



# South Plainfield Middle School

## 2023-2024

Newsletter Committee

Alia Aziz  
Elyse Phillips  
Michele Rodriguez

Melissa Cook  
Kelly Richkus

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## January 2024 NEWSLETTER

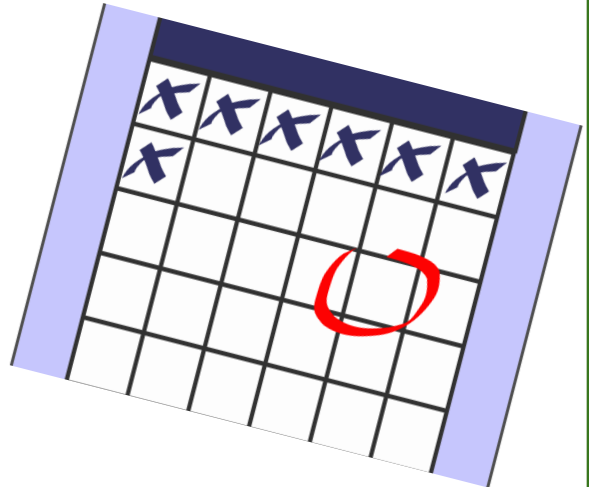
### UPCOMING EVENTS!

#### January:

- 29th - End of Second Marking Period

#### February:

- February 9th - early dismissal
- February 12th - Club picture day
- February 19th - School Closed



# COUNSELING CORNER



Ms. de Mello  
8th Grade Counselor

Mrs. Mikaelian  
7th Grade Counselor

Ms. Aziz  
Student Assistance Counselor

Welcome to the Counseling Corner!

South Plainfield Middle School 7th grade students started attending the We're Not Buying it Program in early January. This program educates our students about media literacy and the impact of substance use. The weekly lessons are provided by Wellspring Prevention instructors and will continue through February.

South Plainfield Middle School 8th grade students have been exploring their interests and beginning to think about their future in High School. Students have taken the opportunity to meet with the 8th grade counselor and discuss future career goals along with exploring how their interests and personalities can impact their careers. Students were made aware of opportunities including the Middlesex County Magnet schools with a variety of programs to choose from.

The High School counselors visited the Middle School to share an overview, acquainting our students with the High School. This included an introduction including scheduling, the course selection process, graduation requirements, as well as content area and athletic information. Parents were also encouraged to attend the night presentation reviewing all the information students received. All 8th graders have access to the High School slide show via Mrs. de Mello's Google Classroom-it is posted for students to reference as needed.


Marking period two ended on January 29th, bringing us to the halfway through the year mark. Encourage your children to reach out to their teachers with questions and issues, utilize extra help sessions, and to try their best. If you are having concerns with your students' progress in a class, reach out to that teacher for individual feedback. If you are concerned with their overall performance, reach out to guidance for assistance.

## 8th GRADE HISTORY



Ms. Pinelli's 8<sup>th</sup> grade History classes have been learning to do DBQ Long Essays. Students were taught how to read the documents, analyze them and research notes before writing their essays.

**The Ideals of the Declaration:  
Which Is Most Important?**

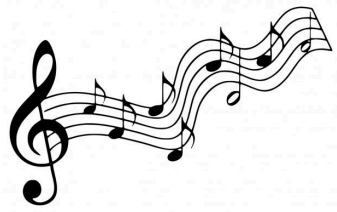


Declaration of Independence, John Trumbull, Commissioned 1817; purchased 1819; placed in the Capitol 1826.

**Overview:** In a recent survey conducted by the National Archives, the Declaration of Independence topped all others to emerge as the “most influential document in American history.” Many Americans think of the Declaration as a symbol of the independence from Great Britain that we celebrate on July 4th. While it is certainly that, the Declaration is also a statement of our nation’s main beliefs about government and its relationship to the people. These beliefs have been the centerpiece of American history for more than 230 years. All the ideas are important, but which is most important? That is the question asked by this Mini-Q.

