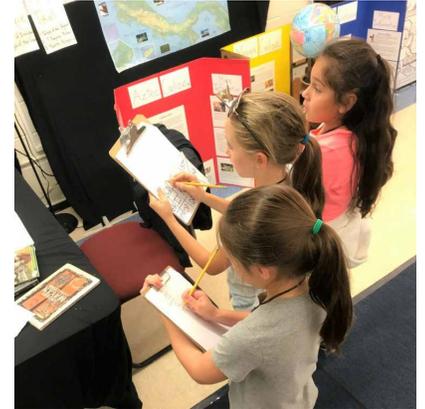


## Submerge Storytelling



Submerge Storytelling is a unique experience where students are able to interact with a story that takes place in the main character's bedroom (the Realm), while looking for clues, evidence and supporting details from the unfolding story around them. It is a unique and interactive experience that provides an opportunity for students to use many conceptual reading skills in a concrete and tangible way.

This year, the Sousa HSA Literacy Committee was awarded a partial grant from The Ed Foundation, which afforded the opportunity to have Submerge Storytelling for a two-week block, adding an additional grade (2nd grade in addition to 4th grade) for daily visits, as well as an opportunity to have one workshop visit for each kindergarten and first grade class. The rest of this program is fully funded by the Sousa HSA.



## Sousa Family Math Night Out

Crowds of parents and their children came out to try their hand at playing elementary math games in a fun and educational way. One of the Sousa community's favorite events, Family Math Night provides great opportunities for kids to interact with their parents at different stations that are expertly facilitated by teachers. A special thank you to Mrs. Garcia, all of the other Sousa teachers and staff for organizing this fun annual school event.



## The Ed. Foundation Awards Grants to Sousa

Here is the list of the awarded Ed. Foundation Grants that will benefit Sousa students for the 2017-2018 school year:

### Sousa Strong: RULER II

**Jennifer Biblowitz, Nadine Fitoussi, Suzanne Potucek, David Meoli**

Three teachers attend a final round of training in order to turnkey a proven schoolwide program called RULER (Recognizing, Understanding, Labeling, Expressing, and Regulating emotions), designed to foster healthy relationships and decrease bullying and aggressive behavior, now in its second year.



### Submerge Storytelling

**Rebecca Schwartz, Erin Leitman-Scott, David Meoli, Colleen Lucie, Dina Maiella-Marro, Cory Drewes, Pia Ferrante, Cathy Galanis, Julie Epstein**

4th graders at Salem and Sousa and 2nd graders at Sousa transform their classroom to become the setting in an interactive, hands-on experience that immerses them directly into a story.



### PW Robotics Clubs Grades 4-8

**Jeanne Zeh**

In this club, students in grades 4 through 8 learn about robotics, computer science, and coding and participate in various competitions.



### Audio Books: Literature for All, Support for the Struggling Reader

**Janet Moser, Ashleigh Salerno**

Audio books are paired with print books to increase vocabulary, comprehension, and listening abilities while encouraging sustained reading for 3rd through 5th-graders.

### All Strings Attached: a Multi-Level Strings Commission

**Kevin Scully, Anthony Pinelli, Jr., Diane Fish, Carol Garofalo, Carly Clancy, Allison Burke, John Akios**

The commissioning of a multi-level string piece by acclaimed composer Kirt Mosier for the students of Port Washington to be performed at the Tilles Center for the Performing Arts during A Night of 1,000 Strings.



# The Ed. Foundation Awards Grants to Sousa

## Expressive Elocution

**Elise May**

This program helps vocally empower and prepare students to present speeches, reports, dramatic enactments, debates, and themselves in interviews and performances.



## Dancing with Our Fifth Grade Stars

**David Meoli, Sheri Suzzan, Pia Ferrante, Barbara Giebel, Bonni Cohen**

All 5th-grade students participate in a 10-week residency with Dancing Classrooms to cultivate essential life skills through the practice of ballroom dance. Co-funded by HEARTS and the HSAs.

## Bridging the Home-School Connection for ELLs

**Jo Ann Miles, Debra Calluzzo**

Parents of English language learners in grades K-1 are coached in literacy skills and reading concepts during 3 evening workshops and will receive literacy kits for home use.



## Cyberstars: Introduction to Computer Science

**Marisa Johnson, Stephanie Yardeni, David Meoli, Lisa Cangialosi**

An after-school workshop for select 1st-3rd graders introduces the fundamentals of computer science programming through the drop-and-drag method of coding.



