

Valley Stream #30

public schools

www.valleystream30.com

A MESSAGE FROM YOUR Superintendent of Schools

Dear Residents,

As winter begins, the District is in full swing of our budget planning season, which will culminate in the Budget Vote for the public on May 18, 2010. Beginning in January, each of our Board of Education Work Sessions will devote time to discuss the development of the 2010-2011 School Budget. Members of the public are invited to attend these sessions (visit our website, www.valleystream30.com for a list of meetings) to gain insight into the budget preparation process and to hear information that can inform public comment at Board of Education Business Meetings throughout the winter. The Board of Education will be working hard in the next few months to adopt a budget for voter approval that continues to support Valley Stream 30's excellent educational program and is fiscally conservative in these challenging economic times. As always, your insight and input are important assets to this work.

Faced with these difficult fiscal conditions, Valley Stream 30 is working hard to get the most out of current resources and to realign resources where possible to improve program delivery. For example, by utilizing more online resources, such as the BOCES Library Databases, we are not only able to expand our students' access to research materials, but do so in a cost-effective manner, as individual texts do not have to be purchased. Similarly, as an outgrowth of the draft Valley Stream 30 Strategic Plan, we are looking to tap local community resources and experts in the coming year to partner with the District at no or low cost to support our students in real-life science learning. Similarly, our recent staff development initiatives have promoted capacity building among our fine teachers so that they have an ever-expanding repertoire of skills and resources to support our students' learning, reducing the need to bring in outside sources.

As we tighten our belts and work even harder and more cooperatively together to educate our students in an environment mindful of costs, the continued support and cooperation of parents and guardians will play a key role in our students' success. Working with our PTA and Building Level Team groups, the District will continue to keep parents informed regarding our programs, including ways families can support their children's learning at home. An increasing number of curriculum resources are available to parents and we will work to make them increasingly available and accessible to you.

Recent news articles have articulated the idea that though these are hard times, they can also be good times, when people are re-discovering connections and the positive feeling that comes from pulling together to find success. As we embark on the budget planning process, we are ever mindful of financial restraints, but are also encouraged and energized by the terrific Valley Stream 30 community that is an ever-present partner in the success of our schools.

Sincerely,
Elaine Kanas
Superintendent of Schools

CELEBRATED STUDENT-MUSICIANS: 18 Students Selected to All-County

As a result of their outstanding talent, dedication, and countless hours of practice, 18 students from the District were recognized as All-County musicians this winter. These band, chorus, and orchestra students were selected as All-County musicians in recognition of their solo performances during the New York State School Music Association (NYSSMA) program and through teacher recognition. The students represented the District at the Division I – West and Division II All-County music festival held at the Tilles Center for Performing Arts at Long Island University's C.W. Post Campus in January. The District takes great pride in recognizing teachers T.J. Adams, Stephanie Cooke, Stephanie Distler, Brian Kalinowski, Emilia Kister, Lidia Kloc-Alberghini, and Celina Taylor and the following students:

CLEAR STREAM AVENUE

Michelle Mata – Band
Shauneil Williams – Band
Dennette Bennett – Chorus
Diana Sabina – Chorus
Arlyn Sorto – Chorus
Karen Maldonado – Orchestra
Yael Weiss – Orchestra

FOREST ROAD

Britney Dunn – Band
Dioncris Luyun – Band
Liza Poserio – Chorus
Gabrielle Singh – Chorus
Nicole Springer – Chorus
Naomi Caquias – Orchestra
Jonathan Lee – Orchestra

SHAW AVENUE

Meaghan Adams – Band
Edward Chung – Band
Derrick Choi – Orchestra
Jan Marvin Ligan – Orchestra



EXPLORING NEW SCIENCE PROGRAM OPTIONS

Last year, the District's Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment Council (CIAC) developed a variety of educational goals. One of the goals established was to provide students with a high-quality, up-to-date, rigorous science education. Therefore, the District's Professional Development Team afforded faculty members the opportunity to work together in curricular circles to develop curriculum and benchmarks for all science-based content areas.

Currently, a team of teachers is creating a curriculum plan that will meet the CIAC's goal and help administrators identify instructional resources that support the new program. The District's curriculum plan for science will have several key components specific to each grade level. Those components include 21st Century learning skills, general process skills, major understandings, and key ideas. These components will be aligned with the New York State Science Curriculum Standards.

It is the District's goal to have a finalized science curriculum plan in place by the end of the year and identify resources in support of the plan. A proposal on the curriculum plan will be presented and made available to the community in early March. Additionally, the science team will be presenting the proposed curriculum plan to the District's Building Level and District Level Teams.

