



THE STANHOPE CHARGER

Your District Newsletter

VOLUME 2, ISSUE 1

FALL 2019

UPCOMING EVENTS

- November 4-5—Parent Teacher Conferences; Early Dismissal Days
- November 6—Veterans Recognition Program
- November 6—Early Dismissal Day
- November 6—MP1 Ends (Gr 4-8)
- November 7-8—NJEA Convention—School Closed
- November 13—Board of Education meeting
- November 14—MP1 Report Cards (Gr 4-8)
- November 27—Early Dismissal Day
- November 28-29—Thanksgiving Break
- December 4—Trimester 1 Ends (Gr 1-3)
- December 11—Trimester 1 Report Cards (Gr 1-3)
- December 12—Winter Concert
- December 14—Craft/ Vendor Fair
- December 18—Board of Education meeting
- December 23, 2019-January 1, 2020 Winter Break—School Closed
- January 20—MLK Teacher Inservice—School Closed

WELCOME BACK!

Steven Hagemann, Superintendent 973-347-0008 x4102 shagemann@stanhopeschools.org

It's hard to believe that we are already almost two full months into the new school year, and what a beginning it has been! Our teaching staff hit the ground running, as if they never left, and our students arrived hungrier than ever to learn. As each year passes, I am still amazed to witness the academic, social, and emotional growth of our students.

In an effort to ensure all students are progressing, the Valley Road School has relaunched an intervention program to support struggling learners and prevent any one student from falling too far behind. This program is called Response to Intervention (RtI) and we've experienced some early success due in part to the collaborative efforts of our classroom teachers, interventionists (formerly known as Basic Skills teachers), and administration. Mrs. Forest continues to help these students as she has for several years prior, and I'm excited to introduce Mrs. Cindy Groseibl to the intervention team! Please join me in welcoming Mrs. Groseibl to VRS.

I'm also very honored and excited to introduce Dr. Steven E. McHugh, Sr., our new Business Administrator and Board Secretary. Dr. McHugh started working in his new role this past summer and brings with him a

wealth of experience as a business professor, corporate accountant, and Sergeant First Class in the United States Army Reserve. He also recently served as the Business Administrator in another local K-8 district. Welcome aboard, Dr. McHugh!

I am thrilled to announce some new courses, programs and clubs that will be offered this school year. Curriculum for Financial Literacy has been developed and Mrs. Mutz has already been working with our students on personal finance skills and how they can apply this new knowledge to develop budgets, manage debt, and plan for the future. Mrs. Fehir has led a Drama course during the first marking period and will facilitate a Quiz Bowl course in marking period 2. We are also excited to welcome the *Lions Quest* program, which focuses on various life skills, including communication, accepting responsibility, setting goals, and making healthy decisions.

Finally, Valley Road School will be hosting our annual Veteran's Recognition Program on Wednesday, November 6 at 9:00 am. We are excited for the keynote address from our very own Janice Bunce-Escobar, and encourage any and all local Veterans to join us on this special day. Thank you to the Lenape

Valley Regional High School band and chorus for participating this year in addition to Valley Road School's own concert band.

Special thanks to our custodial and office staff for preparing our school and facilities for another school year. We could not do what we do without your support and we are forever grateful. Please follow the great things our students and teachers are doing on Instagram and Twitter (@StanhopeVRS) and use our hashtag, #WeAreVRS, to share all the wonderful things happening around Stanhope!

#WEAREVRS

PRINCIPAL'S PRINCIPLES: Self Reflection & Student Success

Alicia L. Finklea-DiCataldo, Principal 973-347-0008 x4106 afinklea-dicataldo@stanhopeschools.org

As the last leaves slowly make their descent and we head into the holiday season, it is a wonderful time to take a minute to reflect on our progress since the new school year has begun. The joys, the sorrows, the wins and losses. The 2019-2020 year has already presented as a busy one with many academic strides, social events, sports programs and activities all happening while we adjust and rearrange our sun-filled summer schedules and routines into a more concrete structure.