## Homework Clubs

For the second year in a row, The Ed. Foundation is partnering with the school district to fund homework clubs in all five elementary schools for the most academically challenged students. Teachers identify eligible students and stay after school to provide homework help and academic reinforcement two days per week. Classroom teachers report great improvements in schoolwork as a result of the clubs.

## Teachers Update

**Kindergarten** The children thoroughly enjoyed making nature prints with Mr. Moore. Students were also very excited about placing their rocks in The River of Kindness. The children also had fun disguising their turkeys. The children thoroughly enjoyed making nature prints with Mr. Moore. Students were also very excited about placing their rocks in The River of Kindness. The children also had fun disguising their turkeys.



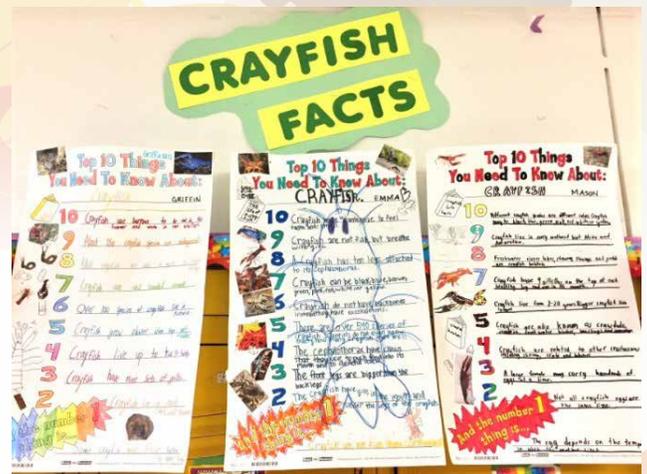
**First graders** learned about being good citizens. They learned the meaning of the Pledge of Allegiance. They started to generate ideas to write their personal narratives and are exploring subtraction.

In **second grade**, students created their Charters about how we want to feel when we come to school, what actions we can take to feel that way, and what strategies we need when things don't go well. They have also been charting feelings on the Mood Meter and understanding that all feelings are okay and how to manage them. In Social Studies, they started their unit on Active Citizenship and discussed how citizens are responsible to the community and how we need rules in order to keep safe. They are also working on their Science unit called Interactions. Throughout the unit, the children observe the chemical and physical interactions of objects. An interaction occurs when one object changes or influences another object.



**Third graders** learned about world geography and culminated their unit by creating paper mache globes in the classroom. In math, students learned about the importance of estimation. Students are learning to round numbers to the nearest 10 and 100. They learned how to use the scientific method to conduct many fun experiments. Their next adventure will take them into the world of forces and interactions through the use of simple and compound machines.

In science, **fourth graders** have been enjoying their hands-on Crayfish study. The students have learned about the crayfish life cycle, their habitat, and behaviors. Each class has been reading the book *Wonder*. This story is being used as a springboard for the RULER program and expands on The River of Kindness rocks which the school created. Students have been studying where New York is in relation to the rest of the world during Social Studies. This includes learning hemispheres of the world, continents, and regions of New York. We have wrapped up our first unit in Math on place value and are moving on to multiplication...ten times the fun!



**Fifth graders** have gone to the Nassau County Museum of Art. They also visited the Hall of Science to deepen their understanding of engineering. They worked on multiplication and division and learning strategies to help them understand both. In Social Studies we are studying various civilizations, including Maya, Aztec and Inca tribes. They will be comparing these tribes to the United States focusing on the characteristics of each civilization. Dancing Classrooms has become an exciting event and students have learned the Fox Trot, Merengue, Rumba, and Tango.

### Library Update:

Once again, Sousa library is blessed with the energy and creativity of the HSA "Friends of the Library" committee. We are all enjoying "the s'more you read, the s'more you know!" bulletin board they created for us!

Our kindergarten students have learned about libraries and librarians, book care, and borrowing. We are now enjoying a unit on Mother Goose nursery rhymes.

First grade can now select books from all over our great library as they have learned how to use a shelf marker to keep the books in their proper locations. We have begun an author study of Martin Waddell, the creator of "Owl Babies".

Second grade extended their library location skills to our Fiction chapter book section with great success. We started a Robert Munsch author study with "Paperbag Princess" and "Stephanie's Ponytail." Fun with a message.

Third grade location skills advanced to the numbered part of our collection. Students located titles within certain hundred groupings and discovered what topics those numbers represented. We have moved on to an author/illustrator (author-strator in my world!) study of Chris VanAllsburg.

