

Home and School Association Newsletter – March/April 2017

A Note from Dr. Meoli

In last month's Sousa Notes, I wrote about our ongoing progress with the development of our social and emotional learning (SEL) offerings. I am proud to follow up by telling you that Mrs. Biblowitz, Dr. Fitoussi, and I were chosen to share Sousa's work at one of the largest educational conferences in the world last month.

The Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) holds an annual convention every spring where over 7,000 educators from all over the globe attend to share new programs and highlight best practices. We were asked to present one of the 300 workshops offered where we were able to highlight and discuss all of the ways that we have made Sousa a welcoming place for children and adults.

Mrs. Biblowitz shared some of her best loved student centered programs (such as Caring Kids, Ambassadors, and Safety Rules), Dr. Fitoussi shared some work we have done with consultant Elisa Waters on making all of us more sensitive to the increasingly diverse populations we serve, I did a little bragging about our Sousa Strong initiative, and all of us pitched in to talk about our first year of the RULER program and how much we felt it had helped us improve the school climate for both staff and students.

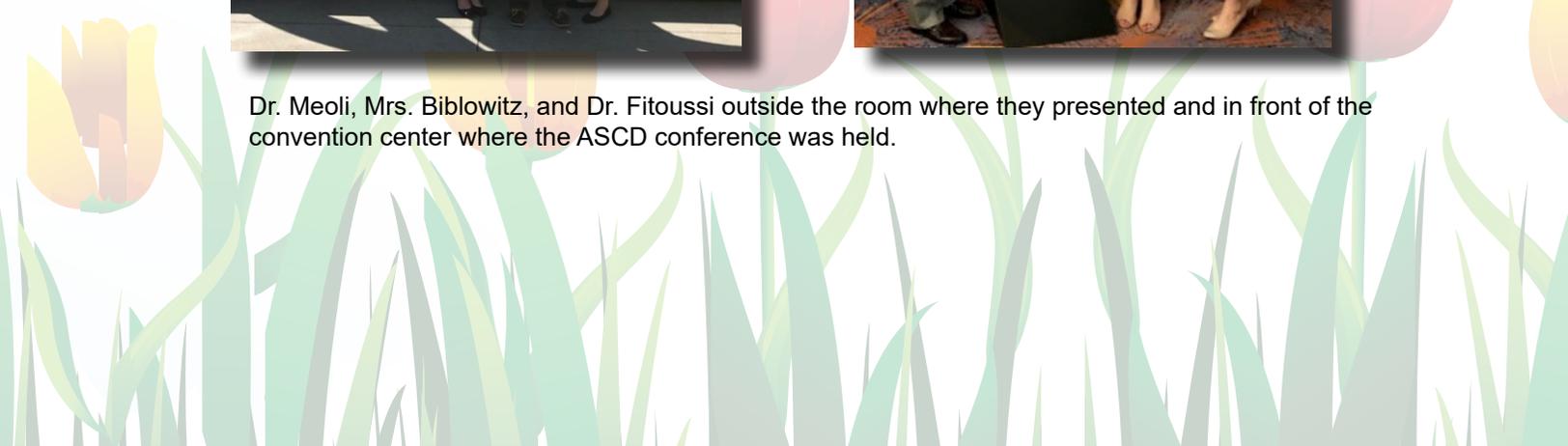
We got a great reception from the audience and have received a number of follow up communications thanking us for sharing our work and asking for materials and examples of our charters and protocols. It was a thrill to represent Sousa and the Port Washington Schools and to discuss similarities and differences in approaches to school climate with a full room of educators from scores of different states and countries! Thanks and congratulations to Mrs. Biblowitz and Dr. Fitoussi for their good work, and to our Sousa HSA and the Ed. Foundation for their ongoing support for our programs, especially RULER.

Thank you!

Dave Meoli



Dr. Meoli, Mrs. Biblowitz, and Dr. Fitoussi outside the room where they presented and in front of the convention center where the ASCD conference was held.



