



# South Plainfield Middle School

## 2022-2023

Newsletter Committee

Chrissy Briskin  
Melissa Cook  
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Kelly Richkus  
Michele Rodriguez

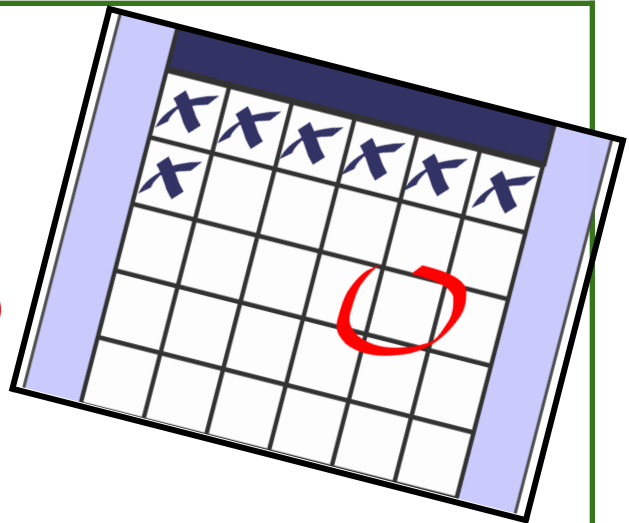
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## February 2023 NEWSLETTER

### UPCOMING EVENTS!

#### February:

- 9th- parent meeting for 8th grade Philadelphia trip (link below)
- 10th-early dismissal for students
- 16th-financial literacy program for students @ 2:30 see flier on p.10
- 20th - President's Day schools/offices closed



[8th grade parent meeting](#)

## *The Year of The Rabbit....*

*Mrs. Haggerty's classes learned about Chinese New Year. They colored this year's animal, and identified which characteristics they share with the Rabbit. This 15-day celebration ends with a Lantern Festival. The students made lanterns which are displayed with their rabbits in the hallway.*



## ***In Music This Month***

***Congratulations to the students who auditioned for the CJMEA Intermediate Region Band and Chorus. The following students earned a spot in these prestigious programs: Molly Van Wyk-Fourth Chair Horn in the Wind Ensemble, Blake Greco-Fourth Chair in the Percussion Ensemble, Wren Rasmussen- alto 1- mixed choir, Jason Miller- baritone- mixed choir, Keily Alas- soprano 2- treble choir, and Anvi Dobhal- soprano 1- treble choir***



# COUNSELING CORNER

Mrs. de Mello  
7th Grade Counselor

Mrs. Mikaelian  
8th Grade Counselor

Ms. Tamborra  
Student Assistance Counselor

Welcome to the Counseling Corner! In the month of January, South Plainfield Middle School attended Middlesex County's Day of Dialogue with a group of ten students. Attendees included 8th graders Sydney Becker, Candor Plum, Alex Wordel, Madison Droge, and Aaliyah Lewis and seventh graders Skylar Boos, Marwah Haji, Sophia Campos, Optimus Cambell, and Blake Greco. This event is meant to bring schools in Middlesex County together to discuss equity, diversity, inclusion, and belonging and to brainstorm what can get in the way of these important issues. At the Day of Dialogue, students talked about their identities, what makes them unique and what they have in common. The focus included listening skills to truly hear one another, and not to offer advice or judgment. We look forward to furthering our work to create a welcoming school community for all.



South Plainfield Middle School also had substance use assemblies presented by Wellspring Center for Prevention. The presenters went over important and crucial information regarding alcohol and drugs. They discussed how the brain is the number one organ affected by alcohol and how the brain is altered by it. They also talked about what binge drinking is as well as understanding serving sizes of alcohol. Our presenters explained what alcohol poisoning is, what signs and symptoms to look for, and when to call for help.

In addition, we reviewed facts about marijuana and its different forms, such as THC carts, joints, edibles, and blunts. Nicki, Rikki and Mara talked about the dangers of using marijuana and alcohol among those who are underage and the negative effects it can have, including mental and physical problems, addiction, overdose, and even death. The presenters also discussed the 911 Bill and the Good Samaritan Law that allows any person, underage or not, to call 911 when someone is under the influence and needs help. This law also allows the person calling and the one who needs assistance to get help without getting charged or in trouble with the law.

Overall, students learned up-to-date factual information about substances, so they can make more informed smart choices in the future.

