

The Sousa Notes



Sousa Notes – Fall Edition – Oct /Nov 2018

Notes from Dr. Meoli

I had the good fortune to see a discussion between two former presidents, Bill Clinton and George W. Bush, at an event in Manhattan recently and it made me feel good about our democracy. Two former leaders from two different parties sharing both a stage and their thoughts on the state of our country and the world was just what I needed to restore my faith in positive political repartee and the art of “fighting the good fight”. Moderated by Doris Kearns Goodwin, both men discussed politics, power, the economy, and brokering deals with humor, passion, and—despite their different philosophies—obvious respect for each other. They reminded me that disagreements are learning opportunities and that arguments, in the rhetorical sense, can and should be healthy and enlightening. It was a pleasure to hear two men with very different backgrounds, leadership styles, and outlooks discuss their decisions, disappointments, and points of achievement on behalf of “we, the people”—a people who are, to be sure, becoming more divergent and diverse.



As we celebrate two distinctly American holidays this month, Veterans Day and Thanksgiving, I hope we can all remind ourselves of the value of knowledge, the power of persuasion, and the critical nature of civil discourse as we strive to successfully run our country, our schools, and our affairs. Whether we are talking about Palestine or PEP, immigration or instruction, tariffs or testing, may we do so with an eye towards collaboration and the common good. We are often at our best when we are challenged, and most successful when we meet such challenge together. Despite our differences, and largely because of them, we are truly blessed; as always, I consider myself a very lucky educator to work with such caring and wonderful adults and children in Port Washington and, particularly, at Sousa.

Here's hoping that you, along with all of your family and friends, enjoy all that November has to offer.

Dave Meoli

UPCOMING EVENTS

November

16th - Early Dismissal, 11:25am

22nd-23rd - Thanksgiving Recess

December

5th - Conversations with Dr. Meoli, 9:00am

5th - HSA Meeting, 9:30am

5th - Dancing Classrooms, 6:30pm

7th - Spirit Day

17th - Sousa's Got Talent Auditions

19th - Winter Concert, 9:30am

24th- Jan.1st - Winter Recess

Sousa Students Donate Treats for Troops

In keeping with a great tradition, Sousa students collected candy from their Halloween treats to send to our troops abroad just in time for Veteran's Day. Halloween cards, which students prepared in class with their teachers, were also sent with heartfelt messages of thanks and appreciation. Treats for Troops is a Community Outreach program that lets our troops know that although they may be far from their own homes, they are not forgotten.



Sousa Unites

On Unity Day, Sousa students got off their buses and were greeted with hundreds of encouraging sayings that were written in colorful chalk all over the sidewalk by fifth grade Sousa Helpers. It was the start of Unity Day, a day celebrated throughout the entire world, which promote kindness and anti-bullying. All students and staff wore orange to symbolize their solidarity. Of course, no Sousa Unity Day would be complete without the famous school group photo!



Discovering Mindfulness at the HSA Meeting

The HSA recently held Conversations with Dr. Meoli followed by a general HSA meeting. The informal Conversations setting was an excellent way for parents to exchange feedback with Dr. Meoli on topics important to them, including homework and nutrition at school. At the HSA meeting, parents had an opportunity to be updated on past and upcoming events at the school. Dr. Hildur Palsdottir, a Sousa parent and founder of Sol Center, a local meditation studio, led the group in a guided meditation and spoke about the benefits of mindfulness to both children and parents. Parents not only left with an understanding of the scientific underpinnings of the benefits of mindfulness, but also with concrete strategies to apply at home to reduce stress and conflict in their everyday lives.





Halloween Parade 2018

Where can you find a chicken, gingerbread man, dinosaurs, Chewbacca, Hermione, football players and unicorns? At the Sousa Halloween parade of course! It was a beautiful sunny day for a parade and as usual Sousa students did not disappoint. Not only were the students having fun, but also the teachers were! Some teachers dressed up as Scrabble letters spelling out different words as they rounded out the caboose of the Halloween parade. It is a Sousa tradition that never fails to put smiles on everyone's faces.



Garden Leaf Printing

As the weather gets cooler, it's time to put the Sousa Garden to bed for the winter. Thankfully, all the children were on hand to help! The first graders created bird feeders out of pine cones, vegetable shortening and birdseed. These were hung around the garden fence for our feathered friends to enjoy. The second and third graders harvested the remaining vegetables (carrots, beets, corn and kale) and dug up the potatoes. The fourth and fifth graders ate kiwis, weeded the garden and composted fallen leaves. In the fourth grade, students explored the garden and collected leaves and dried okra and sticks to use for making ink prints and rubbings. It was fun to watch them use their school garden to create art!