3-D printing in the Library

Ms. Moser is rolling out innovative technology for the fifth graders as they collaborate on the first library project utilizing the 3-D printer. Working in groups, the students chose an object to symbolize an award book for a cool online guessing game. Then, using computer software, they designed the 3-D object that was printed in plastic. Afterwards they created Google slides on Chrome books with the clues. When all of the games are completed, they will be posted on the library website.



Phys Ed Circus Arts

Circus Arts is one of the students' favorite units here at Sousa. Throughout the unit, students learn a variety of skills focusing on hand-eye coordination using different pieces of equipment. The equipment includes juggling items (scarves, balls, rings, and clubs), devil sticks, plate spinning, and the Diablo Yo-Yo. Students get to practice and develop their skills and can even perform a variety of tricks by the end of the unit! For more info on the Circus Arts program, check out the new video on the PE website:

<http://sousape.weebly.com/highlight-videos.html>



John Philip Sousa Elementary School Rankings

Niche.com ranks nearly 50,000 public elementary schools based on statistics and millions of opinions from students and parents. This year, Sousa is again in the top 100, and ranks #71 out of 2,367 public elementary schools in New York – Go Sousa!!!

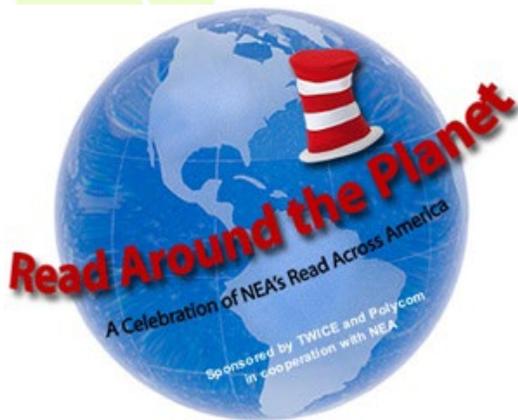


Connecting Through Cyberspace with Read Around the Planet

Through an annual free event called "Read Around the Planet" and through the coordination of all five of the elementary school librarians, Ms. Moser conducted two video conferences during library time this year.

"Read Around the Planet", a program which allows classes to share skits, raps, original poetry/writing through video conferences, matches classes of the same grade based on similar time zones and school times. A Sousa fourth grade class was paired up with another fourth grade class in South Kilbourne Elementary School in Columbia, SC. During their conference call the two classes shared what they are learning in history and science.

The second event connected students from different schools right here in Port Washington. All the elementary school librarians decided to read Jan Brett's "The Mitten" to first graders and then use one of their subscription databases, PebbleGo, to have the students conduct research on one of the animals from the story. The students created clues about their animal to create a guessing game. All five schools paired one first grade class with another for a Skype sharing of clues. The classes that did not participate due to scheduling conflicts shared their clues with each other. With the help from Manorhaven's librarian Mrs. Noone, Mrs. Lenney's first grade class at Manorhaven conducted a Skype session with Mrs. Molloy's class. It was a great event! The librarians hope to extend this to more classes and events soon.



STEM to STEAM at Sousa: Integrating Science and Art

This year Sousa students in kindergarten and second grade were given the opportunity to make connections between hands-on science and the creativity to use that knowledge that is afforded by the study of art during and after the field trips. This exciting project forges a new partnership with the Science Museum of Long Island as students take field trips there to gain a better understanding of topics they are already studying in class. Kindergartners learned about "Good Vibrations" while second graders investigated the subjects "Little Green Thumbs" and "Magnets". These studies were reinforced through visits from the artist-in-residence, Lawrence Chrapliwy, as well as our other artists. A special note of thanks to the Ed. Foundation for awarding a grant to make this program possible.



Sousa's Got Talent!

My Talent Show Experience - By Jae Anne Longaro, 5th Grade

The Sousa's Got Talent show featured the many talents of our children. This year, there were over 40 acts including singing, comedy, music, dancing, gymnastics, and martial arts. Special thanks to Committee Chairs Erica Fazzari, Sarah Cirker and Pam Sorin for hosting the fourth annual show and congratulations to all the children who made this such a special night!