Self-reflection, also known as metacognition, is not only a tool that adults can benefit from but children as well. Research suggests that self-reflection is one of the greatest forms of self-development. According to philosopher, Dewey, "students who learn self-reflection can become proficient in assessing their own progress in learning (Lew & Schmidt, 2011)." An article in *Psychology Today* supports this by stating, "thinking about thinking, optimizes learning and self-awareness plays a critical role in how students make sense of life experiences (Price-Mitchell, 2015)."

In doing so, the mind recognizes be-

haviors and choices either positive or negative which help to create either validation or promote self-growth. Self-reflection is an essential key for goal setting, with intentional recognition of choice that puts into perspective what actions may not have been effective and what actions were spot on. Or, even better, above and beyond! Self-reflection helps to determine what worked or didn't...what it may have looked like, and more importantly what that felt like. It is an evaluation of the process.

An initiative in our district, beginning this school year, is Social Emotional Learning. This includes the integration of self-reflection practices into our curriculum to support our students' successful interactions not only with others, through characteristics such as empathy, responsibility and teamwork, but through self-care and goal setting. These practices occur through the use of mindfulness moments and strategies, conferring, positive self-talk, restorative practices and the addition of our guidance curriculum, *Lions Quest*, a program sponsored by a grant through

The Center for Prevention. The State of New Jersey has also recognized these initiatives as a necessity, creating the Social Emotional Learning Competencies and Sub Competencies. These include self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, responsible decision making and relationship skills (New Jersey Department of Education, n.d.) .

To support your own student, you can find more information on social emotional learning and self-reflection practice at the following websites:

<https://www.state.nj.us/education/students/safety/sandp/sel/> <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/the-moment-youth/201508/self-awareness-how-kids-make-sense-life-experiences>

www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/the-moment-youth/201508/self-awareness-how-kids-make-sense-life-experiences

<https://www.mother.ly/parenting/age-by-age-guide-to-helping-kids-manage-emotions>

THE BUSINESS OF THE BUSINESS OFFICE

Dr. Steven E. McHugh, Sr., Business Administrator/Board Secretary 973-347-0008 ext. 4107 smchugh@stanhopeschools.org

Hello, I would like to introduce myself to the Valley Road School community. I am Dr. Steven E. McHugh, Sr., the new School Business Administrator/Board of Education Secretary for the



Stanhope Public School District.

I am very excited to be a member of this District and I am thrilled to welcome your children to school each morning. Students often ask me if I am a new teacher. I tell them "I am an accountant." In reality my responsibility to our students is much greater. It is true I am not a teacher, but I am an educator. And it is my obligation to provide appropriate fiduciary advice to the Board of Education so that we can best educate the children of our community.



GUIDANCE CORNER: Conversation About School

Assunta Jardine, Guidance Counselor 973-347-0008 ext. 4108 ajardine@stanhopeschools.org

Welcome back to another exciting year at Valley Road School! It's great to be back at school and begin a new year getting to know and work with students, teachers and families. Fall is a great time to teach students about responsible learning behaviors and habits that will lead to a successful school year. Research shows that supporting your child's education at home is very important. Here are some conversation starters that will help you stay involved:

- **"Let's see what you brought home."** Look at completed work to find out what your youngster is learn-

ing and how well she's doing. Also, respond to notes from her teacher, and sign her daily planner.

- **"Show me what you have for homework"** It's your child's responsibility to do his homework, but you play a role, too. Make sure he knows what he's supposed to do by having him explain the assignment to you. After he finishes his homework, look over the work to see that it's completed.

- **"Describe a book you enjoyed today."** This gives you an idea of what your child prefers to read. Then, build a daily reading habit by asking

him what he would like to read to-night. Encourage his reading and listening skills by reading aloud to him and letting him read to you.

