

**DECEMBER  
2024**

# Newsletter

## FROM THE CHAIR'S DESK

Dear Friends,

**Welcome to the new and improved Smithtown Democrats newsletter!**

We've redesigned it to bring you clearer updates, actionable ways to get involved, and a renewed focus on what really matters to our community.

Smithtown deserves real change, and together, we can make it happen. This month's issue is packed with updates, upcoming events, and ways you can take part in building a stronger, more united community. Every action counts, and your voice is an important part of this movement.

Special thanks to Shala Pascucci for putting together & kicking off our new newsletter!

**Thank you for being with us on this journey. Let's get to work!**

Phylliss Hart  
Chair, Smithtown Democrats

## IN THIS ISSUE

- **Upcoming Events**
- **How to Run for Office**
- **Hot Topic: Regionalization**
- **Volunteer Opportunities**
- **Call to Action: Your Voice Matters!**

**CONGRATS!**

**Aris Stavropoulos**  
is now a  
Committee  
Member of ED 2!

## UPCOMING EVENTS

 **Holiday Party: December 16th**

 **Gen. Membership Meeting: January 27th**

# Run for Office

## MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

Are you passionate about your community and ready to make a real impact?

**The Town of Smithtown has several key positions open for the next election**

## AVAILABLE POSITIONS

**2 legislators**

**2 Town Council**

**Supervisor**

**Superintendent of Highway**

## WHAT DO THEY DO?

- **Legislators:** Represent Smithtown in the Suffolk County Legislature, creating laws and budgets for the county.

- **Town Council Members:** Help make decisions and set policies for Smithtown, working with the Town Board.

- **Town Supervisor:** Acts as the chief executive of Smithtown, overseeing daily operations and managing the budget.

- **Superintendent of Highways:** Responsible for maintaining and repairing town roads, drainage, and public infrastructure.

# Run for Office

## Q & A

### Legislator:

**Q: What do legislators do?**

A: They represent Smithtown in the Suffolk County Legislature, making laws and managing the county budget.

**Q: What qualifications do you need?**

A: You must be at least 18 years old, a U.S. citizen, and a resident of the district you wish to represent.

**Q: Is this a paid position?**

A: Yes, it is a paid position.

**Q: Is this a full-time or part-time job?**

A: It is considered a part-time position, though it often requires significant time and commitment.

### Town Council Members:

**Q: What do town council members do?**

A: They work on the Town Board to make decisions and set policies for Smithtown.

**Q: What qualifications do you need?**

A: You must be at least 18 years old, a U.S. citizen, and a resident of Smithtown.

**Q: Is this a paid position?**

A: Yes, it is a paid position.

**Q: Is this a full-time or part-time job?**

A: It is typically considered a part-time position, though it may require substantial time for meetings and other duties.

### Town Supervisor

**Q: What does the Town Supervisor do?**

A: The Supervisor is the chief executive of Smithtown, managing the town's operations and budget.

**Q: What qualifications do you need?**

A: You must be at least 18 years old, a U.S. citizen, and a resident of Smithtown.

**Q: Is this a paid position?**

A: Yes, the Supervisor receives a salary.

**Q: Is this a full-time or part-time job?**

A: It is a full-time position.

### Superintendent of Highways

**Q: What does the Superintendent of Highways do?**

A: They are responsible for maintaining and repairing town roads and infrastructure.

**Q: What qualifications do you need?**

A: You must be at least 18 years old, a U.S. citizen, and a resident of Smithtown.

**Q: Is this a paid position?**

A: Yes, it is a paid position with a set salary.

**Q: Is this a full-time or part-time job?**

A: It is a full-time position.

# Hot Topics

## UNDERSTANDING: *REGIONALIZATION* WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

### INTRO

There's a lot of talk—and confusion—about regionalization in NY schools. It's not about closing schools or mandates. Instead, it's a voluntary plan from NYSED to help districts save money and prepare for possible budget cuts.

This section clears up the myths, explains the facts, and shows why it matters.

**Let's get the story straight!**

### WHAT IS REGIONALIZATION?

It's a voluntary way for schools to work together and share resources, special education programs, subscriptions, etc. to save money and stay sustainable.

### TOP 5 THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW

#### 1. It's Not Mandatory!

☞ Schools can choose whether they want to participate.

#### 2. NYSED is Leading the Way.

☞ This is a plan from Commissioner Betty Rosa and her team—not Hochul or the Legislature.