All District Band and String Festival

Sousa's very own gymnasium was recently transformed into the Carnegie Hall as we gathered with the other elementary schools for the All District Band & Orchestra Festival. Participating students were bused to Daly Elementary School for two days where they practiced with each other under the direction of guest conductors. The band ended the night with a crowd pleasing rendition of "New York, New York." How truly impressive these young students were.

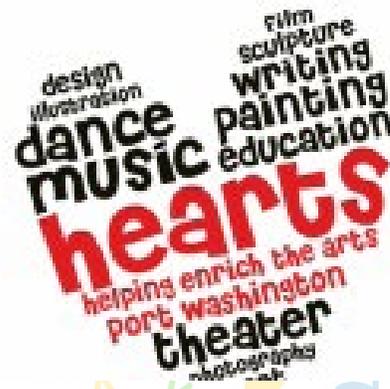


District Choral Festival at Tilles Center

The Port Washington Creative Arts Department recently presented the District Choral Festival hosted by the Tilles Center, LIU Post Campus. This event was co-sponsored by HEARTS and the Port Washington School District.

The Port Washington School District choir is composed of students from grades five through twelve and they performed a variety of ensemble selections, ending with the World Premiere of "Up Above the World" by Dr. Sara Carina Graef.

This composition was made possible by a grant from The Ed Foundation with the Peter and Jeri Dejana Foundation as exclusive sponsors.



100th Day of School

Every year the 100th Day of school is a celebrated milestone at Sousa. This year the day arrived on February 17th, and students and teachers honored it in a variety of ways. For example, Kindergarteners engaged in a number of activities that included bringing in a collection of 100 items, and fourth graders imagined what life will be like when they are 100 years old!



Family Yoga

Sousa Families got their “Om” on at the annual Sousa Family Yoga! Our very own Yoga Jen got participants to release their inner yogi with fun activities for the whole family. We stretched our bodies and practiced our yoga breath by blowing a feather up in the air and keeping it there without dropping. We all worked together to form a big circle and move a hula hoop around the circle without letting go of anyone’s hands. Yoga Jen lead us through guided yoga poses like tree, warrior and downward dog. The day ended with each group creating and naming their very own yoga pose which we got to share with the group. What a terrific way to start a Saturday morning!



Book Exchange

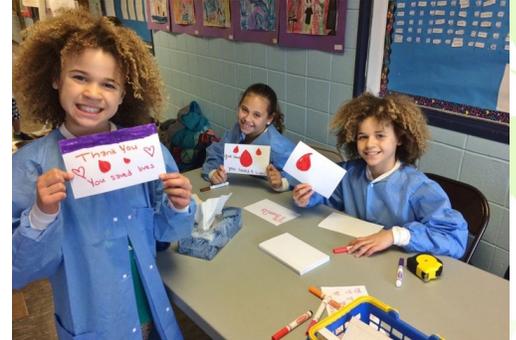
Thanks to the generous donations from Sousa families, this year’s annual Book Exchange was very successful! Students from all grades were able to pick out some new stories to enjoy reading at home. The leftover books were donated to Big Brothers and Big Sisters of Long Island. A special note of appreciation to the event’s Chairs - Amy Urban and Francine Agosta-Furtado - and all of the other parent volunteers who organized this event for Sousa.



Blood Drive

Fourth graders were “Little Doctors” for a day during the Sousa Blood Drive. Dressed in medical scrubs, the students assisted during the life-saving event by providing blood donors with refreshments and “thank you” notes for helping the New York Blood Center fill its banks. To help raise awareness of the drive and its importance, Sousa students created posters which were displayed in storefronts around town. “This was such a great opportunity for me to show my son that it is easy to donate blood and save lives,” said Sousa parent Michele Capobianco.

Sousa Guidance Counselor Jennifer Biblowitz and the Sousa HSA Community Outreach Committee would like to thank everyone who participated in this year’s event. The amount of blood donated at the Sousa Blood Drive will help save approximately 93 lives!