- **"Tell me what you learned that you'd like to know more about"**

Use her interests as a starting point for activities to share. If she likes geometry, you might hunt for shapes together. If she's fascinated by how animals adapt to winter, take her to the library to research the subject or to the zoo to see live animals."

Please feel free to contact me at any time throughout the year if I can be of any service. 973-347-0008 ext. 4108 ajardine@stanhopeschools.org.

KEEPING IT HEALTHY: Focus on Vision

Jessica Frank, RN, BSN 973-347-0008 x4110 jfrank@stanhopeschools.org

One out of five children have some kind of vision problem. Impaired vision can affect learning so it is important for students who have difficulty with the school vision screening to follow-up with the eye doctor. One of my screening goals this year is



to encourage students who have glasses to wear them. Identifying why students are not wearing his/her prescribed glasses is important for effective learning outcomes. There are some challenges for families when it comes to vision care. Parents' scheduling conflicts can make it difficult to get an appointment. Other barriers include lack of insurance, students' refusal to wear glasses, and for-

getting or misplacing glasses. Since untreated vision problems are associated with learning deficits, we need to work together to ensure that students who need glasses receive them, and most of all, wear them in school when needed.

Everyone knows that carrots are good for our vision, but other foods also help protect us from vision problems such as cataracts, glaucoma and dry eyes. Eating foods with vitamins A, C, D, E and Zinc, as well as Omega 3 fatty acids and flavonoids are great for your eyesight. Not sure what foods to eat? These are GREAT for your eyes: broccoli, carrots, blueberries, avocados, strawberries, salmon, sweet potatoes, eggs, and spinach.

I can encourage students who don't want to wear their glasses, find assistance for those with a financial issue, help look for lost glasses, and fix bro-



ken glasses. Often students simply forget to wear them. I hope my friendly reminders will put the FOCUS on VISION and

the importance of wearing glasses when needed. If your child starts to complain of recurrent headaches, frequent eye rubbing, squinting, or an unexplained drop in school performance please let me know and I will be happy to do a vision screening as needed. All students in grades K-8th will receive a vision screening at some point throughout the school year.

If you have any questions or concerns please contact me at 973-347-0008 ext. 4110 or jfrank@stanhopeschools.org



MIDDLE SCHOOL DRAMA... ELECTIVE

by Mrs. Sherry Fehir

This marking period, Valley Road School was proud to announce a new non-graded elective offered to grades 6-8 once per week during their EHA period.



An interest e-mail went out late in the summer, and within hours the elective was filled with students eager to act! So Mrs. Fehir, who had taught this elective many years ago, began work "setting the stage" for her new drama recruits. Many activities have already taken place since the inception of this new elective, such as student interviews, drama ice-breakers, tableaux freeze frames, learning canons and one-liners, and much more!

For the second half of the marking period, the students will learn pantomiming, monologues, skit narration,

improvisation, and blocking. Through these activities, the children will not only improve their speaking and listening skills, but will also improve socialization skills among their peers.

It is wonderful to see students in three different grade levels working together and having fun!

FINANCIAL LITERACY FOR MIDDLE SCHOOLERS!

by Mrs. Ellen Mutz

Valley Road School has a new initiative! All Middle School students will be engaging in Financial Literacy classes!

Sixth and eighth graders will be taking Personal Finance with Mrs. Mutz one day a week for an entire marking period during EHA. Seventh graders will be experiencing entrepreneurship in our TREP\$ Program.

Personal finance is a great way for all students to grow into financially knowledgeable and responsible adults. The students are seeing the impact of saving, debt, credit scores, responsible driving (the cost of fines and motor vehicle tickets' impact on car insurance!) on their lives.

They have engaged in online banking, setting up automatic bill paying, automated transfers to savings (and discussing how early savings builds through their lifetime!), running their own "Lemonade Stand" and how to make good business decisions. Students analyze real credit card statements to see the impact that varying credit scores have on interest rates offered for credit cards, car insurance,



ability to rent apartments, and much more!

