

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

On Wednesday morning, I attended the quarterly meeting of the West Seneca Academy Advisory Board. The Board and its members are made up of educators and business representatives who support students in Career and Technical Education in the district through mentorship, internships, and special programming. West Seneca Schools Director of Academies & CTE, Dr. Robert Merkle, shared a report on student enrollment, which is seeing an uptick for next year, and the progress of those already enrolled in a variety of highly successful programs in our schools. Additionally, Dr. Merkle shared the prototype of an informative and visually beautiful Academy Programs booklet that a student intern is putting the finishing touches on. We will post it on our website for all to see in the near future.



CAREER CAFES AT EAST MIDDLE

During a recent Career Cafe session at East Middle, local veterinarian, Dr. Jennifer Marie Garofalo, visited with interested 6 – 8th graders. These cafes, during the school day, feature a variety of professionals from different backgrounds. The school's counselors, Warren Yokom and Ann Marie Canaple, try to schedule up to two sessions per month, basing guests on students' interest inventories. Next up: Detective, Civil-Water/Wastewater Engineer, Occupational Therapist, electrical engineer, information technologist, women in STEM, and cosmetology—the list keeps growing! Students are attentive, engaged, and asked great questions.

Mr. Yokom says, "Exposure is the key at this age, and we're grateful to provide these opportunities to our students. Also, maintaining strong relationships with professionals in our community is important to us."



READING IS RADD

The RADD writing strategies program has been implemented at every grade level across the District and is seeing extraordinary results. For Mrs. Mary Verbeck’s kindergarten class, children learn that stories about such things as planets are non-fiction, and then they’re given RADD prompts that help them to write about and commit to memory the facts within the text. In writing about what they’ve just learned, students know that RADD asks them to take a question about the text and to use a writing formula in which they do the following: Restate, Answer, Detail, Detail. It’s essential early essay strategy, and it builds writing techniques that follow them through their entire K-12 education and beyond. The formula works!



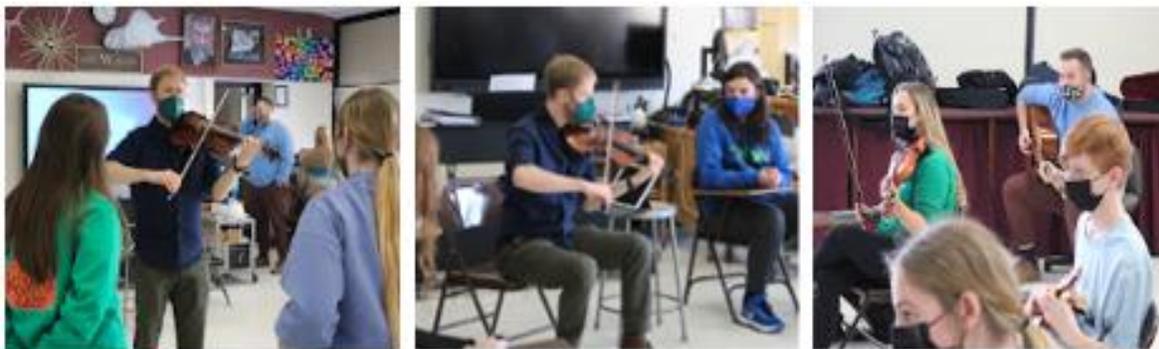
SCIENCE IS “COOL” IN MRS. NICOSIA’S ROOM!

Mrs. Taryn Nicosia’s 1st and 2nd graders at West Elementary have been busy learning about how animals in cold habitats stay warm! They experimented with different insulators to represent blubber, fur, and feathers. This week the students did research on penguins including the different types, how they move, and their life cycle. They also examined different specimens to determine what makes penguins different from other birds! They had a very scientific week reading, writing, and experimenting in the classroom!



