

ELIZABETH PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Every Child, Achieving Excellence

EXCELLENCE NEWS

EVERY CHILD, ACHIEVING EXCELLENCE

Elizabeth Public Schools, Elizabeth, NJ

November 2022

"Learn to be thankful for what you already have, while you pursue all that you want." ~Jim Rohn

Honoring the Brave

On November 11, cadets from the Junior ROTC Program attended the Veterans Day Ceremony held at Elizabeth City Hall. Cadets also helped lay the wreaths.

Photos taken by Elizabeth City Hall



Thank You VETERANS





Mabel G. Holmes School No. 5 Annex

In celebration of American Education week, students participated in weekly spirit days. *Educator for a Day* proved to be a favorite. Students enjoyed coming to school dressed up in attire of the career that they would like to pursue in their future.

Terence C. Reilly School No. 7

Students and team members celebrated AEW by organizing diverse exciting activities, such as decorating classroom doors in college theme and writing thank-you notes to express appreciation of educators and support staff. Parents are also welcomed back to visit their scholar's classroom to share advice about their careers or a favorite storybook. The kickoff event that began this week was *Future Career Day* with students dressing up in outfits to showcase their future careers.

The TCR family includes many future doctors, engineers, police officers, teachers, and lawyers!



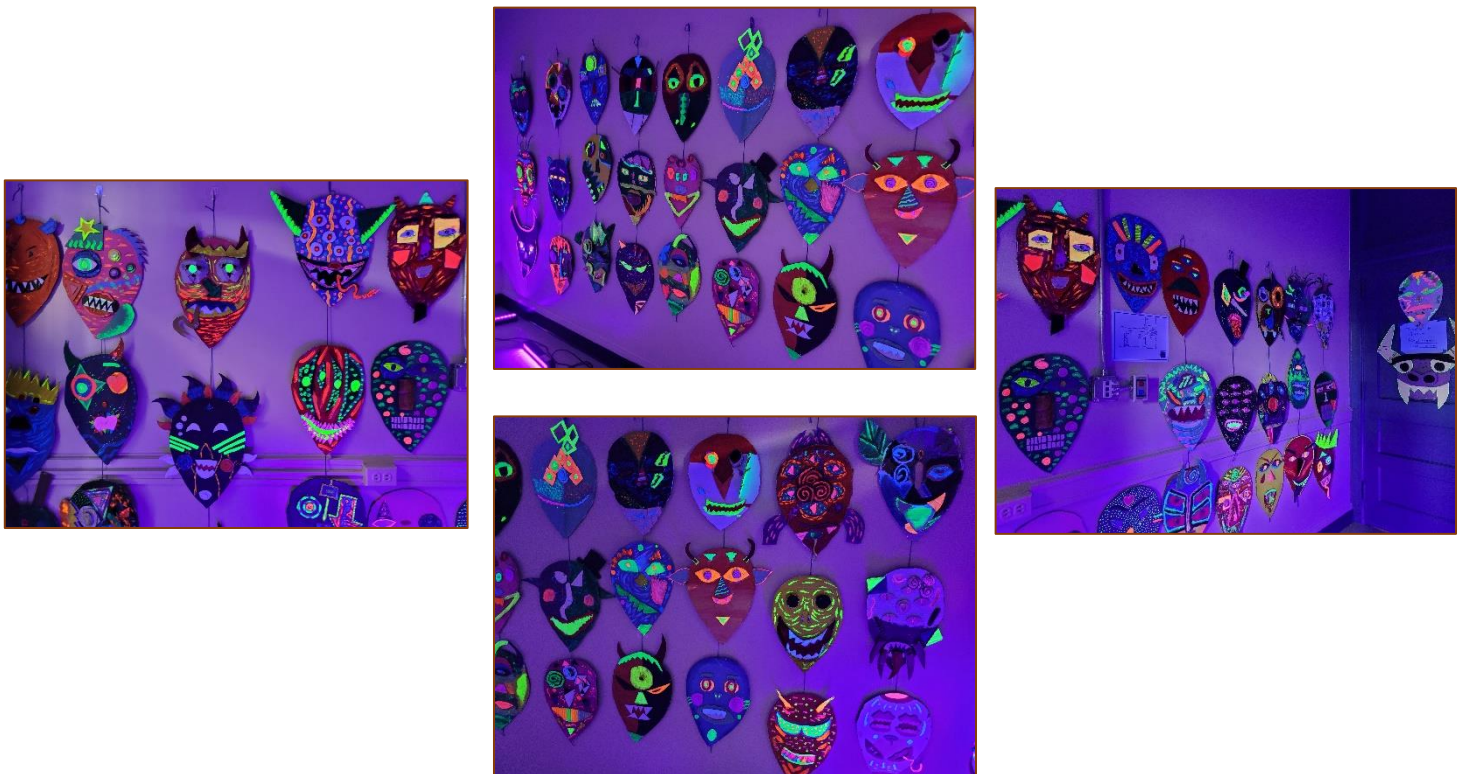
Donald Stewart ECC School No. 51

Students began their week-long AEW celebration by sharing a home/school connection activity on *What I Want to be When I Grow Up*. Students also worked collaboratively to create *Thank You* cards for the entire staff and later displayed them in the lobby. They continued the celebration with *Parents Day*. Parents read stories and were guest speakers to talk about their profession in the classrooms. They ended the week-long celebration by wearing their school shirts to celebrate *Spirit Day* and participating in their *Panda Pride Parade* to show unity and friendship.



JVJ STEM Academy

Students were given an opportunity to celebrate public art education in first art show to inform the community of the accomplishments of public school students. For two weeks, students learned about American artist, Dag Weiser, who was first discovered by galleries for his community arts which include works building floats for parades, Halloween displays, and displays for theater performances in California. Students were inspired to create their own versions for a group show with black light paint.