Fourth and Fifth grades both reviewed past skills and re-familiarized themselves with our Destiny catalog, procedures, and databases. Fourth grade is advancing their skills to go from the online catalog to the shelves to locate exact titles. They are becoming "library superstars." Fifth grade is reviewing literary genres by identifying passages from our own library titles.



## Art Update from Mr. Moore

For the past week the art room has been taken over by a river, a torrent really, of painted rocks. Thanks to all of the parent volunteers! They look beautiful and meaningful out in front of our school.

**Kindergartners**, with support of parent volunteers, have been exploring how texture is created while using found objects stamped into clay. Soon they will be glazing these objects. They have drawn their families, water-colored these drawings, and worked on their cutting and ripping skills.

**First and second graders** have been focused on building with three-dimensional collage and are about ready to start working with clay.

**Third grade** is in the middle of painting. We have focused on color mixing, mark making, and improvisation. We will shortly start a final painting based on a memory of a favorite place.

**Fourth grade** has been starting the long process of making wind chimes.

**Fifth grade** has started their puppets, and should start the fifth grade project within the next month.



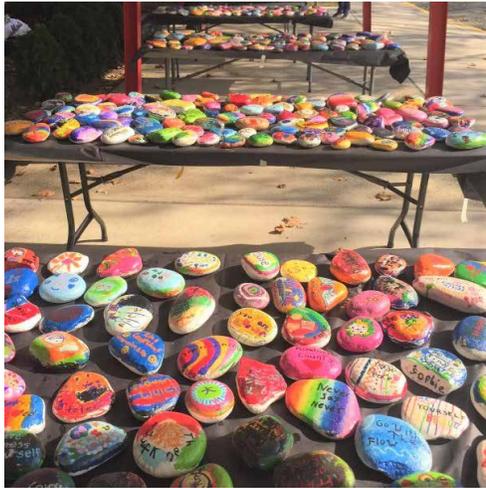
## Garden Update

October was a busy month in the Sousa Garden! First Grade created bird feeders out of pinecones and hung them on the garden fence for the birds to enjoy. Second Grade planted fall-blooming pansies in the Rose and Butterfly Gardens. Third Grade planted bulbs, harvested potatoes and cut down corn stalks for decoration around the Vegetable Garden. Fourth Grade placed the left-over rocks from the River of Kindness project around the perimeter of the Vegetable and Rose Gardens, added leaves to the new leaf composting bin and began to clear out some of the vegetable beds. Fifth Grade dug for the fish heads they buried in the spring, only to find they had decomposed. Then they helped with the final clean-up of the garden before the winter months. Many thanks to all the garden committee volunteers who helped lead the classes this fall and to those who helped clean up the garden by the new River of Kindness!



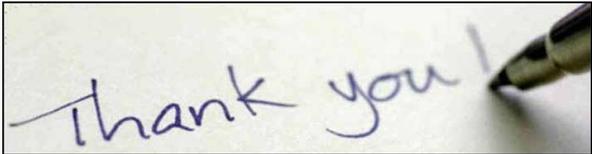
# The River of Kindness Gets Unveiled

Beginning on Unity Day, each child & staff member in the school was able to paint a rock with an inspirational image, word or quote of their own. These rocks are now in a path, in front of our school as a symbolic reminder of the simple message of being kind to everyone - We Truly are **SOUSA STRONG!**



## A Message from the Outreach Committee

On behalf of Parents' Council and the Outreach Committee, we would like to thank the entire Sousa School Community for your generous donations to the Coat Drive. Because of your generosity, many Port Washington families were provided with much needed coats and winter clothing. THANK YOU!



### UPCOMING EVENTS

- 11/16 - BOE Policy & Personnel Mtg, 1:30pm, Daly Annex
- 11/16 - Evening Conference
- 11/17 - BOE Curriculum Mtg, 8:30am, Daly Annex
- 11/17 - RECESS, Conference
- 11/22 to 11/24 - RECESS, Thanksgiving
- 11/28 - BOE Budget & Facilities Mtg, 8:30am, Daly Annex

### December

- 12/1 - Sousa Spirit Day
- 12/6 - Conversations with Dr. Meoli, 8:15 am, MPR
- 12/6 - HSA Mtg, 9am, MPR
- 12/13 - Winter Concert, 9:30 am, Auditorium
- 12/19 - Sousa's Got Talent Auditions, 3pm, Auditorium
- 12/25 to 1/1 - RECESS