

# A Publication of the Board of the Special Services School District and the Vocational Technical School District of the County of Salem



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## Students at Cumberland Campus' Fall Harvest

Students at the Special Services School District's Cumberland Campus created a garden last year planting sunflowers, watermelons and pumpkins. The students worked very hard in planting, watering and taking care of the garden. Then over the summer the students continued to water and watch the seeds they planted grow into an amazing crop.



Since the start of the school year, students in both the pre-school disabled (PSD) program and the K-2 Multiply-Disabled (MD) program have enjoyed taking part in this garden. The K-2 MD class along with the PSD class worked on weeding and harvesting the delicious watermelons which they shared with each of the students. Also the students all loved the pumpkin that they were able to grow. All the students agreed, the best part of growing the pumpkin was sitting on it.

"For some of the students sowing seeds and taking care of a garden was a totally new experience," said EvaMarie Raleigh, principal of the Cumberland Campus. "Seeing the joy on their faces as they got to harvest what they had grown was definitely a beautiful thing to see."



## RDS Celebrates Fire Prevention Week

Annually, the New Jersey Regional Day School at Mannington and the Mannington Fire Department combine efforts to demonstrate the needs for fire safety to the students of the school. The Mannington Fire Department brought a Fire Truck so that the students could see first hand what the trucks can do if there is a fire. The firemen also took the time to teach fire-safety lessons to the students.



"It's important for them to know what to do if there's a fire in their home," said Frank Maurer, principal. "They need to hear, don't hide under beds, don't hide in closets, staying out of the smoke, and getting out of the house and not going back."

## Message from the Superintendent

### Seeing the Trees and the Forest

We've all heard the expression, "You missed the forest for the trees." This month I would like to share with you some of the "trees" that make the forest of our school district so beautiful. Here are a few stories of some of our students.



One of our little autistic boys is making exceptional progress. This is largely due to his teacher, who is exceptional herself, and to the support of his mother. He is in one of our "satellite" programs. That is, his class is in one of the local elementary schools so that he can participate in regular education classes as he is able. He is doing well. In fact,

he is doing so well that our staff has begun to speak with this student's family about transitioning him back to his home district. The conversation was quite interesting on two counts; the mother is so happy with our district that she would like him to stay longer. And, she is also so happy with the host district that she is considering ways of keeping him in that school. The teachers and administration have been so supportive of our programs and of this child, that the mother doesn't want to think of him leaving that environment. This speaks so highly of our staff, the host school, and the staff of that local school. The entire situation is heart-warming. This is how it is supposed to work.

Standing in the cafeteria of the Career and Technical High School, I was approached by a share-time student. This high school boy began the conversation by telling me how happy he was at Vo-Tech. He then went on to say that prior to coming here, he had been a student at Daretown. He is now a fine student and very good athlete in his home

school. Again, I realized that "the system works." This young man is on his way to a very productive life. And, it was the combination of Daretown, the Vo-Tech, his home school and his athletic coaches that have helped him grow into the young man he is and that is launching him successfully into adulthood.

I attended a meeting this week about a gifted 8th grade student. He happens to be in one of our autistic programs and he is academically talented. As we were discussing possible placement offerings for him for high school, we realized that by the Vocational District and the Special Services District combining forces, this young man can have a high quality academic program, that focuses on his areas of strength (in his case Science and Math) in our own district. In his case, he would even have the same child study team and the support of a special education teacher. It is good to see such a complete safety net for students in Salem County.

Just a few days ago a student of the Academy of Biological and Medical Sciences came to see me to ask if the ABMS students could put their hand-prints into some new cement at the Career and Technical High School. The students are proud of their school and see the CTHS as their home school. It is quite exciting to see such school pride and ownership on the part of our students.

These are a few "trees" that I've seen this week. And, I'm sure that these stories could be multiplied over and over. Taken together, they create a picture of a full spectrum of services, a picture of cooperation and sharing to meet the needs of students.

Loren Thomas  
Superintendent of Schools

### Students Enrolled in Different Programs Take Part in Joint Lesson

Students enrolled in the Construction, Electrical, Law Enforcement and Public Safety, and Allied Health programs at the Career and Technical High School recently had the opportunity to experience an integrated joint lesson that included CPR, first aid and safety on the job.



The Allied Health students along with the students in the Law Enforcement program worked together to teach their fellow classmates enrolled in other programs the importance of knowing basic first aid techniques to help someone injured on the job. The students divided into groups to practice bandaging wounds, immobilizing broken bones and CPR techniques.



"The joint lesson was a great exercise in teaching these students on-the-job safety and basic first aid," said Allied Health instructor Johanna Herman. "That's what we're all about here," she said, "preparing students for future employment, to be safe on the job and how to take care of themselves and possibly fellow employees."

