

THE SPARTAN SPECTATOR

Principal's Newsletter



Dear Parents/Guardians and Students,

Welcome to fall! October, in Connecticut, is truly amazing. Cool breezes, leaf peeping, pumpkins, and football on the television. We have made it through our first month and I am ecstatic to report that things are going well. Hope I didn't jinx anything. I want to thank our staff, students, and parents for their efforts in helping us have a successful launch to the school year. Our teachers have been working incredibly hard to ensure continuity of learning for our students. We appreciate our students' investment in the process and the support of our parents as we continue to navigate this Covid learning environment. Our virtual open house is active and ready for you to view. Our very own English teacher, **Denise Collins**, put the site together and did a wonderful job. Please [click here](#) to gain access.

A few positive shout-outs are in order:

Congratulations go out to **Patrick Connors**. Patrick was designated as a Commended Student in the National Merit Scholarship Program. His excellent performance on the 2020 PSAT placed him with the top students nationwide who demonstrated exceptional academic promise. Congratulations on your hard work and achievement Patrick! We are so proud of you!

A big congrats goes out to our AP Calculus teacher, **Jenna Collins**, who had eight (8) AP calculus students in her class last year and all of them scored a five (5), which is the highest you can earn on an AP exam. That is a great accomplishment!

Please do not hesitate to reach out to your child's teachers, school counselors and, if applicable, to their special education case managers with any concerns you may have regarding your student's progress. As a reminder, should your child encounter any difficulties with computer equipment or access, please contact our high school IT support specialist, Tim Lord at tim.lord@somers.k12.ct.us. For inquiries specifically related to Google Classroom support, please reach out to our Library Media Specialist, Tenley Stoltz at tenley.stoltz@somers.k12.ct.us. If you are unable to access your ParentPortal account, please contact our CCC secretary, Valarie Kalinowski at Valarie.kalinowski@somers.k12.ct.us.

Again, we appreciate the support of our SHS families. You are playing a key role in the success of our efforts to provide the best possible learning experience for your children.

Stay well,
Gary Cotzin
Principal

Assistant Principal's Corner

Cheryl Gustafson

We are off to a great start this year. I have enjoyed having all of our students back in the building.



Spartan Code Winners

Congratulations to all of our students who have been recognized for going above and beyond in the school. When they receive a purple ticket, they come to the office for a small token of appreciation and they are asked to nominate a teacher for recognition. All are entered into a weekly prize drawing. This month's Spartan Code winners are Falicity Q, Amber E, and Isabella G.

Just a few reminders to continue our positive momentum:

Hooded sweatshirts

While hooded sweatshirts are allowed in our school, while we are in school the hood of the sweatshirt must stay down. As a safety measure, this requirement allows us to identify students who should be in the building.

Masks

As a reminder, students must wear masks while in the classroom and in our halls and masks must cover both the nose and mouth. Should a student require a mask break, but has not had a study hall, they may request a pass to the nurse or the main office and a staff member will escort them outside for a few minutes.

Student Parking

As a reminder, students must park in their assigned spaces in the student parking lot. If a student is not sure where their spot is located, please consult the main office staff for clarification.

Attendance

Please remember to call the main office attendance when your student is absent or tardy in the morning. It is important that all absences are excused either in writing or by telephone. The office is only able to excuse the first 9 absences when they have heard from the parent / guardian. After the 9th absence, a doctor's note, documentation of a legal obligation is required to excuse each absence.

Thank you all for your continued support. Here's to a fantastic October!

SCIENCE

Integrated Science Consumer Product Testing Lab

By Michelle Kelleher

The freshmen are off to a great start in Integrated Science this year! Working in groups they were asked to develop a marketing slogan for some of their favorite consumer products and test the validity of their claim against the product's leading competitors. An excellent and fun way to review the scientific method and put it into practice. Groups in Mrs. Kelleher's class tested the efficiency of Kirkland make-up remover wipes, the ability of Yeti to keep a liquid colder/hotter, the spreadability of butter, and a taste test to prove Lindt is the better tasting chocolate.