Elmora School No. 12



Hearts and classrooms were full at Elmora School No. 12 during American Education Week.

On Wednesday, November 16th, parents, and guardians were invited to come into their child's classroom and observe the excellent teaching, learning experiences and rigor that takes place daily at School No. 12.

A special "Thank You" to the staff, parents and guardians of Elmora School No. 12 for always showing such dedication, compassion, and collaboration. We could not be more grateful as a school community!

Dr. Antonia Pantoja School No. 27

During the week of November 14, many activities were planned for this exciting celebration. Students had the opportunity to celebrate and express what they love about their school. They also wrote kind notes to a chosen teacher or educator.

Teachers and students commenced the week wearing sports attire to represent being a part of a team! By midweek, students came to school dressed for success, representing future career choices! Middle school students were scheduled to read stories to the youngest learners as well. Students in the same grade level participated in Color Wars! The entire grade level competes to have the largest percentage of students coming to school in the assigned color, and the winners receive a prize! The activities for the week did not end there! Students who chose to submit a video explaining what they would do if they were School Principal, were entered to win *Principal for the Day*.

To culminate the week, Students of the Month would be attending a breakfast celebration to recognize their great effort and success at school. On Friday, everyone showed off their school spirit by wearing Pantoja Shark attire!





Abraham Lincoln School No. 14

Students celebrated “Career Day” for American Education Week. There were future teachers, police officers, veterinarians and doctors represented.

John Marshall School No. 20

It was an exciting week where students were able to explore literature and shop at the Scholastic Book Fair. On Tuesday, November 15th, students were able to share in a *Special Person Luncheon* with a beloved family member. This was followed by *Career Day*, on November 17th, whereas students dressed up in attire that was representative of their future employment. The celebrations ended on Friday, November 18th with a Middle School Teachers vs. Students soccer game and a night time *Potluck Thanksgiving dinner*.