Championing for More State Aid

In an effort to channel more funding to the Port Washington School District, the Parents’ Council organized meetings with our state legislators. In separate meetings with Senator Elaine Phillips and Assemblyman Anthony D’Urso, members of Parents’ Council explained how Port Washington is facing dual challenges from a tax cap law that fails to factor in school districts with growing enrollment such as ours and the State’s foundation aid formula that doesn’t adequately account for the economic diversity in Port Washington. Following the meetings, a letter writing campaign was initiated by all of the district’s public schools. If you are interested in helping continue to push this issue and advocate for our community, please contact Sousa’s Parents’ Council Representative Pam Ollendorff at pamollendorff@yahoo.com



Do you have any photos from Sousa class trips or activities? Show off your child’s artwork, accomplishments, prizes won, etc. in The Sousa Notes. Please send any photos, articles to your class liaisons or directly to:

Rod at rodn29@gmail.com

Pam at pamollendorff@yahoo.com

or Mat at lanfant@msn.com

Nutrition Week

"Put Your Best Foot and Fork Forward" was a big hit! The students hit the ground running (and walking) by counting their steps on their new pedometers which were handed out at the start of the week. This is a great way to recognize how much the students move in a day and encourages them to get moving more!

The students also experienced movement with Trish Gargani, a Sousa parent alum, when she taught a Zumba dance routine and explained the importance of moving our bodies. The Physical Education teachers are on board as well and have added that dance routine to their weekly gym warm up. The children really enjoyed Zumba and look forward to dancing during PE classes.

In the cafeteria Nutrition Week's new menu items included the Hummus Plate, which is served with flat bread, a hard-boiled egg, carrot and celery sticks, was a best seller at Sousa! On Sample Day, the students were also big fans of the sweet corn and tomato salsa along with our longtime sample favorite: Melon Trio. The Nutrition Committee is also happy to report that they also saw a nice variety of vegetables added to our selection such as roasted zucchini sticks, sautéed spinach and roasted cauliflower. They hope your children tried these new items as the new vegetables will be rotated into the upcoming menus.

Students were also reminded to stay hydrated by drinking plenty of water. Nutrition Week may be over - but remember to continue to "Put Your Best Foot and Fork Forward!" Good food, hydration and activity are all necessary for health living! Thank you to the Sousa Nutrition Committee Chairs Mary Apat and Kathy Shanahan and all the volunteers for another successful event.



Sousa Helpers Update

Under the guidance of Mrs. Biblowitz, Sousa Helpers have been keeping busy at Sousa. Several Helpers went into the lower grade classrooms twice a week to read to students who don't have someone at home to read with.

The Sousa Helpers also played a key role in collecting and sorting all of the food and other necessity items donated for the multi-pantry drive. The Community Outreach Committee distributed the goods to all three local pantries (St. Peters, Our Lady of Fatima and the Lutheran Church of Our Savior) who were touched that our students wanted to reach out and help the community. Thank you for your generous donations towards our community.



Fifth Grade Art Project

This year's fifth grade art project will be a sculpture built from interlocking painted laser-cut aluminum shapes. Students are working either alone, or with others to design each shape, its theme, and whether or not internal shapes will be cut-out. The sculpture's future home will be outside, on the lawn, in-between the parking lot and the cafeteria. Our fifth grade students are excited to see this colorful addition become part of the Sousa campus!