Teacher updates

The **Kindergarten** children have kicked off writing workshop with immersion lessons. Immersion lessons focus on what children need to know to be writers in the classroom. Our growing writers will be introduced to what writing workshop looks and sounds like, which materials growing writers use for writing workshop, what whole body listening looks like, why writers write, sketching versus illustrations, and how to draw realistic people... just to name a few.



First graders are learning about the sun, moon and stars. Currently, they are learning about the patterns the sun makes and shadows. They also started generating ideas for their personal narrative stories. Students went to the Nassau County Museum of Art for some observational drawings. Mr. and Mrs. Kosch are working with them on creative dance, and they also studied mindfulness.

Second grade has been learning about active citizenship, along with rights and responsibilities. Students have started generating ideas for their Realistic Fiction writing unit. They also visited the Sousa garden and planted pansies.



Third graders have started their voyage around the world. They are gaining a basic understanding of world geography by learning the locations of the seven continents and five oceans. They even made their very own papier mâché globes! They are conducting scientific experiments, with the scientific method as their guide, to see how scientists gain knowledge. They look forward to learning about forces and interactions. In math they are learning about how numbers are constructed. Students are using place value to gain number sense. They are using this number sense to understand number patterns. They will bridge this number sense to help learn addition with regrouping in the coming units.



Fourth graders have been busy learning all about crayfish. Students learned about their natural habitat, what they eat, what senses are most important to them, as well as their responses to different stimuli. In math, students finished their unit on place value. They were busy comparing and ordering numbers, writing numbers in three different ways, and ordering them. They are currently working on rounding numbers and were very excited to participate in Submerge Storytelling.



The **Fifth Grade** is well into their Dancing Classroom experience, which will all lead up to their performance on December 5th. In Social Studies the students are examining the characteristics of civilizations and how environment and the Agricultural Revolution effected the creation of civilizations.

They are exploring the differences and similarities between science and engineering and did research projects on famous scientists and engineers. Book Clubs and meaningful book talks are just getting started in our classrooms.



In **Physical Education**, during the month of September, students participated in a variety of cooperative games as well as team building activities. Currently, they are in the middle of the soccer unit where they continue to work on building their dribbling, passing, and shooting skills. The third-fifth grade students have also started using their new and exciting Bluetooth heart rate monitors in class!

Greetings from Library Land!

Kindergarten: Our students have learned about libraries and book care and are borrowing books each week. We are currently having a lot of fun sharing Mother Goose nursery rhymes.

First grade: Since the first day, our students learned how to use a shelf marker when browsing for books and now can pick from the whole library! Next lesson was how to pick out "just right" books for ourselves based on interest and the five-finger rule strategy. We are currently enjoying a Martin Waddell author study.

Second grade: Students reviewed library manners and book care and moved onto library location using alphabetical order in the Fiction section. They were very successful. We are now enjoying a Robert Munsch author study.

Third grade: After a review of library practices, privileges, and procedures, students learned a little history of libraries in our country. We kicked up library location to include the numbered section and learned what the different hundred sections include.

Fourth grade: Our students are mastering library location skills by using the online catalog to identify a needed resource, understand the meaning and location provided by the call number and find that item on the shelves.

Fifth grade: The year started with an orientation activity to review library resources both online and on the shelves. We have now begun an internet unit which will encompass internet searches, search strategies, and evaluating websites for accuracy and credibility.



Sousa Students Rally for UNICEF

Once again, Sousa students participated in the annual Trick or Treat for UNICEF campaign to benefit disadvantaged children around the world. A special note of thanks to Sousa parents Ingrid Dudek Levine and Hildur Palsdottir for delivering a rousing performance during the Halloween Safety assembly with Detective Tony Guzzello of the Port Washington Police Department. Students came back to school with coin-filled boxes that will provide children with basics like clean water, food and vaccinations. Here is how that money is used:

- 8¢ provides a packet of special powder that, when mixed with water, can save a child from deadly dehydration
- 25¢ provides 10 kids clean water to drink for a day
- 48¢ provides a child with a notebook and a pencil to use in the classroom
- \$1 provides protein biscuits for a starving child
- \$2 provides 10 bars of soap to keep kids clean and healthy
- \$10 provides vaccination for 280 children



Making Scarecrows

Ms. Anzalone's first grade students once again teamed up with their fourth-grade buddies in Ms. Clark's class to create a tribe of pumpkin scarecrows in front of the school. This year, the scarecrows included a baker, lacrosse player, baseball player and superhero to name a few of the creative and fun ideas the children came up with. Parents, teachers and kids alike had a great time with their creations. A special thank you to the custodial staff for getting all of the scarecrows standing tall on their spikes.