After creating their slogan, designing their experiment, then actually conducting their experimental trials, the groups were required to present their findings and data to the class as well as recommending whether or not the new marketing campaign should go forward or not. We had a lot of fun with this introductory activity!





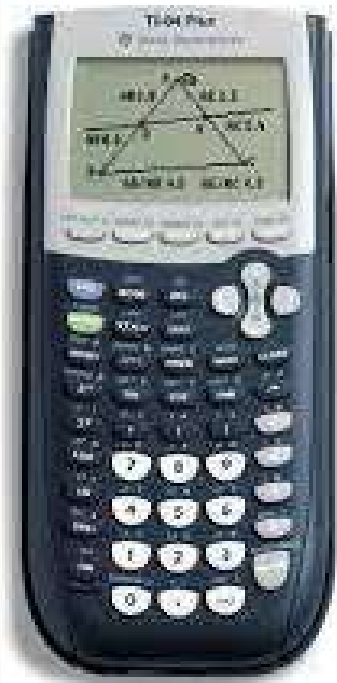
Celebrating Hispanic Heritage Month

In honor of Hispanic Heritage Month, Mr. Mangini's Spanish classes celebrated by researching words that have assimilated themselves into English from Spanish. With the words they found, students created a visual representation of the word with an explanation to add to the visual dictionary that demonstrates their new learning. As a final product, the students' words and images are on display in the hallway and classroom to share their informative creations with the school community. All members involved are excited to showcase their hard work and knowledge!



MATH DEPARTMENT ANNOUNCEMENT

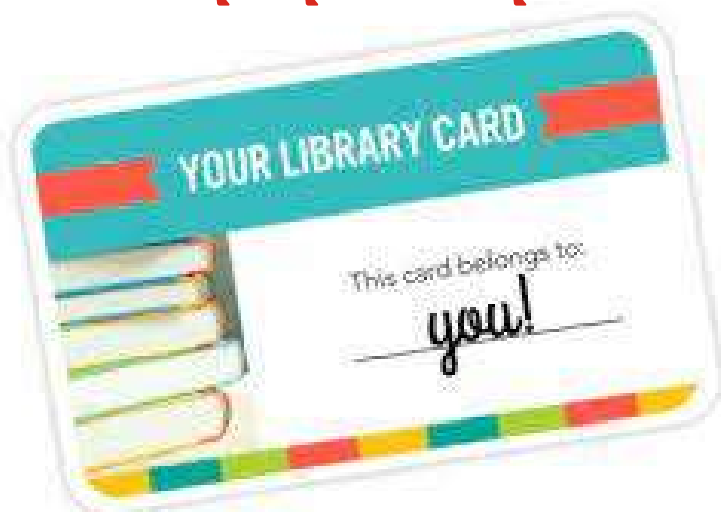
By Carla Castro



The Math Department at SHS is looking forward to a successful school year. Teachers have worked collaboratively to design courses that will offer students a common experience at each level. A rigorous curriculum is in place, and a graphing calculator is now required in every course, beginning with Algebra 2. It is highly encouraged that students obtain their own TI-84 graphing calculator in order to be successful in their math class. If there is a financial hardship that prohibits your student from obtaining their own calculator, please contact the administration.

SIGN UP FOR A LIBRARY CARD!

The Somers Public Library is celebrating National Library Card Sign Up Month!



Any teen who renews a card or gets a library card will receive a gift bag filled with books on a genre of their choice. Any student interested in renewing or getting a card is welcome to stop by the library for assistance.

NEWS FROM THE

Counseling & Career Center

Attention Senior Parents/Guardians:

School Counselors are busy meeting with seniors. Each senior receives a blue folder that contains a copy of the student's graduation status and helpful documents to guide students and families through the college application process.

