



# THE LEARNING SUMMIT

ACADEMIC HIGHLIGHTS PRESENTED BY THE  
OFFICE OF CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

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## DISTRICT SPOTLIGHT:

### THE SUMMIT PUBLIC SCHOOLS CELEBRATE BLACK HISTORY MONTH

This month, we continue to celebrate Black and African-American culture, traditions, and accomplishments in Summit and our world.

#### SUMMIT HIGH SCHOOL HOSTS BLACK HISTORY MONTH PANEL DISCUSSION

By Elizabeth Aaron, SHS Assistant Principal



Above: Councilwoman Susan Hairston (top row, third from left), Assistant Principal Elizabeth Aaron (top row, first from left) and the organizing committee of SHS students.

The Black History Month Panel was offered to SHS students and teachers to celebrate the theme of "Dreaming and Doing", focusing on our individual and shared stories as a way to think about how we can work to support and strengthen each other and work toward Dr. King's "Beloved Community." Panelists were introduced by the high school administrators and the program ran twice in the morning for students and staff to attend.

Panelists were Dr. John Jeffries, a retired educator and anti-racism activist, Ms. Susan Hairston, a member of the SHS Class of 1979, parent of SHS graduates, and Summit's first African-American councilmember, and Sheline Tate, an SHS parent and health care professional and advocate. Panelists were greeted and hosted by the students who worked with the high school administrative team to organize the event.

Panelists connected their own family histories to the Great Migration and the civil rights movement and provided examples of how their own goal-setting and achievement is part of the larger narrative of the American story toward justice and equality.

#### JEFFERSON SCHOOL FIRST GRADERS ENGAGE IN BIOGRAPHICAL RESEARCH

by Natalie Vince, Jefferson School First Grade Teacher

Students in Bianca Brucato, Laura Kuruc, and Natalie Vince's first grade classes and Vanessa Abrantes, Melissa Fusari, and Arthur Rodgers's second grade classes at Jefferson School learned about important Black and African-American historical figures through read alouds, grand conversations, and research projects.

Students independently utilized the website PebbleGo and studied biographies about famous African American athletes, civil rights leaders, explorers, inventors and business leaders, musicians, authors, artists, politicians, and scientists. After initial research students chose a person to study closely. Then, they wrote facts about their individual in their social studies journals. To conclude, students created a Buncee to teach others what they learned.



Left: District Technology Coach Bonnie Weinstein supports a first grade student.

Students were able to share their creations with their classmates. The students truly enjoyed this independent, interactive, and creative endeavor!



## SURVIVORS SPEAK AT LCJSMS

By Grace Buonpane, Language Arts Teacher at LCJSMS

On Thursday, January 23, 2020 Lawton C. Johnson Summit Middle School hosted Holocaust survivors from The Holocaust Council of Jewish Federation of Greater Metrowest. They addressed 8th grade students through a program called "Survivors Speak", and shared their experiences. This program was created for The Morris Museum as part of their outreach to schools. This is Summit's seventh year participating.



Above: Image created by LCJSMS student Natalie Jorek.

Along with their language arts teacher, Grace Buonpane, 8th grade students read The Diary of Anne Frank, and researched the background of that time period. As one can imagine, nothing compares to hearing first-hand testimony. The survivors are models of strength and courage that impacted everyone heard them speak.

### ABOUT US:

The Learning Summit is a newsletter dedicated to sharing academic highlights and information related to curriculum and instruction in the Summit Public Schools.

Sincerely, Jennifer McCann and Tanya Lopez

## SPOTLIGHT ON PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:

### SUMMIT TECHNOLOGY COACHES PRESENT AT NATIONAL CONFERENCE

The Summit Public Schools values education for all, including our teachers! Our technology department not only supports the management of technology resources and programs, but also provides professional development on how to use technology to support teaching and learning.



In January, District Supervisor of Technology Doug Orr and elementary technology coaches Trudy Cohen, Matt Schactel, and Bonnie Weinstein attended the 40th Anniversary FETC Conference in Florida, an educational technology conference. Technology coaches attended daily sessions on a large variety of EdTech (Educational Technology) topics and focus areas.

Matt Schactel notes that the team, "...was also selected to present at the conference two different sessions, one focused on our district's coding/robotics initiative and the other on providing professional development in a 1:1 setting."