Victor Mravlag School No. 21



The students, parents, educators, and community came together to observe a week dedicated to education. The week was kicked off with a staff breakfast to acknowledge the contributions to the hardworking team that they have in scholars' lives. Parents were welcomed back into the building during conferences and as guest readers! Students had the opportunity to dress for the future career and to round out the week, students took on the staff in a volleyball game but sadly, were defeated! A great time was had by all as we were inspired to continue to make education in America great and FUN!



Admiral William F. Halsey Jr. Health and Public Safety Academy

American Education Week is such an amazing and exciting time to celebrate public education. Students were excited to participate in activities in their classes and during their lunches! Students wrote essays about what they would do if they were the principal and wrote shout outs for teachers and support staff. Staff members were very appreciative of the shout outs! In addition, the multicultural club is continuing to celebrate diversity by showcasing a Native American Heritage Month hallway display.



Elizabeth High School - Frank J. Cicarell Academy

Become a Teacher for a Day By: Students Aileen Quispe & Alondra Villanueva

On Thursday, November 17th, celebrated 'American Education Week' by running their annual Become a Teacher for a Day. Sophomores, juniors, and seniors, participated in a raffle for the chance of being chosen by the teacher of their choice. The students were amazed by the multitude of teachers who participated this year, including FJC's very own Principal Mr. Cummings and Vice Principal Mr. Markowitz.

The event was fun and full of laughter, with the unique entries of all teachers either dancing or singing along to their song of choice. Some memorable moments from the event were when Ms. Balseca came in while playing on her Nintendo switch; Mr. Lazo coming in with a metal guiro alongside junior students, Sofia and Sara Lazo, dancing with the Cuban flag in hand; Mr. Vasquez's dance show-off with a senior; Mr. Markowitz entering the gymnasium in roller-skates; and, Mr. Cummings surfing through the bleachers sharing high-fives with all students. Thanks to everyone's hard work - including the FJC Junior Club, the amazing teachers under the leadership of Mr. Cummings and Mr. Markowitz, and the always engaged and energized FJC student body.

On November 21st the students took over their designated teachers' classrooms and living a day in their shoes. Frank J. Cicarell does this event as a unique learning experience for the students. It allows them to experience what it is like to be an educator for a day. It helps them appreciate all the hard work their teachers put in to see their students succeed.



Dr. Albert Einstein Academy School No. 29



Students, staff, and parents participated in a variety of activities to celebrate American Education Week. Activities included Career Day, Breakfast with Parents, Teacher vs. Student Volleyball Game, and a culminating 'Celebrate Learning' gala. These festivities were to applaud to families, educators, and communities coming together to pledge support for excellence for all students.



Winfield Scott School No. 2

There was a week long celebration involving the entire school community. Parents were invited to visit classrooms to share the path to their careers and read aloud to students. Teachers dressed as students and students dressed as teachers to students conduct 10 minute lessons on a topic of their choice. There was also students also chosen to be principal and vice principal of the day.



Toussaint L'Ouverture-Marquis de Lafayette School No. 6



As part of American Education Week events, School No. 6 welcomed parents to visit the classrooms and share their careers with the students.

Mrs. Trujillo visited Mrs. Barone-Papa's Gr. 2 classroom to tell the students all about her work at the Division of Motor Vehicles. The students had plenty of questions about how to get a license, taking the road test, and the responsibilities of this occupation. Next up, Dress as Your Future Career!

Juan Pablo Duarte -José Julián Martí School No. 28

In celebration of American Education week, Ms. Moriello and Ms. Garcia's kindergarten classes participated in many fun activities. Everyone wore superhero t-shirts, classroom doors were decorated with university and college pictures and logos. Students dressed up in their future career outfits, such as teachers, doctors, and police officers. Parents visited and read to several classes! One of the favorite activities included a vocabulary parade, students dressed up to represent word and parade around the school building. Students enjoyed the fun of activities, and are looking forward to next year's AEW!



Association of Sewing and Design Professionals (ASDP) Lifetime Achievement Award



ASDP President Bonny Carmicino with 2022
Lifetime Achievement recipient Vandarra Robbins

John E. Dwyer Technology Academy English as a Second Language teacher Vandarra Robbins was awarded the Association of Sewing and Design Professionals (ASDP) Lifetime Achievement Award at its annual Education Conference on October 22 in Baltimore, MD.