Sousa Garden Update

Spring is here which means the gardening season is upon us! Over the next two months every grade will be visiting the garden to plant flowers, vegetables and herbs. The children absolutely love to be outside, getting their hands dirty and planting something that will continue to grow throughout the summer. The Garden Committee is always looking for volunteers - no gardening experience needed! On Wednesday, April 19th at 1pm, the committee members will meet to clean up and prepare the gardens for the upcoming weeks of planting. If you are interested in helping this spring or maintaining the garden over the summer, please contact Kate Walz at kmwalz@hotmail.com



Coding with Cyber Stars



For the first time Sousa, with the help of an Ed. Foundation grant, offered an after-school workshop in Computer Science for first and second graders. In the program, called Cyber Stars, students spend twelve weeks exploring introductory computer coding with teacher Marisa Johnson and parents Stephanie and Matt Yardeni and Cathy Riva. Students followed an 18-level guided curriculum inclusive of unplugged activities, videos, team-oriented tasks, problem-solving and online safety. First they learned to code with a partner using hand drawn symbols and commands. Then they further enriched their lessons by executing what they learned onscreen. Students mastered command-execute functions and coding fundamentals such as troubleshooting and looping algorithms. At the final level, they were able to block-code a custom animated sequence entirely on their own to truly become Cyber Stars!



Spring Clothing Drive

The Sousa HSA Community Outreach Committee and the Parents' Council would like to thank everyone who participated in the annual Port Washington Spring Clothing Drive. We were able to provide our neediest families with summer clothing, school concert outfits, prom dresses, and sports equipment. Thank you for your generosity!



Fourth Grade Class' Native American Artifact Museum

To culminate their unit on studying Native Americans, Mrs. Wright's class stepped back in time to replicate cultural items of importance to the Native Americans. Ranging from practical items such as bows and arrows and longhouses to items that reflect Native American beliefs such as dream catchers, peace pipes and water drums, the students not only created these replicas but also researched and wrote essays on the replicas to share with the class and their parents. It was a great project that combined creativity, problem solving, research and writing!



Upcoming Events

APRIL

- 10th - 17th - NO SCHOOL, Spring Recess
- 26th - HSA Meeting, 8:15am, MPR
- 29th - Sousa Social Night, 7:30pm, Manhasset Bay Yacht Club
- 30th - Dancing Classrooms Rainbow Competition, Schreiber Gym, 3pm

MAY

- 3rd - Sousa ACES, Sousa Blacktop
- 5th - Sousa Spirit Day
- 9th - Sousa Kindergarten Orientation, 9am, Cafeteria
- 11th-12th - Mother's/ Father's Day Fair, all day, MPR
- 12th - HSA Meeting, 9:30am, Auditorium
- 15th - Sousa Spring Concert, 7:30pm, Auditorium
- 16th - Budget Vote, 6am-10pm, Weber APR
- 17th - Staff Appreciation Lunch
- 18th - Vocabulary Parade, 9:15am
- 19th - Fifth Grade Mixer, 7pm, Weber Cafeteria
- 24th - Sousa Conversations with Dr. Meoli, 8:15am, Sousa MPR
- 25th - Sousa Family Science Night, 6:45pm-9pm, Sousa School
- 26th - NO SCHOOL - Superintendent's Conference Day
- 29th - NO SCHOOL - Memorial Day

Teachers update

Kindergarten

The Kindergarten classes had the opportunity to visit the Science Museum of Long Island for a “Good Vibrations” sound unit earlier this year. The children then worked with a teaching artist as a follow up. This was made possible because of a STEM to STEAM Ed. Foundation grant that Dr. Meoli and Mr. Scully wrote for us (See special article in this edition).



First Grade

March was Women’s History month and first graders learned about important women that left a positive mark on our world. They were busy interviewing important women in their lives and presented their interviews to the class with a puppet show.

Second Grade

Second graders celebrated their published realistic fiction writing with a gallery walk among the classes. Their non-fiction unit on Penguins is now in full swing and students have started exploring new vocabulary and facts about penguins. In math they have started multiplication and division.



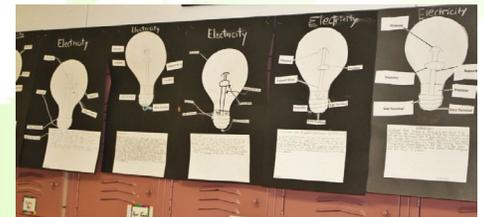
Third Grade

The Work of Rocks Project came to an end for the third graders. They have worked very hard researching a famous rock structure from around the world and enjoyed sharing them with their classmates.