**The Documents:**

- Document A: Equality
- Document B: Right to Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness
- Document C: Consent of the Governed
- Document D: Alter or Abolish Government



*It's Music To Our Ears.....*

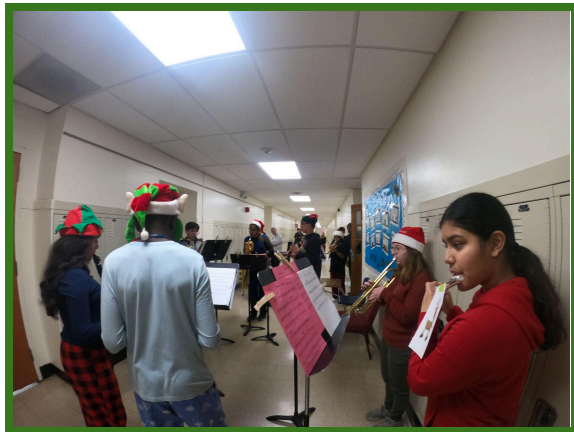


## Holiday Band

On the last day of school before Winter Break, members of the Middle School band along with Mr. Veiss went around the halls of the middle school spreading Holiday Cheer. With a repertoire of about 20 songs, the band members played inside and outside of classrooms with students coming into the hallway to hear the festive songs.

The band members have been coming in before school for two months to prepare for their performance and they played excellently.

The students who participated were: Blake Greco, Anvi Dobhal, Leo Martinez, Jayce Diaz, Hector Weierich-Gonzalez, Myra Mehrotra, Diego Valdez-Mejia, Jason Miller, Laina Wilson, Kiarah Duncanson, Kyle Dobos, and Victoria Simon. Mrs. Haughwout also joined us on Flute. WooHoo Band.



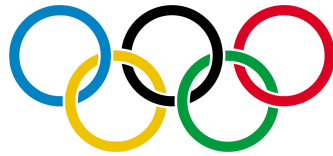


## Region Chorus

On January 6<sup>th</sup>, the middle school choir students were invited to audition for the CJMEA (central Jersey music educators association) Regional Choirs. Over 200 students from Hunterdon, Mercer, Middlesex, Monmouth, Somerset, and Union counties showed up to audition for the honor to be accepted into these ensembles. Anvi Dobhal was accepted into the Treble Choir, and Jason Miller, Blaise Bailes, and Eddie Montanez were all accepted into the Mixed Choir. Out of all the students that auditioned that day, Blaise Bailes earned not only the highest tenor score, but the highest overall score for all the choirs with a nearly perfect score.



## Team Olympic Handball Championships



*Coach Sal's Team Olympic Handball Championships were on Thursday, January 25th. The men's and women's Olympic Handball tournament will take place this summer in Paris and in honor of this, the students learned all about the game! Students learned the rules and skills for Team Handball and then chose teams for an Olympic Handball Unit. Period 2 Team Korea won Gold.*

- *MVP- Lucas Habe*
- *Sportsmanship Award - Kevin Elias*
- *Period 6 Team Greece won Gold*
- *MVP - Joe Sarrubbo*
- *Sportsmanship Award - Taylor Tankiewicz*



## COACH OF THE YEAR

**Congratulations to our very own Miss Wetzel on being awarded GMC Coach of the Year for the SPHS Varsity Gymnastics team! Go Tigers!**



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## *8th grade Art*

*The 8th grade art students tried printmaking and they really enjoyed it!*





# Junior Journalist



Junior Journalist winner Esha Kumar with ELA teacher Marissa DiBella.

## *Sadness, Happiness and Fear Inspire Junior Journalist*

"Sadness," this week's winning entry in the Junior Journalist contest, is one of three poems in a trilogy written by South Plainfield Middle School seventh grader Esha Kumar in response to an assignment about "The Giver," written by Lois Lowry.

The poem was an assignment to help the characters in the book understand emotion because they live in a world void of any feeling.

The other two poems in Esha's trilogy are "Happiness" and "Fear."

