

## **Superintendent's Student & Staff Accomplishments June 7, 2023**

**Last Day of School:** The last day of school for students is Friday, June 9<sup>th</sup>. I wanted to let parents know that we will be serving breakfast to students on Friday, but no lunch. Our schools will be dismissing 3-hours early on Friday.

**East Cardinal Softball Team:** Congratulations to the Pocono Mountain East Cardinal Girls Softball team on earning the District XI 5A Championship title by defeating Whitehall 7 to 6. This is the East Softball team's second District XI 5A Championship title.

**East Cardinal Baseball Team:** Congratulations to the Pocono Mountain East Cardinal Baseball team on earning the District XI 5A Championship title by defeating Pleasant Valley 4 to 3. The East Baseball team defeated Upper Dublin 4-2 to advance to the Quarterfinal Round of the State Tournament. They will be playing tomorrow evening in Fredericksburg, PA, at 4 p.m. against Greencastle-Antrim.

**PIAA State Swim Championships:** West High School Junior Carter Mui finished 9<sup>th</sup> in the 100-meter breaststroke with a time of 56.81 in the PIAA state swimming championships at Bucknell University.

**Elementary Spelling Bee:** Each year, Pocono Mountain School District and Pocono Mountain Education Association work together to coordinate an Elementary Spelling Bee. Classroom-level competitions were held in each homeroom in grades 3 through 6. Winners from the classroom competitions moved on to the grade-level building competitions. The top four spellers from the grade-level building competitions moved on to the district-wide championship held on May 31<sup>st</sup>.

Congratulations to the following students who spelled their way to a 1st place victory in the district-wide championship:

- Grade 3, Aviana Moses from Tobyhanna Elementary Center
- Grade 4, Peyton Valderrama from Swiftwater Intermediate School
- Grade 5, Rylee Colville from Tobyhanna Elementary Center
- Grade 6, Ethan Moncher from Clear Run Intermediate School

**Digital Media Competition:** East High School Senior Oksana Wojcik received a \$400 cash prize for her 2<sup>nd</sup> place award winning entry in the PA Society of Biomedical Research digital media contest “Biomedical Research Saves Lives.” The contest was for students in grades 6 to 12 from Pennsylvania, West Virginia and New Jersey. The purpose for the contest was to recognize students who digitally demonstrate a superior understanding of the connection between their life and biomedical research. Oksana was a participant in the Video and Music Production class with Mr. Eick and Mrs. Baldauff.

**East Junior High School Update:** The following East Junior High School students attended and helped their teams win at the NPCTM Math Contest at Johnson College in Scranton on May 25th. Congratulations to:

- 7<sup>th</sup> Grader Melody Plywaczewski a member of the 1st place team for 7th/8th grade
- 8<sup>th</sup> Grader Abigail Malyszko a member of the 2nd place team for 7th/8th grade
- 7<sup>th</sup> Grader Isabella Cubeta a member of the 3rd place team for 7th/8th grade

High Notes Music Festival: The East Junior High bands and choirs were adjudicated at the High Notes Music Festival in Allentown on May 31<sup>st</sup>. The 130 students who participated were all awarded with superior and excellent ratings. They are taught by Mr. Bill Bock, band director, and Ms. Aubrey Parry, Choir Director.

PA Junior Academy of Science State Competition: Eight East Junior High School students competed in the Pennsylvania Junior Academy of Science State Competition May 14<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup>. The Pennsylvania Junior Academy of Science (PJAS) is a statewide organization of junior and senior high school students designed to stimulate and promote interest in science among its members through the development of research projects and investigations. All of the students did extremely well, with 5 students earning First Awards and 3 students earning Second Awards. A special congratulations goes out to 8th grader Finn McGovern, who earned a Director's Award for Junior High Excellence in Microbiology.

- Junior High First Awards were earned by 8<sup>th</sup> graders Julian Rivera, Sean King, Cole Clifford, and Finn McGovern, and 7<sup>th</sup> grader Jasper Shelton.
- Junior High Second Awards were earned by 8<sup>th</sup> grader Sophia Ardioni and 7<sup>th</sup> graders Miriam Thomas and Sheena Patel.