WHAT'S NEW WITH *Strategic Planning*

The Strategic Planning Committee met with the Board of Education during their December and January Work Sessions to help develop a Board of Education-approved Strategic Plan for Valley Stream 30, which will span the next five years. The District believes that establishing such a plan will provide a framework to guide future budgets and resource allocation decisions over the coming years. Community, staff, and family input was actively sought and considered.

Throughout this development process ten goal areas were identified. The first, 21st Century Learning, forms an overarching umbrella under which all the other goal areas rest. Preparing our children with the skills needed for their learning, social, and economic success in the global society is of paramount importance. Other goal areas include Science, Social Studies, Physical Education and Nutrition, Technology and Computer Skills, as well as items related to Parent Communications, Student Behavior, Staffing Standards, and Student Enrichment. For a detailed list of the goal statements, timelines, and examples of these goals from a 21st Century perspective, please visit the District's website at www.valleystream30.com.

The District would once again like to extend its appreciation to the Strategic Planning Committee members: Jackie Capewell, Ed Cullen, Steve Epstein, Ellen Fitzgerald, Jamilah Grant-Guimaraes, Maureen Hotzak, Angela Hudson, Kymberley C. Jones, Sherri Holmes Knight, Kim Lopera, Helene Levine, Erin Malone, Ryan Meloni, Jessica Mitchell, Caroline Nonan, Jeffrey Olson, Sue Perrone, Gerard Poole, Caroline Reser, and Mark Tenzer.

Timetable Set for 2010-2011 BUDGET DEVELOPMENT

In November, the Board of Education approved a budget development schedule and established deadlines and actions. In December the District's administrative team met to discuss a preliminary budget for specific areas, which will be used as a foundation as they work to develop a budget over the next several months. The community is encouraged to become active participants in this year's budget development by attending upcoming Board of Education meetings. Budget discussions will continue to take place at the 3/15 Board Work Session and the 2/22 and 3/22 Board Business meetings. All will be held in the Shaw Avenue Library.

The Board expects to adopt a proposed budget during their regular meeting on March 22 at 8:00 p.m. in the Shaw Avenue School library. With the current financial climate in mind, the Board recognizes that this year's budget process will be most challenging and is committed to proposing a 2010-2011 budget that strongly factors in today's turbulent economic state.

PROTECTING YOUR INVESTMENT – *Through Maintenance & Capital Projects*

Throughout the school year, the District's maintenance staff conducts **regular maintenance** in order to protect the investment the community has made in the District's facilities. Since the summer, a wide variety of projects have been completed, ranging from stripping, sealing, and waxing floors, to painting and refinishing gym floors, to minor reconstruction.

With respect to **budgeted capital projects**, the roof was replaced at the Shaw Avenue School this past summer and currently the rescue windows are being retrofitted. The roof and rescue window retrofit were capital projects approved by the community in May 2008.

Cost-Saving INITIATIVES

In an effort to keep the burden on taxpayers to a minimum and reduce costs whenever possible, the District participates in a large number of cooperative agreements and consortiums with other districts. This approach is used not only in the general support area (purchase of fuel oil, insurance, contracted security, building repairs and maintenance) but also in the instructional (cross contracts for professional development and non-public school textbooks with BOCES) and transportation areas.

TECHNOLOGY in the Classroom

The District's Instructional Technology Initiative was established in 2007 when the Board of Education adopted a six-year technology plan. This plan outlines four key dimensions: Instructional Environment, Professional and Instructional Capacity, Community Connections, and Support Capacity. These dimensions are regarded as synergistic parts of a single system. The framework they create emphasizes a combination of critical elements that are necessary for a school district and/or school to effectively use technology as a means of accelerating student achievement and learning.

Throughout the past several years, the District has remained committed to this plan by implementing several technology-based initiatives. During the course of the 2007-2008 school year all classrooms received new workstations, computer labs were upgraded, the District's technological infrastructure was updated and enhanced, and the department was restructured to improve technical support to instructional staff. In 2008-2009 the Technology Curriculum Circle developed a technology skills scope and sequence that outlines exactly what students are expected to understand and execute at each grade level and the tools and skills teachers need in order to prepare them to meet those benchmarks.

During the current school year, the District is working toward providing instructional staff members with resources and training opportunities outlined by the 2008-2009 Technology Curriculum Circle. This includes equipping classrooms with interactive whiteboards, mounted projectors, netbooks, document cameras, and enhanced audio systems. Teacher requests for this equipment are under review and the technology department will develop a schedule for installation (fall or spring). In addition, the District is providing staff members with more than 30 hours of professional development, focusing on how to incorporate technology into the classroom to enhance instruction and effectively teach students technology skills, via the outlined scope and sequence.