## WHO'S WHO IN THE SUMMIT PUBLIC SCHOOLS: SPOTLIGHT ON OUR DISTRICT'S LIBRARY/ MEDIA DEPARTMENT

### ELEMENTARY LIBRARY MEDIA DEPARTMENT

The elementary library media program is part of the "specials rotation" and is delivered through weekly instruction followed by book selection/check out with a progression of skills through

the grades. The curriculum includes Literature Appreciation, Digital Citizenship, Research and Inquiry, and Coding and Robotics.

School librarians also support a variety of special events , including collaboration with classroom teachers, annual author visits, Hour of Code, World Read Aloud Day, Read Across America, the WhoWas History Bee, and Battle of the Books.

#### Follow us on Twitter:

Franklin School @flicsummit

Lincoln-Hubbard School @LHCommons

Washington School @LCWSsummit

### ZOOM IN ON... **BATTLE OF THE BOOKS**

All fourth and fifth graders are invited to participate in Battle of the Books, a reading motivation program sponsored by the New Jersey Association of School Librarians (NJASL). The goals of the program are to encourage reading for pleasure, to broaden interests, and to have fun reading and talking about books. The Summit Elementary School Librarians received a grant from the Summit Educational Foundation (SEF) to purchase the books necessary to run a Battle of the Books program. The program is extracurricular and completely voluntary.

Student teams meet in their school library under the direction of the school librarian once a week during lunch recess to check in with their teams.



Students are encouraged to read as many of the books as they choose, but must commit to reading at least three of the 15 offered titles. School battles begin in February, and cross-school district battles occur in March.

### SUMMIT HIGH SCHOOL MEDIA DEPARTMENT

More than half of the school has cycled through the media center over the last few weeks with students working on research papers.

Students have learned about primary vs. secondary sources, advanced search strategies, website evaluation, and evaluating sources for bias, misinformation, and disinformation.



In addition to research, our student book club met and discussed the memoir Educated by Tara Westover. Members enjoyed reading and discussing this book and look forward to exploring our next book this spring.

**To learn more**, please check out our website <http://shslibrarynj.weebly.com/> or follow us on Twitter: @SHSLibMedia and Instagram @shslmc



## LCJSMS MEDIA DEPARTMENT

The library program at the middle school is flexibly scheduled, meaning that teachers from all subject areas bring their classes in for projects on an as-needed basis.

Teaching information literacy is a cornerstone of our program and we update our practices to reflect current trends in teaching.

One trend that has taken hold in education is gamification, which motivates students to learn by incorporating game elements into lessons. Breakout EDU is a popular tool being used in classrooms around the world to make learning more engaging for students. Breakout EDU activities are similar to Escape Rooms where students have to work collaboratively and utilize critical thinking skills to break codes, solve puzzles and riddles and unlock physical and digital locks.

We are fortunate to have Breakout boxes and a variety of locks thanks to PTO and SEF grants and have created Breakout experiences for 6th grade Library Orientation, 8th grade Whodunnit, and the 7th grade Lewis and Clark unit.



6th grade Language Arts students learn all about the LCJSMS Library Learning Commons with a Breakout EDU activity



7th grade Social Studies students work together to crack a code with a Lewis and Clark-themed Breakout EDU.

Student response has been overwhelmingly positive:

“It really is a fun activity that gets kids thinking and learning.” - 7th Grader

“I enjoyed the activity because I think it was an amazing way to educate kids about the expedition - never would I ever trade that experience for anything...” - 7th Grader

“I enjoyed the activity because it was interactive and involved thinking.” - 8th Grader

I really liked this activity, it made us move around a lot and was hard, but not too hard. It exercised our brains.” - 8th Grader

“Never give up. You might not solve the problem the first time.” - 8th Grader

To learn more about our program, please follow us on Twitter: @LCJSMSlibrary and Instagram @lcjsms\_library

### A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO SUMMIT'S SCHOOL LIBRARIANS:

Judith Shue and Rebecca Zarabi (SHS), Karen Doherty and Beth Thomas (LCJSMS), Cindy Abramov (Washington), Courtney Kaczynski (Brayton), Loreli Stochaj (Franklin), Carole Stubeck (Lincoln-Hubbard), and Kyrsten Thomas (Jefferson)