PMSD Lego Robotics Expo: Several students in grades 5 to 8 attended the PMSD Lego Robotics Expo held at West Junior High School in April. Lego Robotics is a program overseen by the gifted teachers in the district, and it allows students to demonstrate what they have learned about the different areas of STEM. This year the theme was “Superpowered,” and the students explored energy and the essential role it plays in keeping our world running, from the machines that move us to the food that sustains us to the wireless technologies that connect us. The East Junior High team was made up of six 7<sup>th</sup> graders, and together they were challenged in the areas of robot design, robot games (building mission models and coding the robot to complete different missions) and creating an innovation project that reimaged a better energy future, all while focusing on core values such as teamwork, inclusion, fun, discovery, innovation and impact. This amazing team came up with the idea of a wind bus, which uses several different types of energy, but when able, the bus is fully powered by wind using the wind turbine located on the front of the bus. Congratulations to the East Junior High Lego Robotics team of Melody Plywaczewski, Miriam Thomas, Jasper Shelton, Kylie Steele, Nicole Sobolev, and Valerie Cooper on a job well done.

**West High School Update:** The West High School ESports team, the Blue Panthers Smash team, advanced to the quarter final rounds in the PlayVs Super Smash Brothers Ultimate tournament in April before falling to RP Scallywags from Ridgefield Park Jr./Sr. High School. The West team of Quinton Abbot, Andrew Church, and Joseph Kulik finished 8th out of 64 teams.

The West High School ESports team also competed in the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Esport Association (PIEA) Super Smash Brothers Ultimate Championship rounds on May 13th at Pittsburgh Technical College. They fought a tough and close competition against Nazareth but fell just short of the championship round in the semifinals. They were able to win the consolation match against Bishop McDevitt to finish third in the PIEA state

ranking. The team consisted of Quinton Abbot, Amir Batiz, Andrew Church, Joseph Kulik, and Kai Nascimento.

All-State Basketball Champ: Congratulations to West High School senior Julian Pagan, who was selected for the All-State Class 5A men's basketball team this year. He is West High School's 6th honoree in the school's history and will continue his basketball and academic careers at Kutztown University in the fall.

Excellence in Education: Mrs. Brenda Fladger, West High School assistant principal, received a 2023 Excellence in Education Award from IU 20 at their annual dinner held on May 11th. Mrs. Fladger received this award for the annual West High School Black History Celebration Assemblies.

National Honor Induction Ceremonies: May 11th, the West High School held its annual National Honor Society induction ceremony, and for the first time ever, its National English Honor Society and Science National Honor Society induction ceremonies. Congratulations to the 72 students who were newly inducted into these 3 honors societies.

**West Music Accomplishments:** On Friday, May 5<sup>th</sup> the West Junior High and West High School Jazz Ensembles traveled to Delaware Valley High School where they performed in a jazz festival and received a rating based on their performance. Both Jazz Ensembles received the highest possible rating. The high school group also won awards for: Outstanding Trumpet Section, Outstanding Reed Section, and Outstanding Rhythm Section. Senior Billy Bolan also received an award for Outstanding Trumpet Soloist.

**TEC Paper Airplane Guy:** On May 22<sup>nd</sup>, Tobyhanna Elementary Center students enjoyed assemblies with John Collins, The Paper Airplane Guy, who created a world-record setting paper airplane design. Mr. Collins' paper airplane flew 226 feet, 10 inches in 2012. He held the world record for 10 years. Students enjoyed learning about gravity, drafting, aerodynamics and other STEM-related concepts during the assembly that featured various paper airplane designs including the boomerang which flies out and then circles back and returns to its sender when thrown. Students then tried to recreate Mr. Collins' record setting design as he provided step-by-step folding instructions for students to follow. A special

thanks to Blue Ridge Communication for sponsoring Mr. Collins' assemblies at TEC.

**East High School Update:** Congratulations to the following East High School MCTI Outstanding Students of the Quarter:

- Ashley Cuoco in Horticulture
- Carlos Vergara in 9<sup>th</sup> Grade – English and Math
- Khamorah Walton in Health Professions 2
- Kayla Krayeski in Health Professions 1
- Makai Reid in Welding
- Gabriel Romano in Electrical Technology

**PA Junior Academy of Science:** Congratulations to the East High School PJAS team members for their accomplishments at the Pennsylvania Junior Academy of Science state competition.

- High School First Award winners are as follows: Seniors Madison Rios, Daniella Erlanger and Alissa King, Sophomores Nicholas Ingrassia and Lila Shelton, and Freshman Ryan Sanon.
- High School Second Award winners are as follows: Seniors Alexa Petroff, Jessica Rinaldi, Katherine Gude, Alexandra Bock and Katelyn Ingrassia, Sophomore Connor Straub, and Freshman Frank Palmenta.

Congratulations to all our PJAS participants, Mrs. Maureen Elswick, Mr. Keith Walters, Dr. George Croll, and Mrs. Suzanne Croll for all of their hard work.