## **ATTENTION SPRING SPORTS ATHLETES!!**



**SOFTBALL**



**BASEBALL**



**TRACK**

- A current **SPORTS PHYSICAL** or **UPDATED** form must be on file in the Health Office.
- You will not be allowed to try out or practice until this is done.
- Athletic Forms are available in the Health Office or on the school website or by clicking [Sports Physical Exam Packet](#) or [Update Form](#)

**ALL FORMS DUE BY: February 17, 2023**

- Not sure what is needed? Check with the Nurse Wollman to see the date of your last sports physical. PHONE: 908-754-4620, ext 2620

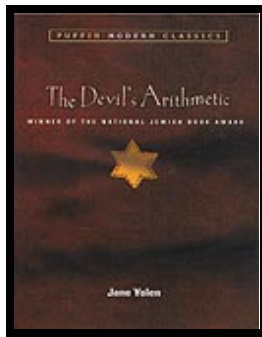
February 2023

## Tour the SPMS Art Gallery...

In Ms. Bednar's 8<sup>th</sup> grade art classes, the students read poems from the Harlem Renaissance. They selected a poem and created an inspired watercolor painting. Every painting turned out differently which emphasizes their creativity. Students pictured are Allison Orellana, Tyana Williams, Sophia Iosso, Rhiannon Ghigliotty and Kwame Asumadu.



## Never Forget



Students in Ms. Cook's ELA 8 class wrote "I Am" poems from various points of view from the historical fiction book, *The Devil's Arithmetic*, by Jane Yolen. This is a time-travel Holocaust book that portrays the racial and anti-semitic violence that occurred in the concentration camps throughout Europe in 1941. A story of quiet heroism and why we must bear witness to history.

The students chose which point of view they wanted to write from: a Jew, a Nazi soldier, Lilith's Cave (an allusion for the gas chamber) or a swallow (bird that circled the camp). Once the poems were revised and edited, the students presented them to their classmates.

I am a Jew.  
I wonder what it would feel like to be free.  
I hear gunshots and dogs barking.  
I see innocent people being killed every day.  
I want everything to go back to normal.  
I am a Jew.

I pretend everything is fine.  
I feel tired of working.  
I touch the uncomfortable bed.  
I worry about the poor Jews that have to go to Lilith's Cave.  
I cry because I miss my home.  
I am a Jew.

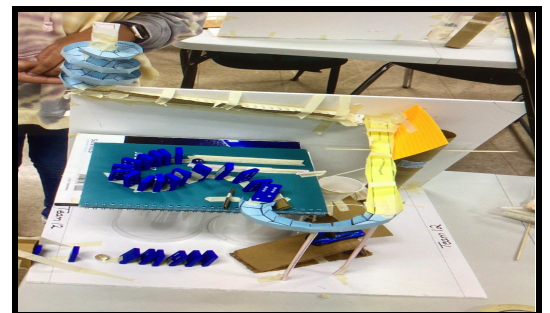
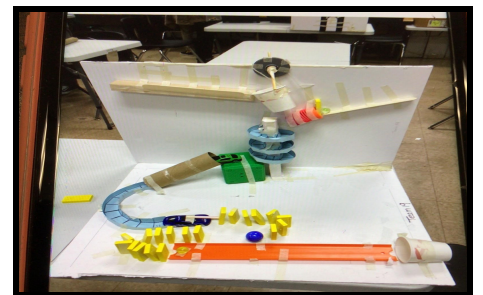
I understand that the Jews did nothing wrong.  
I say nothing because I don't want to die.  
I dream about going home.  
I try to survive.  
I hope I can survive.  
I am a Jew.

By Victoria Melick

## STEM: Rube Goldberg Machines

Eighth grade students were challenged to apply their knowledge of simple machines as they designed and built a Rube Goldberg model. Using various supplies, students engineered a Rube Goldberg contraption that included at least one of each type of simple machines: pulley, lever, screw, wedge, inclined plane as well as wheel and axle. Students constructed and tested their Rube Goldberg machine. If the machine did not work properly or as intended, the students redesigned and retested as needed.

These machines might not be practical, but they are definitely fun, creative, and educational! Building a Rube Goldberg machine is a great hands-on activity and it encouraged our students to flex their STEM muscles.



## *Sending **Love** to Our Veterans....*



*The National Junior Honor Society created Valentines for Veterans. The students worked on Valentine's cards that were specifically designed to honor and thank our South Plainfield veterans. Ms. Pinelli mailed the cards to the American Legion Chaumont Post #243 located on Oak Tree Avenue. The veterans were surprised and appreciative. Students pictured:*

*Josie Joseph and Natalie Travers and Cassie Penny, Savannah Anesh, Cador Plum, Vishva Patel*



# SMART KIDS, SMARTER HABITS



We have crafted a program that entails two sessions throughout the year where we and a group of dedicated volunteers will work with the students to enhance their financial literacy. We want the students of South Plainfield Middle School to be able to get a head start on financial literacy early on in their academic career. We feel that an early start on financial literacy is important because it will allow children to understand how money can best be used.

Don't let your kids miss out on a head start about:

- The Responsibilities of Money
- Managing Savings
- Common Sense Budgeting
- The Risks of Debt
- Investing in Oneself

At the Middle School Information Center on February 16 at 2:30.

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**GETTING AN  
EARLY  
START ON  
FINANCIAL  
LITERACY**

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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: Mrs. Santiago ext. 2602*

*Guidance*

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

*School Nurse*

- *Mrs. Wollman: ext. 2620*

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