Vandarra first made a mark on the sewing world by co-founding the Northeast NJ Chapter of the American Sewing Guild and launching East Coast Sewing Associates, an association committed to sewing education. They conducted sewing workshops and conferences, bringing in sewing experts from around the country for the benefit of the sewing public. She would become a member of the Professional Association of Custom Clothiers (PACC, now the ASDP) and the newly formed NJ Chapter, in both of which she remains active and passionate about proper sewing techniques and educating others. She has devoted her entire career to improving not only her own sewing skills but those who enter her sphere of influence.

Before joining Elizabeth Public Schools, Vandarra was the creative director at Handler Textiles Corporation, an interfacing manufacturer, for which she was responsible for all aspects of product development and educating consumers and retailers on the proper use of the company's products. She also served as a resident sewing expert at the McCall Pattern Company, during which she influenced sewing techniques used for patterns and development of pattern instructions that helped guide an entire generation of home sewers.

She served as President of the NJ Chapter of ASDP for 12 years, developing a jurying program for the chapter so members could improve and verify their sewing skills. She even gave classes on specific techniques such as bound buttonholes that members would encounter in the jurying process. This program subsequently became part of the foundation for the current ASDP's Master Sewing and Design Professional (MSDP) and Master Alteration Specialist (MAS) certification programs.

She continues to promote sewing education, working hard to get an after school sewing club off the ground while also continuing to teach sewing in her home studio.

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SEWING & DESIGN
PROFESSIONALS

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All Things Fall

Farm-fresh produce, “apples” for educators and a harvest of Thanksgiving foods are how the fall was ushered in at **Nicholas S. LaCorte Peterstown School No. 3**.

Produce, under the New Jersey State Department of Agriculture’s Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program, is delivered to the school every week and includes apples, oranges, and bananas, but this month’s harvest included foot-long carrots and cucumbers, gargantuan heads of broccoli, tomatoes, and avocados, all from local farmers. Under the guidance of CDA and paraprofessional Edward Melchionna, the program introduces elementary school children to a variety of produce that they otherwise might not have the opportunity to sample.

In addition to the exceptionally bountiful produce harvest, the school chose apples for educators as part of its celebration of American Education week. Bright red and green-colored apples were decorated by students with their favorite subjects and brought home to parents to share their favorite school memories. Ending the week were middle-schoolers dressed as their favorite teachers and reading to students in grades kindergarten through three.

Rounding out the fall activities, students and staff collected Thanksgiving fixings for meals to raffle to ten school families as well as donate to St. Joseph’s Coalition. Each grade level collected a specific item from home to donate, including canned fruits and vegetables, stuffing, macaroni, and cheese. Students in the SEL afterschool program helped organize packages, eighth-grade volunteers designed Thanksgiving greeting cards, and third-grade teacher Gina Rysinski helped distribute an entire meal – from appetizer to a turkey and all the trimmings.