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. 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!

Observational Drawings

Just before the weather turned too cold, the first-grade classes visited the Nassau County Museum of Art. The museum guided the students through the museum's expansive grounds where they were both scientists and artists: observing, questioning and learning about the sculptures, foliage and evidence of the changing seasons. The children loved running through the fields, physically interacting with the art on the property, seeing and touching leaves, plants, pine cones and more on the wooded trails, and finally, settling in for story time on a blanket in the grass.



Kindness ROCKS!

Our River of Kindness is flowing again with positive and uplifting sentiments. Every Sousa student was given the opportunity to create a design on a rock that exemplifies kindness. Thanks to Sousa parent volunteers, the rocks were cleaned and primed before the students painted them. Before they were placed in the "River" we were lucky enough to have two special helpers, Tony and Billy from LaCorte Family Auto, come and spray them all with a weather resistant coating so that our rocks will last. Come walk by on your way to the front entrance and take a moment to read what our students think is really important.





Dads' Night Out

Sousa Dads' Night Out was another great success. Our super dads were able to raise over \$6,500.00 for the Sousa HSA which will be used to fund extra programs for our children such as Family Literacy Night and Family Science Night. We'd like to thank everyone who came out despite the pouring rain, especially Dan, Eric, Josh, Marc, Mat, Mike, and Steven for putting it together and making it possible!



Globe Making and Painting!

The fourth graders had a fun and messy week making globes. On Day 1, students applied paper mâché to beach balls to create the circular shape. Then, they painted the globes blue in preparation for later adding continents. Thank you to all the parents who volunteered to help out!



Submerge Storytelling

Funded by the Sousa HSA and with the help of a partial grant awarded by The Ed Foundation, the Sousa HSA Literacy Committee brought Submerge Storytelling to Sousa for the third year in a row. Submerge Storytelling brings us a unique, immersive learning experience where one of Sousa's rooms is transformed into the bedroom (called the "Realm") of the main character of their story. This year's fourth-graders just finished the week-long program where they made daily visits to the Realm. They spent the week trying to solve a mystery by looking for clues and coming up with evidence-based conclusions about the story's characters, plot and theme. It was an interactive literacy experience where the students had fun while using critical thinking and learning life skills. Thank you to all involved!



Food Day

Thanks to the generosity of Port Washington families, fresh fruit and vegetables were delivered to the Port Washington Senior Center, St. Peter's Church and Our Lady of Fatima Church. After these local pantries took everything they needed, we still gave 1,000 pounds of fresh produce to the INN in Hempstead! They were amazed at milk crates overflowing with apples, citrus fruits, broccoli, carrots, a variety of squashes, onions, green beans, brussels sprouts, potatoes and sweet potatoes. Thank you!



Moms' Night Out

The weather might have been gloomy but the mood inside was sunny and warm. Moms' Night Out, held at Toscanini in town, was a lovely night filled with good food and friends. New parents and not so new parents all enjoyed live music and a multi-course meal. The room was full of laughter and smiles. Thanks to all the volunteers who helped make it so successful and a special thanks to Diane Johnson and Jen Tesman who have been running the event for the last six years. This was their last (both have their youngest child in fifth), and we thank them for their years of volunteering here at Sousa!



Be Kind

Here is the latest "Be Kind" addition to our school halls. Special thanks to Stephanie Yardeni for designing it and Abby Meyer of Chief Graphix for creating it. We are Sousa Strong!



The Ed. Foundation Awards Grants to Sousa

Here is the list of the awarded Ed. Foundation Grants that will benefit Sousa students for the 2018-2019 school year:

Robotics Club Jeanne Zeh

Continuation of a Robotics Club for students in grades 4-8. Students learn about robotics, computer science, and coding and participate in various competitions.



District Band Spectacular Kevin Scully

Band students from all seven schools will perform at the Tilles Center for the Performing Arts under the guidance of a renowned guest conductor. Co-funded with HEARTS.

