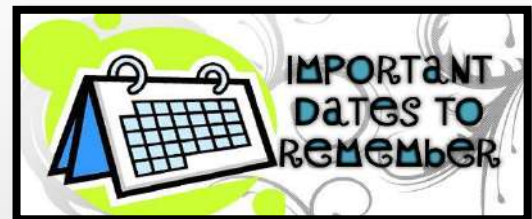


SES News

Every Voice Counts...Every Voice Counts... Every Voice Counts...



Wishing
you PEACE
LOVE and
LAUGHTER
in the NEW YEAR



January
10th

SES Band/Chorus
Winter Concert
7:00pm @ SES
Auditorium

January
17th

Tropical
Reading Day!

January
21st

No School
MLK Jr. Day



Please visit the Home & School Connection link on the SES Website for newsletters, the handbook, school hours and LOTS more!



Somers Elementary School is on Twitter!

Follow us at: @Somers_ES or view our tweets on the Somers Elementary School Homepage

100th Day of School Food Drive

The third grade classes of Somers Elementary School are sponsoring a food drive for the 100th day of school. We are asking each grade level to help by collecting 100 items of nonperishables for each grade level. When the drive is finished, the third grade classes will collect the items and make the donation to the food pantry at the Somers Congregational Church on Main Street.

We chose this organization because they serve members of our own school family. If each grade level collects 100 item, SES will donate 600 items to this worthwhile organization!

Each grade level is asked to bring the following items below:

Kindergarten: tuna fish

First Grade: soup

Second Grade: canned fruit

Third Grade: canned vegetables

Fourth Grade: boxed macaroni and cheese

Fifth Grade: cereal



Please send donations in the week of February, 21st.

Thank you for your help!



We Need Your Help!

PTO NEWS

Happy New Year and welcome back to the second half of the school year! It seems amazing to think we have bid farewell to yet another year in 2018 and have now welcomed 2019! The thought of a New Year always brings hope for new promises, new plans and new resolutions! Many committee chairpersons are gearing up for the Spring activities, and will be looking for volunteers to help!

We want to thank ALL of you who participated in the Yankee Candle and Square One Art fundraisers! They were both a huge success!

Upcoming Events:

Wolf Pack, Globetrotters & Purse Bingo



**Purse Bingo!
March 9th.
Details to come.**



NEXT MEETING will be held on February 4th at 5:30 pm. We will be discussing the upcoming events, budget and new business! We hope to see you there!

Mandy Shonak, VP



Our students are young and self-awareness (across domains) can be difficult, but this skill can be critical to later success and happiness and can help kids feel more confident and positive if we begin to develop it now. There are many facets to self-awareness, but we will talk about two components of self-awareness that are more developmentally appropriate for elementary students.

Self-awareness can help students have a good understanding of their strengths and weaknesses and how to use strengths to compensate for weaker skills. Additionally, in understanding what skills are more difficult for them, students can identify, learn, and employ compensatory strategies. While elementary students are generally not developmentally ready to think about their own thinking (this generally develops between the ages of 12 and 15 years), they are equipped to begin thinking about what things challenge them and what skills they need to work harder to develop. This time of year can be a great time to facilitate this conversation with older elementary students with respect to making New Year's Resolutions. Ask what things are important for them to know, but are not easy for them and make goals in these areas, discussing small steps to take to reach these goals.

Emotional self-awareness is also important. Being able to identify and understand emotions – from basic to complex emotions – is important to controlling behavior and identifying the need to problem solve. This type of self-awareness is important for students of all ages. While kindergarteners may be working on more basic emotional self-awareness (i.e. happy, mad, sad), older students will be graduating to more complex emotional awareness (i.e. confused, guilt, jealousy, confident). Part of becoming emotionally self-aware involves understanding and “decoding” the physical sensations caused by emotions. Recognizing sensations in our body and thinking about what might cause them is an ever-developing skill. Does that stomachache mean I'm sick? I'm worried about something? I feel guilty about something? Asking these questions helps kids realize that emotions can cause sensations. You can help to build these skills by talking and recognizing your own sensations regarding emotions. If you are looking for a book to facilitate this conversation, *Listening to My Body* by Gabi Garcia is a great kids book on this topic. It may be a bit longer for younger kids, but you could read it over two or three days.

When kids realize that emotions are causing these sensations, they can get better at calming down stronger emotions and build confidence. They can think about the situations that cause the feelings and prepare in advance of similar situations or problems. And they can build awareness of the activities that help them calm down even if it is different than what works for their friends. Trying different strategies – exercise, various deep breathing, muscle relaxation, visualization exercises (there are tons of these online...just make sure they are appropriate for your child) – regularly and when calm can help your child determine what works for him or her.