November is Citizenship Month

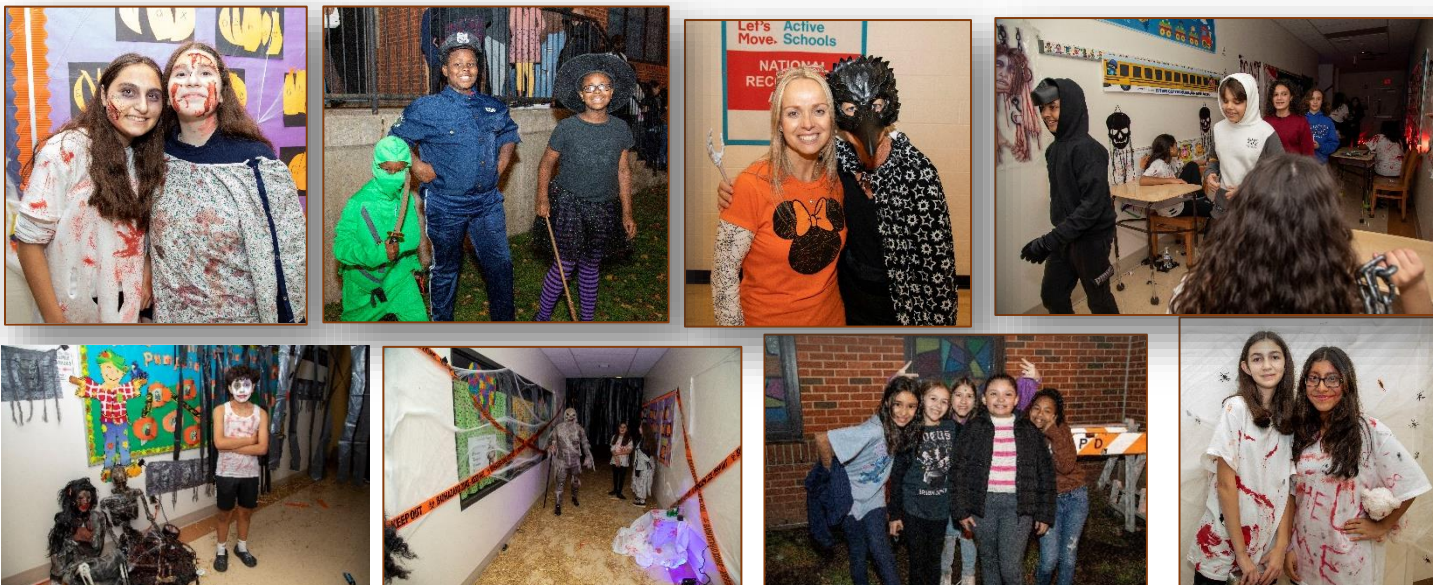
The parents, students and staff at **Sonia Sotomayor School No. 25** once again banded together to donate food items and turkeys to give to twelve families in the school community. The theme for the month of November is Citizenship. What a great way to demonstrate what it means to help one another at this time of Thanksgiving.



The school motto is *Together We Soar*. It brings smiles to so many faces to see the Joy soaring in parents’ eyes when they arrive at school to receive the food baskets. School No. 25 is thankful for having a school community that shows such great support for one another each and every day.

Haunted Hallways

Victor Mravlag School No. 21 held its *Haunted Hallways*. It was held on October 20th and presented by the eighth grade students, team members and PTA. It was such a spooktacular event.



Fall Festivities

George Washington Academy of Science & Engineering School No. 1 kicked off the “Week of Respect” with the annual PBIS Pep Rally. George Washington Academy Lion Cubs were celebrated for making respectful, responsible, and safe choices and provided the chance to participate in minute to win it games! A cup stacking challenge, three-legged race, and musical chairs were all games the students were able to play with a grand finale game of students versus teachers tug-of-war. Following the Pep Rally, the school ROAR store opened allowing for students to be rewarded for positive choices on a weekly basis. George Washington Academy scholars ended the month with a Fall Harvest festival. GWA families and students were invited to participate in a *Pumpkin Decorating Contest*. All pumpkins submitted were on full display at the Fall Harvest for all to see!



Hamilton Seniors Send Eighth Graders Letters for Thanksgiving



For this Thanksgiving season, Ms. Cannon's 12th grade students at **Alexander Hamilton Preparatory Academy** teamed up with Mrs. Roman's 8th grade students from **Nicholas S. La Corte-Peterstown School No. 3** to write letters of encouragement that provide advice and to share their plans for Thanksgiving recess. Students who are about to embark on a new journey in high school should be prepared for what to expect and how to ready themselves for what this next chapter in their life has to offer them. Ms. Cannon's students took their time to write detailed letters offering the best advice they could give to these future high school scholars. These letters will be delivered right before Thanksgiving break, so Mrs. Roman's students can see what other students in the community are thankful for and how they will be celebrating their four-day weekend.