Important discussion points include:

- Graduation status and requirements
- Discussing prospective colleges and the application process. It is our goal to have seniors prepared to apply to colleges before Thanksgiving break.
- Creating a CommonApp account for those students applying to 4 year colleges and updating their college list on Scoir as well as CommonApp.
- Making sure they're all set with their college essay which they have worked on through English classes.
- Asking teachers for letters of recommendation now, no more than two teachers, to give them enough time to write them.
 - The student needs to fill out the melon recommendation form and print a copy of their resume to give to the teacher.
 - The student should then request their teachers through Scoir.
- If students would like or need a school counselor statement, students need to fill out a Student Interview form.
 - We also ask that parents/guardians fill out the Parent Brag Sheet. We love to read your comments and add them to our letters!
 - These forms can be found in the CCC or [on our website](#).

If your student is still exploring college options, Columbus Day weekend is a great opportunity to visit colleges. Many have Open Houses scheduled. Registration is usually required. The College Tour website is also a helpful tool to utilize to take virtual tours of campuses you may not readily have access to. [See the link here](#).

Be on the lookout for important information on Financial Aid and upcoming College Rep virtual visits.

Notes from the Nurse



Eating for Optimal Health

With the upcoming colder months and activities moving us inside and closer to one another it is important to do what we can to protect ourselves from illness. What we put into our bodies is one of the most important indicators of our health. Our immune system is what helps us fight off viruses and even vaccines rely on our body's own immune systems to help prevent us from getting sick. Luckily eating plenty of the right foods can help boost our immune systems for the upcoming months. For example kiwi, broccoli, and strawberries are high in Vitamin C which is thought to increase white blood cell production helping us to fight infection.

Below is a brief article about 21 different “super foods” that are packed with high levels of vitamins and antioxidants that you could easily incorporate into your diet to help increase your immune system response and overall health. Of course other lifestyle factors play a major role in our health so make sure to get your body moving everyday, stay well hydrated, and get to bed at a reasonable hour. Unfortunately Covid-19 is still a reality for us but the more we can do to increase our own health the better we will fare against any illness.

[21 Immune-Boosting Winter 'Superfoods' to Fight Flu and COVID-19](#)



SPARTAN SPORTS



Over the summer, senior Noah Baptiste vaulted off his work as the captain of the SHS Esports team into a paid internship with New England Scholastic Gaming as a community organizer for their new Smite league. Noah will work with Mr. DeMatteo and Ms. Stoltz to expand the presence of esports in New England schools using Discord. The NESG is the official New England affiliate of the North American Scholastic Esports Federation or NASEF. The NESG only just began this summer so Noah is getting in on the ground floor. This is an exciting opportunity for Noah who plans to break into eSports tournament coordination in the years to come. Congratulations, Noah!



Somers Cross Country took part in Winding Trails Invitational in Farmington, CT. The girls team won their second invitational of the year by winning over NCCC rivals Ellington and Suffield. Rachel St. Germain set another course record and won the race by over a minute. Freshman Stephanie Burzynski finished 3rd for the Spartan girls. Gracie Flynn was 5th and April Kelly finished in the top 20. Ella Campion had a strong finish for the team.



The boys placed 6th and were led by Ben Campion finishing 7th and 19th by Alex Deveau. Bryce Huestis had a big Personal Record on the day and Freshman Cody Marks medaled in the JV race.

Clubs & Activities

Exploring STEM as "Community Scientists"

by Meg Duffy

Inspecting the water quality regularly at Lake Hurd at Camp Aya-Po in Somers kept two Girls in STEM Club members occupied this summer. Students **April Kelly** and **Sarah Cranna** became volunteer "community scientists" for the CT DEEP (Department of Energy & Conservation) Lake Watch Program which trains volunteers to measure water quality, and track and report their findings. Both students hope to pursue science as a career. "This gave me a taste of what it is like to gather field research and data," said Sarah Cranna.

The Girls in STEM Club was launched in early 2021 to create awareness and engage more girls in science and technical fields. Monthly meetings are held.

The DEEP Lake Watch Program welcomes both boys and girls to monitor local Somers lakes and streams. See Ms. Duffy in the CCC for more information about this volunteer program, or to learn more about the Girls in STEM Club.