Fourth Grade

All 4th graders participated in the Peer Leadership program, where students from Weber came to the class to talk about the harmful effects of smoking. Fourth graders are also very busy in their electricity unit and have been building many different circuits.



Fifth Grade

Fifth grade is currently learning about European Explorers & Slavery in the Western Hemisphere. They have been given free seating during lunch and are looking forward to sitting with a friend. Decimals have been introduced and they are learning how to work with decimals using all operations. Dancing Classrooms Rainbow Competition is on April 30th, at 3:00pm at Schreiber. We look forward to seeing the Sousa team perform and hoping that many Sousa students will come out in support.



Library Update:

5th - Finishing up Google slides and 3-D printing for cool award book guessing game. This will eventually be posted on the library website.

4th - Connecting the great immigration picture books they shared with research into historic immigration waves into the US.

3rd - Created fun Tall Tales which are on display in the library. Beginning a multicultural Cinderella unit.

2nd - Learning about Literary Genres by sharing picture books and playing “Name that Genre”

1st - Just finished their first research project on the animals in Jane Brett’s book, “The Mitten” using our subscription database - PebbleGo.

K - Learned about book awards such as the Caldecott and Theodore Seuss Geisel awards. We are enjoying sharing the 2017 winners!



THE SOUSA HSA INVITES YOU TO
SOUSA SOCIAL NIGHT 2017
CELEBRATING OVER 30 YEARS OF EDUCATION AT SOUSA

JOIN FRIENDS AND FACULTY FOR SOUSA'S
LARGEST FUNDRAISING EVENT OF THE YEAR.
WATERFRONT VENUE AND OPEN BAR (BEER & WINE), DINNER, DANCING,
FANTASTIC SILENT AUCTION AND RAFFLE PRIZES

SATURDAY, APRIL 29TH AT 7:30 PM
MANHASSET BAY YACHT CLUB

NOW IT'S OUR TURN TO WEAR SOMETHING RED!

Sousa Social Night – Help Support Our School!

Saturday, April 29th is Sousa Social, our school's biggest fundraiser and we need all parents' support. Please make every effort to attend this event. Remember, if funding isn't there, wonderful programs/activities for our children will not be either. AND it's a great excuse for a night out!

Great Views, Good Food, Open Bar!

Did you know that last year we raised over \$20,000 at Sousa Social Night? The money raised was used to fund school-wide cultural arts and literacy programs, our enormously popular Science Night and helped to supplement our new school-wide initiative promoting emotional intelligence, called RULER.

Amazing Auctions!

This year we have an amazing number of great auction prizes - including Hamilton tickets, camp discounts, tickets to sporting events and other attractions, and Park Hopper passes to Walt Disney World! And don't forget our ever-popular Faculty Auctions!

RSVP NOW!

You can RSVP and pay for tickets & raffles now by logging into the store at <https://www.myschoolanywhere.com/cart-enter.a5w> or send in your invite to school by Monday, 4/25. Tickets are \$75 pre-paid, \$85 at the door.

Can't Make It?

If you cannot attend, please consider making a donation or participating in the Faculty Auction. <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1PlwD-Nu-fau9sZ79gAeyz0w5366mfQgUGHw0-Z2DnQw/edit?usp=sharing>
Several of these priceless experiences were won last year by families that did not attend the Social Night.

Help Sousa!

If you would like to learn more about making a tax-deductible donation to the Sousa HSA, please contact Ba-Nhi at banh@b@gmail.com. Thank you!



The long awaited Sousa Family Science / STEAM Night **STRIKES BACK !**



SAVE THE DATE!

Thursday, May 25th, 6:45-9:00pm

All Sousa Jedi Knights (grades K-5) accompanied by their parents will observe and participate in a series of hands-on lab stations prepared with unique science experiments. This will be an opportunity to explore science together with family... and Yoda!

Want to Help?

Please contact Laura at lfriedla@nyit.edu or Mat at lanfant@msn.com