"The Instructional Technology Initiative has been very successful in providing the instructional staff with the tools needed to enrich the learning environment and the District's instructional capacity to integrate technology," stated District Director of Technology Ryan Meloni.

News Around the Schools

Spirited Celebration at CSA

Clear Stream Avenue School celebrated School Spirit Week by coordinating several theme days, including sports day, professional day, wacky Wednesday, pajama day, and school colors day, focusing their attention on how one's character traits can increase the building's school spirit.

As a culmination to the celebration, the entire student-body enjoyed an assembly program they dubbed "What Clear Stream Means to Me." During the program, the students shared individual and group projects they had created on the topic. Projects ranged from songs and raps to poems and artistic creations.

In addition to their character projects, the school's student council visited with senior citizens at the Franklin General Hospital, where they sang holiday songs, played games, and read books together. A group of fifth and sixth-grade chorus students also performed several holiday hit songs at the Green Acres Mall.



Celebrating the Culture of the Holidays

Shaw Avenue School's third graders went on a whirlwind tour this holiday season when they researched and shared how their families celebrate various holidays. The students completed a survey with the help of their parents and learned about their own unique family customs and traditions.

After they compiled their research, the students drafted beautiful essays titled "Home for the Holidays". They decorated the essays with cover pages, illustrating pictures of their own homes. After completing their projects, the students shared their essays with classmates and learned that although they may celebrate differently, they have many traditions in common. The project was a great way to celebrate the season and further the students' understanding and appreciation of a variety of cultures.

Additionally, third graders coordinated a "Secret Pal" week. The students exchanged favorite books and handmade treats and trinkets, in the spirit of the season. They were especially eager to reveal their secret pal identity in letters to their classmates.

To bring some joy to other members of the community, the school's sixth-grade students coordinated a collection drive for VFW Post 1790. Students donated a wide variety of items, including toothbrushes, toothpaste, bars of soap, and T-shirts.



Giving All Year Long

The students at Forest Road School have been learning about the Character Trait of Empathy as part of their schoolwide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) program. As the oldest children in the school, the building's sixth-grade students have kicked off a schoolwide campaign centered on this very topic. The students are turning learning into living by undertaking a social action project with a long-lasting goal.

Realizing that many more families are in need of year-round assistance, students created Forest Road Lends a Hand, a program that will gather, organize and donate food items to local food pantries for distribution for the entire school year. Please keep on the alert for the school's advertisements as they work to collect specific food items each month! If you are interested in donating, please contact the school at 791-6134.



2009-2010 Board of Education
Kenneth Cummings, President
Elise Antonelli, Vice President
Maria A. Fletcher, Ph.D., Trustee
Carolyn Pean, Trustee
Cristobal Stewart, Trustee

Dr. Elaine Kanas, Superintendent of Schools

Dates to Remember:

February 15-19
Winter Recess - Schools Closed

February 22
VS District 30 Bd. of Ed. Mtg.
@ Shaw Avenue School Library
8:00 p.m.

March 13
PTA Legislative Breakfast

March 14
Daylight Saving Time Begins

March 15
VS District 30 Bd. of Ed. Work
Session Mtg. @ Shaw Avenue
School Library 8:00 p.m.

March 22
VS District 30 Bd. of Ed. Mtg.
@ Shaw Avenue School Library
8:00 p.m.

March 29-April 5
Spring Recess - Schools Closed

Kindergarten Registration for 2010-2011

The District's kindergarten registration process for the 2010-2011 school year will take place in all three District 30 schools during the week of April 19, 2010. Children eligible for kindergarten must be born on or before December 1, 2005.

Documentation such as proof of residency, child's birth certificate, photo ID of parents, immunizations, and physical examination are necessary for registration. Please contact your local school's main office for further details about the registration process.

Washington Avenue Kindergarten Center
150 Washington Avenue, Valley Stream, NY 11580
516-872-4333 or 516-992-1860

Forest Road School
16 Forest Road, Valley Stream, NY 11581
516-791-6134

Shaw Avenue School
99 Shaw Avenue, Valley Stream, NY 11580
516-872-4320

Are you
registered to
VOTE?

If not, please contact
Anne O'Brien at
516-285-9880 ext. 227
or aobrien@vs30.org

TRANSPORTATION REQUESTS DEADLINE

In accordance with Board of Education policy, transportation requests for the 2010-2011 school year, for students attending non-public schools, must be written and **received by the district no later than April 1, 2010**. In an effort to contain costs and keep pricing competitive, District 30 is part of a twelve-school district transportation purchasing consortium.