MUSIC THEORY MASTER CLASS

West Seneca East music teacher Phil Farugia recently took his music theory students on a field trip to Springville for a master class with violinist and composer, Jeremy Kittel. Mr. Kittel is currently artist-in-residence at the Springville Center for the Arts. He is a Grammy-nominated artist, formerly of the award-winning Turtle Island Quartet, has collaborated as a composer-arranger with such diverse artists as My Morning Jacket, Yo-Yo Ma & the Silk Road Ensemble, and Béla Fleck & Abigail Washburn. In 2018, the Brooklyn-based artist built his own repertoire of music for a wholly original new group, Kittel & Co. which inhabits the space between classical and American roots music. The students were thrilled for the personal attention and inspiration they received from Mr. Kittel. Thank you to Mr. Farugia for consistently exposing our students to greatness.



ATHLETIC SCHOLARSHIPS

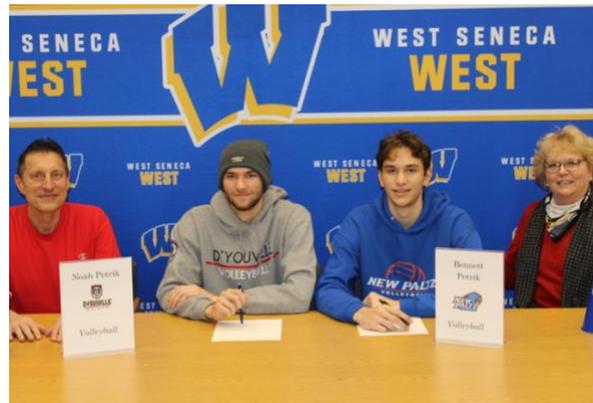
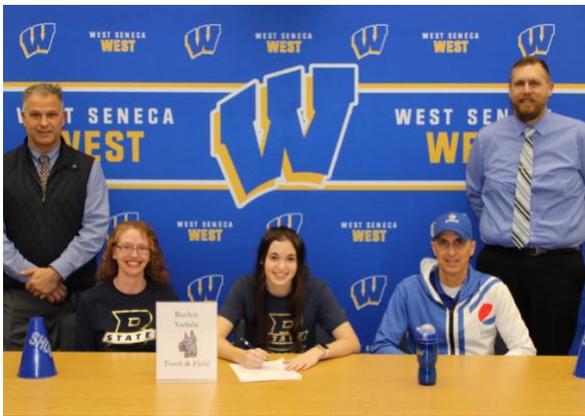
This week, seven of our top athletes signed with colleges and universities for a range of sports including football, volleyball, track & field and bowling. Anyone who follows West Seneca high school sports has undoubtedly heard the names of these students over and over for their winning achievements in sports and in the community. It was good to see our young scholar-athletes' talents pay off in ways that will serve them well in their academic pursuits. We are so proud of our athletes, coaches, and their families who dedicated themselves to making sure their athletes got everything they needed to succeed. So long, seniors. We'll undoubtedly be reading about your achievements in the future!

East Seneca High



(L) Noah Workman & (R) Kooper Aiken - Hilbert College - Division III Football

West Seneca High



Clockwise from top left: Raelyn Vadala – Bluefield State College – Div II Track & Field; Isaiah Simmons – Stony Brook University – Div I Football; Grace Miltenberger – Medaille College – Div III Bowling; Noah Petrik – D'Youville College – Div II Volleyball; Bennett Petrik – SUNY New Paltz – Div III Volleyball

JOSH ALLEN: THE MUSICAL

Beloved Buffalo quarterback Josh Allen and the Buffalo Bills may not appear in the Super Bowl in February, but from February 24 to March 19, Allen will be portrayed in "Seventeen: The (Unofficial) Josh Allen Musical". The short musical, co-written by West Seneca East music teacher Phil Farugia, along with Amy Jakiel, is about two guys playing the Madden video game together, who get the idea to invite Josh Allen to play with them. Seventeen explores the friends' attempts to get Allen to join. The play will be one of six featured in Alleyway Theatre's "Buffalo Quickies". Alleyway tickets can be [purchased by clicking here](#).



BLACK HISTORY MONTH

East Senior librarian, Michele Pava has curated a wide array of reading for Black History Month including fiction, non-fiction, and graphic novels, celebrating the accomplishments, voices, and experiences of People of Color in America. Click [this link](#) to see the featured titles for this month in East's Destiny catalog.



Enjoy the rest of today's snow day and your weekend!

Matthew Bystrak
Superintendent