Building self-awareness, both of emotions and skills, that is accurate and realistic can help children be more confident and competent in many aspects of their life. Additionally, these skills help children to develop self-monitoring skills, which can improve both academic and social development.

Resources

- <https://www.apa.org/monitor/2010/04/classrooms.aspx>
- <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/the-moment-youth/201508/self-awareness-how-kids-make-sense-life-experiences>
- <https://www.pbs.org/parents/child-development/age-8-emotions-self-awareness/self-awareness>

It's almost here

Tropical Reading Day

2019



Bring your *beach towel*, *sunglasses*, and *favorite book* to school on Thursday, January 17th for some readin' and relaxin'!!

(snow date: Friday, January 18th)

SES Art Matters

Painting in Art Class with Mr. Dailey

In art class with Mr. Dailey, students in grades 5, 4, 2, 1, and K have been exploring different ways of making pictures using tempera paint, paintbrushes and other applicators such as sponges. We inquire and wonder about *How do Artists get their Ideas?* Artists have access to handouts, tracers, books and other resources that help them build confidence at picture making. Painters develop their skills at setting up a paint station, cleaning up after oneself, and most importantly enjoying the creative process of painting!



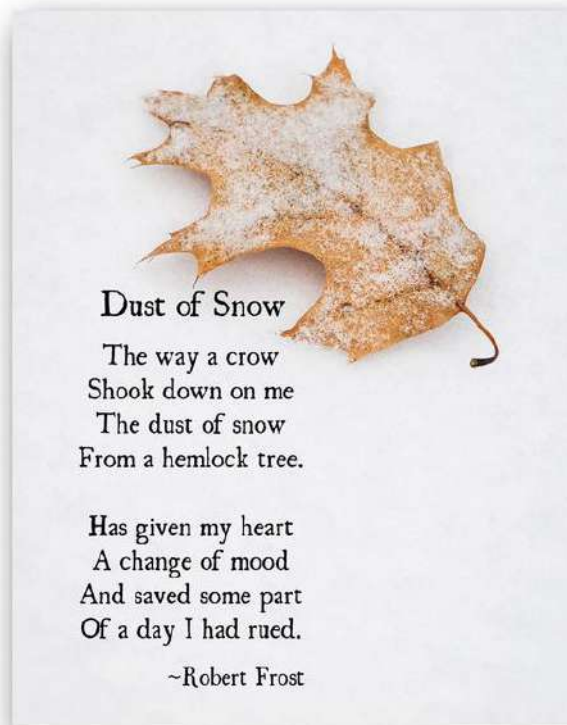
PHYSICAL EDUCATION NEWS



Welcome to Winter! We may not have had much snow yet but we certainly have been feeling the cold rain lately. We may not be able to go sledding or skating but there are still plenty of active activities in our area to take part in. Our town recreation department has many programs available. The local “Y” also has a list of things to do. Here in our own town we have many local trails on land trust property and state forest, land. There are many near by businesses that also cater to sport activities. There are several gyms that have climbing facilities, bowling allies, dance and yoga studios, and other indoor games. Take the family out and make a day of it.

In our physical education classes we have been busy working on basketball skills. We begin with simple ball bouncing (dribbling), passes and shooting progressing to more advanced skills and game situations. With many of the grades we will be playing modified games that use the basketball skills but allow more children to take part at the same time. Some of these games include; basketball golf, horse, around the world, pig, knockout and others.

Other activities to come include tinikling, wall climbing, floor hockey and eventually volleyball. We look forward to introducing these units and letting our students explore their imaginations!!



6 Apps Parents Should Know About



It's a parent's job to protect their kids, but sometimes that can feel impossible in a digital age. And although apps themselves do not pose an actual threat to their safety, they can provide an opportunity to expose, persuade, and, potentially lead kids to make bad decisions. So how do we stay informed about the countless apps kids use to be sure they're safe? Thankfully, the same digital age that makes us fearful for our children provides plenty of resources and information for parents, too! First, be as proactive as possible. Talk to your children about cell phone safety, and explain that, despite what some apps may profess, there really is no such thing as texts or photos that disappear completely. Second, if possible, add your kids to your iCloud account. That way, whenever they download an app, it will automatically download to your phone as well. Similarly, with a Playstore account, you're able to see all "purchased" (i.e., downloaded) apps. They may think you're invading their privacy, but you'll have more input into which apps they're using.