Esha's favorite author is Colleen Hoover, a young adult fiction and romance writer.

Esha's favorite subject is ELA, and her future aspiration is to become a lawyer.

DiBella said Esha's creativity is evidenced in her work. She is hardworking and dedicated to always doing her best, and DiBella tries to push her out of her comfort zone.

Esha and her family will receive

### Sadness

By Esha Kumar

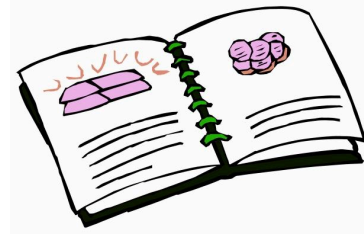
Sadness is a lonely night,  
A fading light, a lost light,  
It's a tear that slips away,  
A sky turned gray, a forgotten play.

Sadness is a silent song,  
A night turned wrong,  
It's a heart that's feeling sore.

But remember, in sadness too  
Strength can come,  
For after every stormy night,  
Comes morning after light,  
shining bright.

lunch at HomeTown Heroes courtesy of Debbie and Charlie Kurland and a T-shirt courtesy of the *South Plainfield Observer*. She and her parents will be invited to the Junior Journalist banquet in May, where the winners will be further recognized and prizes will be awarded, including the \$500 Ruth Kurland Memorial Award.

The Junior Journalist program has awarded more than 400 winners and provided more than 4,000 dinners during its 20-year tenure.



Congratulations to seventh grader Esha Kumar for winning the Observer's Junior Journalist contest! Her poem, "Sadness", stemmed from an assignment in English Language Arts for Lois Lowry's *The Giver* in which students engaged with characters through emotional tributes.









# Nurse's Nook

## ATTENTION SPRING SPORTS ATHLETES!!

*I hope everyone had a wonderful holiday and wanted to remind you to send in sports physicals for spring sports. I would like to have them in by **2/9** so I can complete them in time for tryouts. If anyone needs a form please have your student stop by my office or email me at [MMccarthy@SPBOE.org](mailto:MMccarthy@SPBOE.org) and I will email you a copy. When they are complete students can drop them at my office.*

*Also, here is a chart to use as a guide for when students should stay home from school. With cold and flu season in full force, we could all use the reminder!*

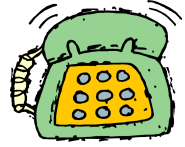
<b>Sick Kids: When to Stay Home from School</b>					
<b>FEVER</b> A temperature of 100° or higher	<b>COUGHING THAT WON'T STOP</b> Or other problems with breathing	<b>DIARRHEA OR VOMITING</b> Within the past 24 hours	<b>RASH</b> Body rash with itching and/or fever	<b>HEAD LICE</b> Itchy head, active head lice	<b>EYE INFECTION</b> Eye is red and oozing a yellow or green discharge
					
<b>When to Return to School</b>					
Fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medication such as ibuprofen or acetaminophen	Cough is mild and infrequent and evaluated by doctor if needed	Free from diarrhea and/or vomiting for at least 24 hours and evaluated by doctor if needed	Free from rash, itching or fever and evaluated by doctor if needed	After first head lice treatment	24 hours after starting antibiotic eye drops or ointment

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*Need to reach us?*  
**SPMS ADMINISTRATION**



*Main Office*



- *Principal: Mr. Leo Whalen ext. 2610*
- *Administrative Assistant: Mrs. Lodato ext. 2601*
- *Assistant Principal: Mrs. Kelly Richkus ext. 2611*
- *Administrative Assistant: Ms. D'Addario ext. 2602*

*Guidance*

- *8th Grade Counselor: Mrs. deMello ext. 2633*
- *7th Grade Counselor: Mrs. Mikaelian ext. 2632*
  - *SAC: Ms. Aziz ext. 2634*
- *Administrative Assistant: Mrs. Giannakis ext. 2631*

*School Nurse*

- *Mrs. McCarthy: ext. 2620*

Please visit the new [nurse's page](#) on the middle school website