PROJECT INVENT

@SHS

BY ERIN MAYNARD

The mission of Project Invent is to "empower youth to become confident, caring leaders who change the world." The program starts with design thinking, which leads to engineering, and finally entrepreneurship. Students are working with a Community Partner at our school to create a physical technology that includes an electronic component by April 2022.

This year, Project Invent has 107 participating teams in 70 schools across 21 states. **Somers High School is one of three schools in Connecticut offering this curriculum and the only public school out of the 3.** Building off of the interest in last year's Girls in STEM club and the success of the Women in Engineering Makerspace workshop, SHS was able to offer students this opportunity through a generous grant provided by the Somers Education Foundation. There are 12 students participating which means we will have two teams! From now until December, students will be needfinding by interviewing our community partner, synthesizing the information from their interview to determine a "how might we" statement, ideating to brainstorm options for a physical technology that meets the "how might we" statement, and initial prototyping of their idea selection. Our first milestone is Idea Review in December where each team will pitch their chosen idea and initial prototype to mentors from Stanford, MIT, and industry professionals for feedback.

Fundraiser in honor of Genevieve Neiman

About the Fundraiser

The Class of 2024 is hosting a fundraiser in which students will bring in a dollar a day and participate in the spirit week in honor of Genevieve Neiman. Each day has a theme of something Genevieve loved.

With the proceeds the Class of 2024 will purchase a brick sponsorship at the Macie's Place Splash Pad which will state,

"In Loving Memory of Genevieve Neiman, forever in our hearts. Love, Class of 2024"

If we have extra proceeds, they will be given to Genevieve's family to build the scholarship fund in her honor or to donate to a cause of their choice.

ALL ARE WELCOME AND ENCOURAGED TO PARTICIPATE



Date	Theme
October 25th 	Wear something Disney because Genevieve loved Disney
October 26th 	Wear something orange or gold (yellow) because the orange ribbon represents those suffering from Leukemia and the gold represents children suffering from cancer
October 27th 	Wear something UConn because Genevieve wanted to attend UConn
October 28th 	Wear a headband, barrette, or hair accessory because Genevieve always had a hair accessory
October 29th 	Wear something Halloween because Genevieve loved Halloween

THE CLASS OF 2024 IS LOOKING FOR YOUR GENTLY USED SHOES!



We are collecting shoes now through November 15th. The shoes that are collected are sent to impoverished countries where they are refurbished and sold to support micro businesses in the local communities. In return, the Class of 2024 will earn money for every 25 pairs collected. It is our goal to collect 2500 pairs! You can help us achieve this goal by dropping shoes off at a collection bin located at Geissler's, Anytime Fitness in Somers or Ellington, SomerSault Gymnastics, or contact Chris Mangini or Kate Dzurenda to arrange a drop off at the high school.

"HALF/HALF TICKET PULLING" FUNDRAISER

Support the Class of 2023 and cheer on the Spartan Soccer teams! During the night games the Juniors will be selling tickets to raise money for class activities.

1 ticket \$5

5 tickets \$20

Winner will be pulled at half time.

Boys Varsity Soccer 10/7

Girls Varsity Soccer 10/29

6:00

WEAR RED TO SHOW YOUR SPIRIT!

**Class of 2023 will be
selling Spartan Ornaments
during the month of
October. [Click here to
order yours now!](#)**

*All money must
be turned into
the LMC by
10/27.*



Important Dates

Columbus Day (School Closed) - 10/11

Early Release 11:00 (Staff Development) - 10/13

"Save a Life" Tour (Juniors and Seniors) - 10/14

School Photo Make Up - 10/19

PSAT (Grades 9-11) - 10/26
(Grade 12 regular school day)

Early Release 11:00 (Staff Development) - 10/27

USEFUL

Contact Information

Principal - Gary Cotzin
gary.cotzin@somers.k12.ct.us

Assistant Principal - Cheryl Gustafson
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School Nurse - Monica Willemain
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School Social Worker - Shannon Radlo
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Jenny Devlin - School Counselor
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Kate Dzurenda - School Counselor
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Lisa Grenier - School Counselor
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IT Support - Tim Lord
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