

THE SPARTAN SPECTATOR

Principal's Newsletter



Dear Spartan Parents/Guardians,

Thanksgiving already? It is difficult to believe, but one-quarter of the school year is now in the books. Before you blink an eye the holidays will be done, five pounds will be added to the waistline, and mid-term exams will be rolling in. But until then...

Veterans Day is a federal holiday in the United States observed annually on November 11, for honoring military veterans, people who have served in the United States Armed Forces. Our National Honor Society students are planning to create a Veteran's Day program including a breakfast and assembly to honor those who gave so much to our country. The SHS band and chorus will also be contributing to the event and the program will conclude with a three volley rifle salute performed by Post 101 of the American Legion. Students are also making cards to give to Veterans that will be delivered to the Newington Veterans Hospital.

PSATs are completed and we thank everyone involved for making the day run smoothly. We expect to have results in early December and will keep you informed accordingly. SATs will be administered in late March for juniors. It will be digital only as no paper tests will be given moving forward. For our part, teachers will be diligently working to identify general areas for improvement for all 9th, 10th and 11th graders. We will also be looking at individual student weaknesses and developing plans to provide them with intervention services specifically designed for their needs. Since colleges and universities still primarily focus on student grades, course rigor, and SAT results, this is where much of our efforts will remain focused.

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While we are all of different races, orientations, creeds, backgrounds and beliefs in our own community, it is important to reinforce with our students the importance of respectful and responsible discourse in understanding the differences that make our school and town a great place to learn and live.

An important aspect of being involved in your student's school performance includes reviewing the student handbook with your son or daughter. It is important to review areas of academics and extra-curricular activities, as well as the behavioral expectations of the school. This is never an area we like to stress or point out, but students will sometimes make poor decisions and, therefore, need to know the ramifications for their actions.

We are always grateful for your support and continual pride and commitment to Somers High School and Somers Public Schools. I appreciate your attention and time as we continue to make Somers High an excellent school for all our stakeholders.

HAPPY THANKSGIVING!!

Sincerely,
Gary M. Cotzin



Interim Assistant Principal's Corner

Hello Somers High School Community!

After 13 years as the Grade 8 Social Studies teacher at Mabelle B. Avery I have joined the High School as the new Interim Assistant Principal. It has been a good transition into the school and it has been great to reconnect with the students, parents and community members in my new role. I have always been proud to work in Somers and I look forward to working with the community in my new position.

I look forward to being an active member in the community and will be in attendance at sporting events, drama and music productions, and after school events the students are taking part in. I will be working and supporting students in different ways

this year. The job also will have me working with students and parents when certain decisions are made.

Go Spartans!

Mr. Szafir
Interim Assistant Principal



ENGLISH NEWS

BY MINDY LAJEUNESSE

All English classes are working well within their literature units. Some of the units include **Grade 9**'s current focus on *To Kill a Mockingbird* while grade 10 engages in a powerful dystopian unit. **College Prep English 12** students are reading *Oedipus Rex* and analyzing rhetorical devices. Evaluating societal issues within *The Crucible* is the focus point of **College Prep 11**'s thematic essay. Students are exploring American culture through short stories and *Their Eyes Are Watching God* in **Honors English 12**.

Additionally, as a team, we continue to expand our writing curriculum to widen the students' exposure to writing for different purposes. Narrative writing and research papers, for example, have proven to be valuable additions to grades 9 and 10. Our long-range goal is to create and implement a linear writing curriculum spanning grade 9-12.

The English team continues to implement more resources into our classrooms with IXL, Sadlier digital vocabulary accounts and Newsela.

In regards to **UConn English ECE**, the new 1007 syllabus has been submitted to UConn and accepted. This course has a slight shift to multimodality in writing, which allows students to explore various forms of writing, presentation and digital incorporation. UConn 1007 is currently paired with AP Literature and Composition and AP Language and Composition, with a goal the new, upcoming UConn literature course being offered to AP Literature and Composition for the 2023-24 academic year.

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English continued

BY ANDREW SLATER

In English 11, we have started by recognizing the course's objectives as developing skills that will be transferable to any career field after high school or college. We studied *The Crucible* and assessed our understanding by recognizing central themes and events using the software program Pixton. Next, we're moving on to reading *The Wave* and studying human behavior, group thinking, and varying levels of indoctrination. This will blend nicely with our next unit *Night* by Elie Weisel.