**West Junior High School Envirothon:** The Pocono Mountain West Junior High Envirothon team swept places 1st through 5th at the competition this week. Thank you to Dr. and Mrs. Feuerstein for all of their hard work with the team members and congratulations to all of the students who participated in Envirothon.

**Clear Run Elementary Center Update:** Clear Run Elementary Center would like to thank Dr. Robison, Ms. Lopez, and Mr. Strunk for stopping by on May 16<sup>th</sup> to visit the school. Coincidentally, their visit fell on the same

day as the Super Paw Pawlooza. The Super Paw Pawlooza is an annual event when students get to cash in their hard-earned Dojo points for special treats, activities, and other incentives.

In addition to thanking the Super Paw committee for their hard work and commitment, CREC would like to commend music teachers, Ms. DeBella and Ms. Williams, for their recent second grade virtual performance of "Carnival of Animals." Each of the nine 2nd grade classes performed three different songs for their assigned animal for the piece of music by Camille Saint-Saëns, and many of the performance decisions were made by the students. A link to these performances can be found on the school website.

**Swiftwater Elementary Center Update:** Swiftwater Elementary Center continues to give back to the community. Students at SEC partnered with the East High School and Four Diamonds Mini-Thon. The SEC school community raised \$1,333.79 to support Childhood Cancer research. The SEC Mini-Mini-THON Committee hosted a Pie in the Face quarter fundraiser and students participated in mini-dance breaks throughout the school day on May 12<sup>th</sup>. Three staff members "won" the Pie in the Face for the most quarter donations. Officer Joe, Mr. Holland and Ms. Mosher received a pie in the face on the SEC news live broadcast.

Plant Sale: Swiftwater Elementary Center's hardworking PTO recently hosted a plant sale to benefit SEC PTO programming throughout the school year. The timing was perfect as students carefully chose plants to share with family members during Mother's Day Weekend. All students had the opportunity to peruse the beautiful plant sale displays with their classmates, to learn about the types of flowers, vegetables and herbs on display. SEC appreciates its PTO.

**Graduation Ceremonies:** The East Class of 2023 graduation ceremony will be held at Cardinal Stadium on the Swiftwater Campus on Friday at 6 p.m. The West Class of 2023 graduation ceremony will be held at Panther Stadium on the Sullivan Trail Campus on Saturday at 10 a.m. Tickets are required for admittance to attend the graduation ceremonies. Congratulations to all of our seniors who will be graduating on Friday night and Saturday morning.

**Special Presentations:**

**Odyssey of the Mind World Finals:** I have very exciting news to share with the board and our school community. We had three teams from the district qualify to compete at the Odyssey of the Mind World Finals, that took place at Michigan State University over Memorial Day weekend. Two teams were from the East Junior High School and one team was from the East High School. All three teams did amazing.

The East Junior High team that competed in Problem 5, The Most Dramatic Problem Ever!!! Division 2, placed 3<sup>rd</sup> out of 65 teams from across the United States and around the world. This team earned the highest score of any team in the competition in the long-term problem and style portions of the competition, and was the highest placing team in this problem for the United States.

The East Junior High School team that competed in Problem 1, Pirates of the Treasure Division 2, placed 5<sup>th</sup> out of 61 teams from across the United States and around the world.

The East High School team that competed in Problem 5, The Most Dramatic Problem Ever!!! Division 3, place 9<sup>th</sup> out of 42 teams from across the United States and around the world.

We are very proud of all of our Odyssey of the Mind teams, and especially our three teams that excelled at regionals, states and at the world finals. Congratulations to the World Final teams and their team advisors, Jennifer Fiore and Galen Smith, for the East Junior High teams, and Kevin Semian, for the East High School team.

Pocono Mountain School District offers Odyssey of the Mind as an after-school activity open to students in grades 4 to 12. Students try out to be part of these creative problem-solving teams. Each student brings their own individual talents to the team, which may include mechanical or building skills, artistic skills, problem-solving skills, and many other Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Mathematics (STEAM) skills and talents needed to take on the challenges of the Odyssey of the Mind problems that change every year.

**Make-A-Wish Presentation:** I would like to bring forth Mr. Tom Brogan, PSEA Union President, for a special check presentation to the Make-A-Wish Foundation.

**Other Reports:**

**East eSports Report:** As part of my report tonight, I invited Mrs. Toleno, the East High School Principal, and the East High School Esports Team to provide us with an update on their program.

The East High School eSports Team became a reality during the 2021-22 school year. It has grown tremendously during the 2022-23 school year. Members of the East High School eSports Team will share the exciting experiences they have had as members of this team.

**Presenters:**

Jessica Allhouse, Esports Co-Advisor  
Jason Anglada, Esports Co-Advisor  
eSports Team Members