#### 3. Why Now?

☞ State budget cuts could mean less funding for schools. NYSED wants to help districts prepare before it's too late.

#### 4. It Will Save Money.

☞ Schools can combine services to lower costs and stretch their budgets further.

#### 5. No School Closures, Merging, or Consolidation.

☞ This is about helping schools thrive—not shutting them down.

## LET'S CLARIFY SOME THINGS:

What People Say	True or False?	What's Really Going On
"All schools have to regionalize—it's mandated!"	<b>False</b>	Regionalization is entirely voluntary. Schools decide if they want to participate. <b>No mandates.</b>
"This is something Hochul or the Legislature is pushing."	<b>False</b>	Not true. This is an initiative by NYSED and Commissioner Rosa, separate from the Governor or lawmakers.
"They'll shut down schools or consolidate them if this happens."	<b>False</b>	The plan is to support schools by sharing resources, not to close them. Regionalization can help schools thrive.
"Regionalization will save schools money, though, right?"	<b>True</b>	Yes! By sharing costs for things like subscriptions, programs, and staff training, <b>schools can save significantly.</b>
"Emergency Regulations (ER) mean something is wrong."	<b>False</b>	ERs are common tools to quickly implement measures that help districts sooner rather than later.
"Why are they even talking about this?"	<b>Good Question!</b>	Budget cuts are likely, and <b>NYSED is trying to help districts</b> plan ahead so they can adapt and stay strong.

## WHY SO MUCH MISINFORMATION?

### Political Motivation

- Some groups may use this as an opportunity to attack NYSED or the state government claiming it's about control or overreach. It's not.

### Resistance from Districts

- Some districts may resist sharing resources because of fear of losing autonomy or control. They won't.
- Larger or wealthier districts might worry they'll end up subsidizing smaller or poorer districts. They won't.

### Lack of Understanding

- The concept of regionalization might be new to many, and without clear information, people may jump to conclusions or spread rumors.
- Fear of Change
- Change is hard, especially when it comes to schools. Families and educators may worry about what regionalization could mean for their local schools.

## LETTER FROM NICK

Fellow Smithtown Democrats,

As we spend the remainder of 2024 celebrating the holidays with friends and family, and relaxing after a long campaign season, we must also begin looking to the future, both for our organization and the broader future of our party. Recruiting new members to our committee and recruiting candidates for town and county offices are paramount, and to do so we must remember what makes a committee like ours so great.

When I first joined the committee, I was recruited by other long-time members I had met during one of our local campaigns. Like many regular volunteers, I would be involved up until the end of the campaign, and then I would wait until the next one started up again. The Smithtown Democrats provided for me and many others a community of like-minded people who cared about the same issues I did. The Smithtown Democrats provided a home in a town dominated by our opponents.

Like those people who recruited me, we now have the responsibility to bring in new people. Speak to those you worked with on the campaigns who do not belong to any political groups. Reach out to friends, family, and colleagues who are like-minded and are eager to support our cause. Tell them what we stand for and what we do, because the Smithtown Democrats get it done. Tell them about the feeling you had when you made a change in this community, helped candidates countywide to win elections, and how their involvement can make our impact greater.

If we recruit new members, our committee gets stronger. And when we get stronger, winning in Smithtown as Democrats goes from the impossible to the possible.

Nicholas Cipollo  
1st Vice Chair  
Smithtown Democratic Committee

# Wrap Up

## BECOME A COMMITTEE MEMBER

- **Make an Impact:** Help choose candidates and shape the Democratic agenda.
- **Stay Connected:** Be the voice of your neighborhood and bring local concerns to the table.
- **Grow Your Skills:** Learn about campaigns, elections, and organizing.
- **Build Community:** Connect with like-minded people and local leaders.
- **Create Change:** Be part of the movement to strengthen Smithtown and beyond.

GET MORE INFO:

[smithtowndemocrats@gmail.com](mailto:smithtowndemocrats@gmail.com)

## NEXT MONTH

### Got Ideas? Let's Hear Them!


Have a suggestion for an event, an article, or a topic we should cover? We're always looking for ways to better serve our community and make an impact.

Give us a shout!

[smithtowndemocrats@gmail.com](mailto:smithtowndemocrats@gmail.com)

Together, we can do great things!

## HA HA! WE'RE FUNNY



- **Why did the Republican cross the road? To blame a Democrat for traffic.**



Smithtown  
DEMOCRATS