By analyzing credit card statements students see what happens when you pay just the minimum payment due, more than the minimum payment or pay the entire bill! Students learned it could take 19 years to pay off \$5,000 at the minimum payment with a HUGE amount of interest! Demonstration of what happens when no payment is sent, and the repercussions of poor money management.

Early and positive money management is stressed and students are asking great questions and enjoying seeing the positive effect good money management can have on their future.

Do middle schoolers look to a future of

purchasing a car, having an apartment, and college or job seeking? You bet they do! This class helps them consider how good financial planning can make those life moments go smoothly!

Which would you choose:

\$1,000,000 or receive a penny a day to start and have it doubled every month? The decision you make could be huge! Ask your personal finance student what they chose and why!



BACK HALL HAPPENINGS: What's Your Anti-Drug?

What's Your Anti-Drug?
by Mrs. Benedetto and
Mrs. Mayhood

There are so many different things that keep you away from alcohol and other drugs. During October, fourth graders created posters to communicate what their anti-drugs are; **exercising, family time, singing, dancing, sports, camping, going to the beach...**and more! They're choosing healthy lifestyles. Some student posters have been entered into the county wide Center for Prevention and Counseling's contest.

So, what's your anti-drug?

Pictured right, 4th Graders from Mrs. Mayhood's and Mrs. Benedetto's class proudly present their Anti-Drug posters



ACTIVITIES & CLUBS: GOTR! Girls On The Run

GOTR is Off To The Races
by Mrs. Reilly and Ms. DiIunno,
Coaches

The fall season of Girls on the Run kicked off in September. Girls in 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade have been meeting twice a week to learn about self confidence, handling emotions, teamwork and community outreach. Additional-

ly, the girls are training to run a 5k in November with all the GOTR teams in Sussex, Bergen, and Passaic Counties! Still to come this season is a community service project and a practice 5k celebration. We are also so excited to share that one of our own team members will be singing the National Anthem on the big day!



IT'S ELEMENTARY: What's new from K, 1, 2, 3

Kindergarten on Chromebooks by
Mrs. Marra and Mrs. Grube.

Kindergarten classes logged onto their Chromebooks for the first time with the help of 5th grade peer helpers. They were so excited to have their own Chromebooks and to explore many educational websites.



Mrs. Davis' first grade class has invited their parents to be Royal Readers to the class. Our very first Royal Reader was Mrs. Soto, Sophia's mom. We look forward to many more parents being readers!



Third Grade Glows by
Miss Reilly and Miss DiIunno
Third graders are off to an awesome start this year. We celebrate the end of our first math unit with a Glow

Games afternoon. We decorated the room with blacklights and the third graders competed in activities to show us what they learned. This is quickly becoming one of our favorite third grade traditions and we were so happy to share it with this year's class! Other happenings in third grade include building a hurricane shelter to wrap up our weather unit in science. Students will have to use their knowledge of weather, especially extreme weather to design and build a two story shelter.

STANHOPE PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT

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Dr. Steven E. McHugh, Sr.,
Business Administrator/Board Secretary

Creating Stanhope's Future...
One Child At A Time!

Follow us on Twitter
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@StanhopeVRS

BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETINGS

7:00 PM

Regularly the Third Wednesday of the
Month (check school calendar for updates)

Ms. Leanne Sweeney asked, "WHAT LIFTS YOU?"

To start the school year, VRS art students, as well as faculty and staff, worked together to create a collaborative mural. The inspiration for this mural came from artist Kelsey Montague and her "#WhatLiftsYou?" movement. This campaign was started by Montague as a way for others to share what inspires them, allow people to become works of art, and provide a space for others to spread positivity. Our VRS community followed suit and created feathers with messages about "what lifts them" indicted on each. In the end, each feather was added to a larger set of wings that represents that positivity, hope, and happiness that exists in our school. If you want to learn more about Kelsey Montague and her artwork, you can visit her website at <https://kelseymontagueart.com>.

#WEAREVRS