Expressive Elocution Elise May

A standards-based program to help 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 will participate in a ten-week residency with Dancing Classrooms to cultivate essential life skills through the practice of social dance. Co-funded with HEARTS and the HSAs.

Homework Clubs

David Meoli, Sheri Suzzan, Pia Ferrante, Barbara Giebel, Bonni Cohen
For the third 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 in grades 3–5 two days a week.



Submerge Storytelling

Rebecca Schwartz, Erin Leitman-Scott, David Meoli, Colleen Lucie, Dina Maiella-Marro, Cory Drewes, Pia Ferrante

Fourth graders have an interactive, hands-on experience that immerses them into a story as they transform their classroom to become the setting.

Cyberstars: Introduction to Computer Science

Marisa Johnson, Stephanie Yardeni, David Meoli, Lisa Cangialosi

An after-school workshop for select first-third graders introduces the fundamentals of computer science programming through the drop-and-drag method of coding.



Mindful Kids

Julie Anzalone, Marisa Johnson, Maria Buffolino, Jamie Greenberg

1st and 2nd-graders learn and practice mindfulness during this ten-week workshop aligned with the schoolwide RULER program.

Taekwondo at Sousa

Jen Biblowitz, Emily Baxter, Diana Conway, Marisa Johnson, Justin Ryan, Karen Silver

All 3rd grade-students learn about South Korean culture and the “Super Six” character traits: focus, cooperation, self-control, respect, responsibility, and perseverance through Taekwondo in connection with the schoolwide RULER program.



Family Literacy for ELLs (English Language Learners)

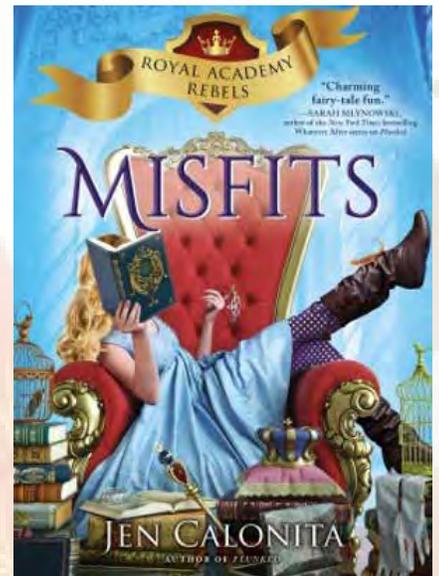
Jo Ann Miles, Debra Calluzzo

Parents of ELLs in grades K-1 are coached in literacy skills and reading concepts during three evening workshops. Literacy kits are provided for home use.



Jen Calonita Visits Sousa

It's no secret how author Jen Calonita knows the inside scoop on Hollywood. A former entertainment editor at a teen magazine, Jen started out her career chronicling backstage life at concerts with Justin Timberlake and interviewing Zac Efron on film sets. She recently visited Sousa to discuss the first book of her new series, Royal Academy Rebels - Misfits. In Enchantasia, becoming a legendary prince or princess doesn't happen overnight. Readers are invited to enter Royal Academy, the training ground for the fairy tale leaders of tomorrow! Born in Mineola, Ms. Calonita lives on Long Island with a chihuahua named Captain Jack Sparrow!



Class of 2017's Art Project Takes Shape

Some of you may have noticed that the installation of the fifth grade art project of Class 2017 is finally in process. It is located on the lawn between the Sousa parking lot and the cafeteria. The wonderful folks at Buildings and Grounds have poured a cement slab and embedded the central feature of this colorful sculpture. They have also installed four rectangular black tubes where more artwork will soon be attached. It's really exciting to see this long-awaited sculpture nearing completion.



A Thank You Note from the Community Outreach Committee

On behalf of Parents' Council, the Sousa HSA Community Outreach Committee would like to extend a heartfelt THANK YOU to the Sousa Community, the people of Port Washington, as well as our guidance department. Through all the donations received, we served over one hundred families on Thursday night alone. In the end, we were also able to donate coats towards the Parent Resource Center's Coat Drive, which will assist more Port residents, and Big Brothers Big Sisters of Long Island. None of this would have been possible without the support of each one of you, whether through donations or by volunteering your time to help during the Drive. Thank you again for making the Winter Coat Drive a success and for a great start to our giving season.



HAPPY
THANKSGIVING

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 or Mat at lanfant@msn.com