In Honors English 11 we are continuing to develop our analysis and synthesis skills as we prepare for higher-level education with an increased emphasis on rigor. We started the year by developing our debate skills as we discussed themes and concepts in *The Crucible*. After studying the text, its historical significance, and its allegorical elements, we went on to have very high-level discussions as a group. Our Socratic Seminar evoked interesting ideas and discussions and questions. We look forward to continuing our study of "Monsters" by reading the classic *Frankenstein* next.

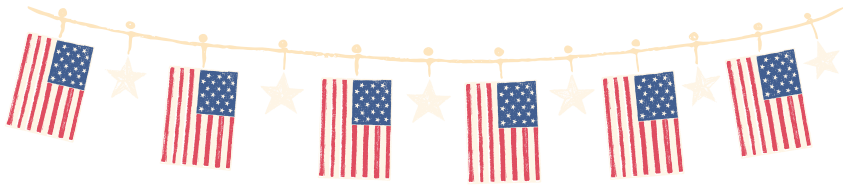
NEWS FROM THE *Counseling & Career Center*



The College Fair was a huge success!

SHS students were able to interact with nearly 100 representatives from colleges, military and trade schools. The representatives were very impressed with our students who asked great questions and the wonderful luncheon provided by our new culinary lunch team.





History

IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF HISTORY

by Mr. Philip Goduti, Jr.

On Thursday October 27, 2022, the Advanced Placement United States History class visited Boston as part of a project where they are researching the American Revolution. Library Media Specialist Ms. Tenley Stoltz and I accompanied students as we all toured major sites in Boston linked to the founding of the nation.

Students arrived on the Boston Commons where the first settlers spent time at the founding of the colony prior to the Revolution. They met their guide, Jeremiah Poop (yes, you read that correctly) from Freedom Trail Tours and traveled to historic sites on the Freedom Trail such as the Granary Burying Ground where Samuel Adams, John Hancock, and Paul Revere are buried, King's Chapel, the old State House, where the Boston Massacre occurred, and the Old North Church.



After the Freedom Trail students toured the Paul Revere house and went on to Faneuil Hall, a place where people such as Abraham Lincoln and John F. Kennedy have given speeches in the past. Students continued this journey at the John Adams house in Quincy Massachusetts. As part of the National Parks, the students were given tours by Park Rangers and walked through places where three generations of the Adams family lived. Junior Sarah St. Germain said, "Boston was super fun and an educational experience that was helpful in expanding our knowledge of what we were learning."



*Top Picture: AP US History Class with tour guide Jeremiah Poop
Bottom Left: Mother Goose's gravestone at the Granary Burying Ground
Bottom Right: Adams' Family Library*

Physical Education + Health

by Eric Henne, Amanda Welch, & Andrew Barnes

We are excited to announce we have a new teacher added to our department; Mr. Andrew Barnes! Andrew is currently an undergrad at Central Connecticut State University studying both Health and Physical Education. He will be finishing his student teaching this spring, and has been teaching at both the middle and high school. Andrew enjoys playing volleyball in his free time, participating on the CCSU men's team, and has been coaching all around CT and Western MA. After this year, he plans to go back to school to earn a Master's degree in Special Education.

In Health we just finished our "Analyzing Influences" unit. Throughout this unit we analyzed advertisements, music, as well as social media usage. Students reflected on their social media usage after they tracked their usage for 1 day, then took a break from all social media for 1 day. It was a challenge, but there were some students that were successful for the whole 24 hours. Students found other activities to do instead of being on social media. Some of these activities included:

- ~ Being physically active**
- ~ Hanging out with siblings/friends and family**
- ~ Playing with pets**



In Physical Education we are looking forward to the return of our flag football unit. We have not had it for the past 3 years due to the pandemic but students and staff alike are eagerly awaiting its return! It will begin right after the conclusion of the hockey unit. Students enrolled in Lifetime PE will be participating in bowling as an alternative to flag football.

Parents please help us in making sure your child has a change of clothes for P.E. class. The winter months are always tough because kids come in with jeans, coats, boots, and other articles of clothing not conducive to a physically active lesson. Changing for class is part of the daily grading so let's work hard to earn those 10 points every day!

As a reminder, our Health & Physical Education department website is up and running. We will continue to update the website as needed.

Notes from the Nurse



Vaping continues to be a major issue throughout the country. The American Cancer Society has designated November 17th as the day of the Great American Smoke out. If you or your teenager have considered or want to quit smoking cigarettes or vaping, why not join thousands of people across the country by taking the first step on November 17th. It is important to have a plan in place before the quit date. Smokefree.gov is an amazing resource and has great information for adults and teens alike. They walk you through how to create a quit plan, and go in depth about how the first day without nicotine could go, as well as discussing triggers and urges. A good first step could be starting up an honest conversation with your teenager to see how they feel about vaping. I would be happy to be part of any quitting plans for students and can help answer any questions you may have. Feel free to reach out to me directly at the school at extension 4106. Please check out these resources below for more information.