Cyberbullying and Internet Safety

William F. Halloran School No. 22, in collaboration with The Union County Prosecutor's Office and Counseling Department, sponsored an assembly for all students in grades 6-8 regarding Cyberbullying and Internet Safety on Nov. 16th 2022. Detective Green presented to the students the effects of cyberbullying and the importance of internet safety. Students were excited to learn and engaged asking questions about the topic and relevant social media pages that are currently popular.



Harvest Dance and Parade

Robert Morris School No. 18's middle school students participated in a Harvest Dance. Students were able to mingle with friends, while dancing to the beat and nibbling on delicious treats.

Elementary students participated in a Harvest Parade and had a chance to dress up, socialize and participate in a Trunk or Treat. The beautiful smiles say it all!



Facing the New Year Together

Mrs. Struble from **Madison Monroe School No. 16** had each of her art students complete a miniature self-portrait. Students worked on a 6" x 6" piece of paper and were assigned one colored pencil to create different values in their work. This resulted in 2 collaborative art displays that were hung in each building of the school titled *Facing the new year Together*.

Students loved the displays and enjoyed trying to find their mini self-portraits!



How Can I Help Bring Peace?

The Husky Team engaged in a schoolwide project promoting school safety. “*How Can I Help Bring Peace to Mabel G. Holmes School No. 5?*” is a project created to facilitate School Violence Awareness as well as promote peace. Students included their peace response and decorated a peace sign. Each sign was then displayed together on the **Peace Wall** representing “Bringing Peace Together the Husky Way!”



Unity Day

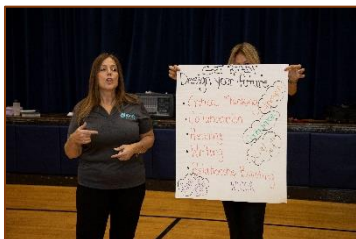
Unity Day is the signature event of *Bullying Prevention Month*. In honor of this event, **Chessie Dentley Roberts School No. 30** celebrated Unity Day with a school wide wearing of the color orange. There was also a *Bullies to Buddies* assembly for fourth and fifth grade with guest speaker Connie Palmer. The students were engaged and loved it. They especially enjoyed role playing and utilizing the Golden Rule toolbox. Grades pre-k to third worked on their classroom Unity posters, and finally the day was wrapped up with a staff versus student basketball game with grades fifth - eighth with a special appearance from Chessie the Bear.

For more photos, please visit: [Unity Day @ Chessie Dentley Roberts School No. 30 \(epsnj.org\)](http://Unity Day @ Chessie Dentley Roberts School No. 30 (epsnj.org))



School No. 15 Held an AVID Celebration

The **Christopher Columbus School No. 15** AVID students and teachers participated in the 2022-2023 *AVID Fall Celebration*. The celebration's theme was *Get Ready, Design Your Future!* The celebration focused on the core skills of critical thinking, collaboration, reading, writing, and relationship building. The students put their skills into action by engaging in fun activities during which all students worked together in ways that showcased their dedication to skill building and their growing confidence. These students are the true designers of their bright futures!



Port Authority Bus Poster Contest Winner

Chessie Dentley Roberts Academy School No. 30 student, Ethan Arroyave was one of the award-winning posters for the Port Authority Bus Terminal Contest, in New York City. There were hundreds of New Jersey and New York elementary and middle school students that participated in this event. Only three students were selected this year by The Port Authority Bus Terminal Advisory Council, and he was one of them. His illustration was chosen for the 5-8 division.

The theme for 2022 was *Where Does the Midtown Bus Terminal Take You?* and Ethan illustrated his favorite destination spot, *Leggo Land*. Large reproductions will be made digitally from the posters for public display in the terminal soon. His art teacher Ms. Ortiz and the school community are so proud of his achievements and want to congratulate him on his hard work in the visual arts.