## Salem County Vo-Tech Air Force Junior ROTC Program Has Big Heart

By Shabria Davis, Today's Sunbeam (used with permission)

MANNINGTON TWP. - Many say that it is quality and not quantity that counts, which is the case for the Salem County Career and Technical High School's Air Force Junior ROTC program.

Though it's the smallest JROTC in the country, the kids that participate have plenty of heart.

The Salem County Vocational Technical School District unit, which has 35 students, is the smallest of all 875 Air Force JROTC programs around.

"If we would have applied today we would not have been accepted into the program, strictly because of our size," said instructor Col. John D'Auria. "But once they came down and



saw how great are kids are, they decided to keep us."

An interesting fact about the SCVTS Air Force JROTC program is that aerospace science instructor Chief Master Sgt. Eric Tucker holds

the highest possible rank in the Air Force.

"Only one percent of all active airmen are allowed to hold that rank, and we have him here," D'Auria said of his colleague.

As for Tucker, he is just happy to be a part of the students JROTC experience.

"I am just happy I get to share this with the kids," he said.

The students in the program all joined for various reasons. Some have siblings that went through the program; others believe the program will prepare them for a career in the military after high school.



"I have a brother and sister who are both in the program, and I saw how it gave them more citizenship and made them more respectful toward elders, so I thought it would be a good thing for me to be a part of," said freshman Lindsay Foster. "It also gives you a lot of opportunities and you gain a lot of respect from teachers."

Sophomore Alex Croci hopes he will be able to use what he learns in the

program after high school.

"I joined the program because I want to go to the Air Force Academy one day," he said.

Despite the hard work and dedication the program requires, the students enjoy their time spent in class. They look forward to their weekly challenges, during which two teams battle it out in a riveting game of "Jeopardy!" for the coveted prize -the presidential gold coin.

"They work hard every week, and whichever team loses is always upset," said D'Auria as he praised his students during a recent school board meeting.

Many of the students said they enjoy JROTC because they learn more than just Air Force rules and regulations.

"We learn a lot about leadership, manners, and other real-life situations," said freshman Laura Hergert.

"Yeah, we get to learn a lot about current events, as well as our peers," added Foster.

While the senior students enjoyed joking with their younger classmates during the Jeopardy! competition, they did have some advice for the "Jeeps" (as they are referred to by their instructors) on how to survive in the program during the next four years.

"Keep your head above the clouds and do your best," said senior Lucas Underwood.

"And stay active and remember to have fun," said fellow senior Trevor Murray.



### Upcoming Events

November 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>  
NJEA Professional Development for Teachers  
School Closed for Students and Faculty

November 9<sup>th</sup>  
Veterans Day - District Closed

November 15<sup>th</sup> - 21<sup>st</sup>  
American Education Week

November 17<sup>th</sup>  
Board of Education Meeting - 7 p.m.

November 19<sup>th</sup>  
SCVTS/SCSSSD Community Advisory Board - 6 p.m.

## Students Participate in Artist-in-Residency Program

Students at the Daretown School will participate in an art project thanks to an artist-in-residency grant from Appel Farm. Artist Pauline Houston McCall will work with students and the district's art teacher, Christina Calabrese, to create a positive and contemplative space for students, parents and the school community. Ms. Calabrese will be paired with Ms. McCall during all of her visits to the school which will take place on Mondays. The elementary students will alternate with the secondary students each week.



Pauline Houston McCall (second from left) meets with staff and students at the Daretown School to discuss ideas for the wall mural.

The artist-in-residency program is a three-year program. In year one, students will help create a mural in the main foyer of the school. The mural will be a dreamscape of imagery and words taken from the students' artwork and poetry. In year two, students will create handmade clay tiles that will be incorporated into the remaining walls of the foyer. In year three, the artist and students will design painted furniture for the space.

"The goal of the project," said Dr. Jim D'Amato, principal of the school, "is using creativity as a springboard to build self-esteem in the students and increase positive behavior." In addition, Dr. D'Amato said, the themes explored in the artist-in-residency program will directly support the school's curriculum.

Pauline Houston McCall received her B.A. from the Moore College of Art and Design. She is a multimedia artist (drawing, sculpture, painting and music) and an energetic educational professional. Pauline has worked for The Philadelphia Museum of Art, Congresso de Latinos Unidos, the Village of Arts and Humanities, the Mural Arts Program, and Perkins Center for the Arts. She is also the founder and director of "WOMEN HOLLER," a nationally acclaimed collective of women artists who encourage each other through the creative process. She performs as lead vocalist for the Philly Soul band, Moka.

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