[***Talk with Your Teen About E-cigarettes: A Tip Sheet for Parents***](#)

[***Quit Vaping | Smokefree Teen***](#)

[***Facts About Electronic Cigarettes: Johns Hopkins Kimmel Cancer Center***](#)

[***Great American Smokeout***](#)



SPARTAN SPORTS

Cross Country - Girls and Boys both closed their conference seasons in impressive style. At the NCCC Championships, the girls placed 6 kids on the all-conference team led by Stephanie Burzynski, who won the race. The girls team was crowned the league champions for the fourth consecutive year. The boys team was led by Ben Champion who finished third in the championships. He was joined by 2 others on the all-conference team. After a strong regular season the boys finished in third place.



Somers girls capture their second straight Class "S" State Championship.



Ben Champion finishes third at state championships to earn All-State honors.

Girls Soccer - After a slow start, our girls team has come on strong and finished the regular season with a record of 9-5-2. Over the final six games of the regular season, the girls have been nearly perfect. Five big wins including a great home victory over Granby 2-1. After closing the season with a 2-2 tie to Ellington, the girls now await their opponent for the upcoming state tournament.

Boys Soccer - Just as our girls team has done, boys soccer has gotten hot at the right time. The team currently sits with a record of 8-4-2. They have won 5 out of the last 6 games including wins over Manchester and Stafford on the road. Having qualified for the state tournament already, the team looks to improve its seeding with two games remaining in the regular season. The boys travel to Windham Tech and Granby this weekend before gearing up for the state tournament in early November.

Winter sports sign-ups are now available on the high school sports website.

Clubs & Activities

Fundraiser for Genevieve's Scholarship a Success!



During the week of October 17th through the 21st, the students and staff of SHS, MBA, and SES all participated in a spirit week to honor Genevieve Neiman.

Genevieve was a student at SHS that passed away a year ago from leukemia. She was a great friend and a huge part of the school and Somers community. She is dearly missed and the students wanted to do something to honor her. Last year, Sara St. Germain brought up a fundraiser idea to buy Genevieve a brick at the new Splash Pad at Connor's Park. This turned into a spirit week which raised money for the brick and the scholarship her parents founded in her honor.

This year, the spirit week took place again with proceeds going towards her scholarship. Everyday of the spirit week was something different and important to her, from Disney day to Uconn/basketball day. During this week students and staff from all schools brought in donations to participate in the spirit week. In total, \$1880.70 was raised in her honor. We are very appreciative of everyone who donated and participated.

Scriptura Publishes its Third Halloween Edition

Scriptura, SHS's literary and art magazine, held its 3rd annual Halloween contest this year, and is pleased to announce that Morgan Dickinson won first place in photography, Emma Waters won first place in poetry, and Payton Goodwin won first place in artwork. Congratulations to all of our runners-up! Please be sure to check out [Scriptura's Halloween publication](#) on SHS's website.



Clubs & Activities continued



Check out this fantastic picture of the band from the Big E Parade in September!

LOOKING FOR THE PERFECT HOLIDAY GIFT FOR YOUR FAMILY AND FRIENDS?

The Somers High School Class of 2023 is selling amaryllis and paperwhites to raise funds to help offset the cost of senior year activities such as prom, the class outing, and the senior banquet.

Please consider purchasing an item or two. Not only will these beautiful flowers brighten your winter, they will also help support a great group of students! Orders purchased before 12/1 are guaranteed to arrive in time for the holidays.

Visit our Flower Power page at

<http://SomersClassof2023.fundraising.com>.



Clubs & Activities continued



Interact Club's
5th Annual
FOOD DRIVE

**FROM MONDAY 11/7-
FRIDAY 11/18**

**STUDENTS WILL BE ABLE TO DROP OFF NON-
PERISHABLE GOODS WITH THEIR ADVISORY
TEACHER. ITEMS WILL BE COLLECTED UNTIL
FRIDAY, 11/18.**

**THE ADVISORY WITH THE MOST ITEMS WILL
GET DONUTS!**



Quarter 1 Ends - 11/4

Quarter 2 Begins - 11/7

Veterans Day Program (for students + staff) - 11/11

Early Release (periods 2, 4, 6, 8) - 11/23

Thanksgiving (No school)- 11/24

No School- 11/25

USEFUL

Contact Information

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