In addition to those tips, stay informed about any apps that may be of concern. We've listed here six apps that are popular with kids but may pose some issues for parents

1. HIP You know the old saying "don't judge a book by its cover?" Well, that is the case for Hide it Pro (HIP), an app disguised as a music manager, but really it's meant for hiding anything from photos and videos to text messages and other apps. The name is pretty straightforward in the app store, but on your screen it simplifies to HIP to add to the clever mask. The user sets a pin code and can then move files to the app and remove them from the phone (i.e., photos, messages, etc.). This, and similar hidden "vault" apps, helps kids hide inappropriate material from their parents

2. Calculator+ Same concept, but this app has a calculator icon posing as something it isn't. The calculator actually acts as the password input (PASSCODE followed by %), which reveals hidden photos, contacts, browser history, and passwords. Again, the name 'secret calculator' is straightforward in the app store, but the app appears as calculator+ once it's downloaded to the user's phone, to help minimize suspicion and hide the purpose from concerned parents.

3. Whisper is an online community app that allows users to anonymously share what they're really thinking. The word anonymous seems to be open to interpretation though because although the app claims it does not store personally identifiable information, if you disable the geo-location, other users are still able to determine your city, state, and country. There is also a "nearby" section where you can see posts from people who are in the same area. Users may be exposed to cyber-bullying, explicit language, references to drugs and alcohol, and other material that would concern parents. Because the app provides geo-identifying information, there is increased danger that strangers will see where your child is currently located. The app also promotes private communication where users can exchange images and personal information.

4. Omegle is not an app, but it may be the most concerning to parents. Simply type omegle.com into any browser, and you can be connected via chat or video to a stranger. Yes, we have spent hours, days, weeks, and years teaching our children not to talk to strangers, and now they are one click away from doing just that. What's even more disturbing is that this site is one of many.

5. Yik Yak On the surface it seems harmless enough, just another messaging app. The problem with this particular app is that it is an "anonymous" messaging app that allows its users to send text and photos to others without using their name. Another feature of this app is that it is location enabled. You can choose to view and contribute to the feed of other users in a 5, 10 or 15 mile radius. This feature can potentially leave the door open for predators to make contact with minors in their local area. The "anonymous" nature of this app tends to lull teens into thinking that what they say and share won't be connected to them, which makes them more likely to behave inappropriately.

6. KIK is a messaging app that lets users exchange videos, photos, sketches, and gifs. Privacy is a big concern, however, as users can send and receive messages from people they are not friends with. Kik does not offer any parental controls, and can be password protected, allowing users to prevent parents and others from seeing their activity in the app. Again, there is no way of authenticating users, thus making it easy for predators to use the app to interact with minors.

Adapted from: <https://www.learningliftoff.com/10-apps-kids-use-that-parents-should-know-about/>

School-Wide Assembly Guests!

Just about every month, we have a school-wide assembly that is facilitated by students and theme based. Within each assembly, awards are given to those students in each grade level that demonstrate qualities throughout their day that meet the "Social Emotional Learning" focus of the month (see the chart below for topics by month)



Parents/guardians of those students who are receiving awards are invited to attend the assemblies. If your child is an award recipient, the office will send home a notice, via sealed envelope, prior to the assembly, as the award will be a surprise to your child. Due to limited space within our gymnasium, we are inviting only two members of each child's family to attend. Once you have received the invitation, you must RSVP so we know who will be in attendance by returning the bottom portion of the notice or, calling the office directly.

At the assembly, we ask that you refrain from taking videos/photographs to help maintain the confidentiality of all our students. There will be a dedicated time for you to take photographs of your award recipient. In addition, all guests of award recipients will be exited to the main lobby where they may sign out their student if they wish.

<u>Month</u>	<u>Social Emotional Learning Focus</u>
January	Self-Awareness/ Emotional Awareness
February	Conflict Resolution (Respect)
March	Problem Solving (Cooperation)
April	Honestly & Trustworthiness
May	Citizenship & Community Service
June	*Specialists' Awards & Gr. 5 Citizenship Awards



Winter in Connecticut can mean a mix of sleet, snow and freezing rain.

If weather conditions warrant school closings or an early release, they will be posted on the Somers Public Schools Website and the following television & radio stations: WTIC/WRCH- Radio, WFSB-TV 3, FOX - TV 6, WTNH - TV 8, WVIT - TV 30.

Additionally, we will send a text alert via School Messenger when there is a closing, early dismissal or delay.

Please Dress for the Weather!

Whenever possible, we strive for outdoor recess which means students head outside wearing what they came to school with and at times, students do not have the proper outdoor attire. Please make sure that your child dresses accordingly.