Hamilton Academy at *Hamilton* on Broadway

On October 19th, 38 students from **Alexander Hamilton Preparatory Academy** participated in the Hamilton Education Workshop at Richard Rodgers Theater in New York City. AHPA was invited to participate in the Hamilton Education Workshop presented by the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History and by cast members of the hit Broadway Musical, *Hamilton*.

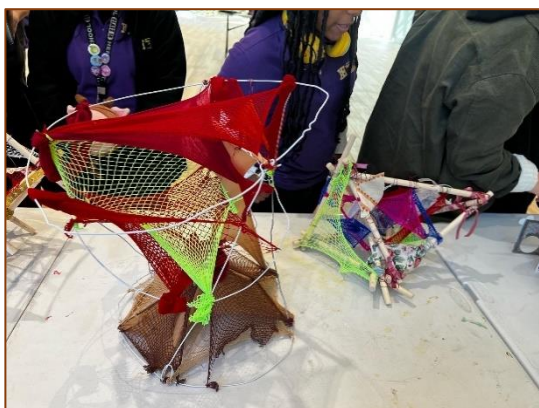


Students worked individually or in small groups to create their original spoken word, rap, song or skit from the Founding Era. All their projects were submitted to the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History. The Gilder Lehrman Institute then reviewed all submitted projects and chose a select few for performance at the workshop.

After students viewed the matinee performance of *Hamilton*, AHPA students engaged in a question-and-answer session with the cast from *Hamilton* on Broadway. The students were able to interact with the actors, who answered several questions from students. After watching *Hamilton* on Broadway and participating in the Eduham project, the AHPA students commented how this experience reminded them of “how lucky they are to be alive right now” and truly believe that “history has its eyes on them.”

Thomas Jefferson Arts Academy's Visual Arts Students at VACNJ

Thomas Jefferson Arts Academy's Visual Arts students had the opportunity to create art pieces inspired by the current fall show at the Visual Arts Center of New Jersey (VACNJ). The fall program offered at VACNJ allowed the TJAA students to experience a real-world environment through outside-of-classroom learning.



Successful Socktober



During the month of October, students at **J. Christian Bollwage Finance Academy** celebrated SOCKTOBER! Socks are the most needed, yet least donated, articles of clothing in homeless shelters throughout the country so the Community Service Club organized a drive to collect socks for the YMCA of Eastern Union County Shelter located on Madison Avenue in Elizabeth. Students donated new socks as well as combs and brushes. Hopefully the students' contributions have made a real difference, have tangible effects on the community, and help foster the building's connection to the community at large.

Trunk or Treat at School No. 16

Madison - Monroe School No. 16 parents and staff members were delighted to have its very first in-person celebration which was a great success. Students and families enjoyed a very fun and safe event by having its very first Trunk or Treat. As students moved from one car to the next, collecting treats, they enjoyed seeing the creative ways teachers and parents decorated their cars.



Students from Pre-K through eighth grade were also able to showcase their Halloween costumes and attend various afternoon Halloween festivities. The week before School No. 16 also held Halloween Spirit week in which students enjoyed wearing various theme t-shirt days such as monster Monday, pumpkin Tuesday, and ghostly Friday.



Celebrating Superstars and Team Members

The first grade team, from **Nicholas Murray Butler School No. 23**, Ms. Spillane, Ms. Scott, Ms. Hernandez, Ms. Simpson, and Ms. O'Neill have a great bulletin board on the second floor promoting and recognizing student achievement in ST Math. These ST Math "SUPERSTARS" are 1st grade students that have completed the greatest number of ST Math puzzles thus far in the schoolyear. This is a great way to encourage and motivate students to love MATH. Students are excited to see who will be on that bulletin board each month.



Also, Miss Drobniewska's Kindergarten class made thank you cards to show their appreciation to the staff.

They made thank you cards for the kitchen staff for the delicious food they serve, the custodians for keeping classrooms nice and clean, the nurse for taking care of those that are sick and the security for keeping school safe.



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Send us excellent news on the wonderful things happening in your school to Delilah Sousa email: enews@epsnj.org

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