

Aid adds up for Port Jefferson STEM program

School district gets funding for learning at SBU

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Port Jefferson school district received additional state aid, secured by state Sen. Ken LaValle (R-Port Jefferson), to pursue studies in science, technology, engineering and mathematics, Superintendent Ken Bossert announced at Tuesday night's school board meeting.

The \$100,000 sum, to be shared with the neighboring Mount Sinai School District, will allow students at Earl L. Vandermeulen High School to participate in Stony Brook University's Center for Science and Mathematics Education. CESAME gives students educational and research opportunities in those disciplines, according to center's website.

Bossert said in an email Wednesday that he hopes the initiative will expand to include cooperation with Brookhaven National Laboratory.

The superintendent said previously, when the initiative was announced in June, that the program will run after school and district officials would approach specific students about the opportunity should it receive the state aid.

Port Jefferson received about \$45,000 of the funding and the remainder went to Mount Sinai for the districts' joint initiative. The two districts had appealed to LaValle for the aid earlier in the year and submitted a proposal for the program.

The funds will be used for students' tuition for CESAME and to pay for a faculty adviser and transportation costs, Bossert said Wednesday.

Port Jefferson students have participated in programs at SBU and BNL in the past, but on an individual basis. The superintendent previously said that working with Mount Sinai on the program will provide important opportunities for students and save money.

Of LaValle securing the funds for the district, Bossert said at Tuesday's meeting, "We truly appreciate his support. And our goal is to create a program that other districts can use as a model."

