

*December 2018*

*Volume 11*

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# *Principal's Newsletter*

*Somers High School*



Dear Parents/Guardians,

Whether we enjoy it or not, at least it is beginning to feel like the holiday season with this chilly air upon us. I truly hope that each and every one of you has a great holiday season and have ample opportunity to spend it with family and friends.

The month of December has been one of steady pacing thus preparing your children for the January rush to midterms. Teachers are continuing to work on their goals which focus on literacy and math preparation and we will surely be letting you know if your child(ren) are struggling to keep pace.

As with everything in life, change happens. We will continue to look at our programs and services in order to ensure that they are meeting the needs of all students. One such initiative was our recent forum on vaping. It was well attended and many thanks go to Suzy Williams, SHS Social Worker, and Jay Gershowitz, School Resource Officer, for hosting the event. Vaping is a huge issue across the country, and we are right in the thick of it. We are currently drafting a comprehensive plan, which will include assemblies, forums, education, and greater vigilance by all school and community constituents.

This newsletter is a monthly publication that is designed to keep you updated on the latest educational issues and events. In addition, I always maintain an open-door policy and am here to assist you. Please feel free to contact me if you should have any concerns. I am looking forward to working with each of you and to helping make our school the best it can possibly be.

Sincerely,

Gary M. Cotzin  
Principal  
Somers High School

### *ART Department News:*

Ms. Curran's printmaking class just finished a unit in stenciling by creating their own wrapping paper! The students hand cut their stencils and used multiple colors to print on large paper. Andrew Golden said, "this is so satisfying" as he printed.

Other students had some feedback afterwards. Faith Sarisley said, "It seemed like it would be really difficult at first, but it ended up being one of my favorite projects." According to Kayla Scibelli: "It was a long process, but it was worth it."

So, families, you might see some gifts wrapped in these beautiful papers soon! Unless, as Alyssa Milliken said, "It's so pretty I don't want to wrap with it."



### *Real-World Application in Intro to Business!*

Students never leave business classes saying, “When will I ever use this stuff?” Most recently in Mr. Clement’s Introduction to Business classes students engaged in a career preparation unit. Beginning with career research, students worked towards discovering potential jobs they would want to have 30-40 years down the road. Based on their career selection they developed resumes, cover letters, and completed job applications geared towards mapping out what it would take to reach their final career objective.

In culmination, students had the opportunity to take part in an in-class mock interview, in which two students applied for an open Sales Manager position for a technology company. Three other students played the roles of interviewers, consisting of a Chief Executive Officer, Vice President of Sales, and Human Resource Director. The focus of this final activity was not only how to perform well when being interviewed, but also how to effectively interview job candidates.

Below, executive board members Jillian (Left of Photo), Douglas, and Cooper interview job candidate Jonathan. Jonathan was challenged to answer questions that measured if he would be a good fit for both the open position and company as a whole. Candidates were also asked a bonus question, in which they had to make a live attempt and role play selling a laptop to a customer.



### *Somers Education Foundation: Thank You!*

Grant: Bass Clarinet for our music program  
Grant: Cursive Club seed money  
Grant: Vex Robotics funding  
Grant: Wide Format Color printer for our Media Center  
Multiple grants for teacher development workshops

## *English Department News*

This month the English department continues to prepare students for the SATs. Depending on the course, students are focusing on various skills that will help them be successful on the test; some of these skills include but are not limited to command of evidence, words in context and reading informational texts. In addition to Newsela, English teachers are now using IXL to provide the students with another practice resource. To help further prepare your child at home for the test, there are many resources and practice tests available at [www.CollegeBoard.org](http://www.CollegeBoard.org).

While all English courses currently have a strong focus on writing, the English department is soon adopting a formal writing curriculum. This writing curriculum will allow the community to better understand the vertical alignment of writing within the high school. The ultimate goal for formalizing the writing curriculum is to prepare students for 21st century writing tasks that they will be completing in all fields of study. Having a writing curriculum in place will help teachers break down writing into a process for students to learn over time. Instead of re-teaching the same skills each year, English classes will have an opportunity to build students' writing skills from the previous year within the system. We are hoping to have this curriculum available for viewing on the district's curriculum database, ATLAS, within the next two years.

## *Math Department News*

During the past month students in AP Statistics and AP Calculus have been completing real-world projects that relate to curriculum standards. In AP Calculus students investigated various packages of canned goods to determine if companies are optimizing the volume of the can based on the surface area. Students gathered various canned items and used their knowledge of calculus to calculate the optimization range for each item. They found that all of the companies that they investigated have an optimization range above 90%.

In AP Statistics, students designed their own experiment, gathered data, and analyzed the results. Students were able to choose topics that were of interest to them, and included the new hospital policy at Johnson Memorial, the use of Google Assistant and Amazon Echo, the feeling our people towards allergies related to Halloween candy, and teen driver habits. Students worked to interpret the influence of biased wording in questions and how that affected their results.

## *SHS Sports*

Our 2018 fall sports season just ended with our Stafford/East Windsor/Somers co-op football team advancing to the CIAC Class S semi-finals after a 41-6 quarterfinal win over Cromwell/Portland. Despite the 21-14 overtime loss to Haddam Killingworth, the team won the Pequot Uncas Divisional Championship after going undefeated at 10-0

during the regular season. Fall Sports awards will be held on Tuesday, December 11th at 6:00 PM in the high school auditorium. Winter sports will officially begin with the girl's basketball team playing a home game against Windham Tech on Monday, December 10th. On December 14th, the boy's basketball team will open their season at home vs. Bolton and Tri-Town hockey will host the Redhawks at Enfield Twin Rinks, while the wrestling will visit Suffield on December 12th for their first league match. We will also have several indoor track athletes participating with Ellington High School for this winter season. For winter sports updates, please go to the school sports website for more information.

*Goooooo....Spartans  
The Season of Giving!*

“Fill the Table Cloth” Food Drive



During the month of November, non-perishable items were collected for Champ's Place, a local food pantry in Somers. The event, sponsored by the Student Advisory Club and Interact Club, encouraged students to fill the table cloth outside the auditorium with items that would help brighten someone's holiday season. Three hundred items were donated by the Spartan community.



### Battle of the Beards

During “No Shave November,” 9 staff members and one student put down their razors and competed to see who could grow the most epic beard. Students were able to vote for their favorite facial hair during lunch, when members of the Students Supporting Students Club and Interact Club collected money. The \$55.00 collected will be donated to Movember, a charity dedicated to men’s physical and mental health. Congratulations to Vinnie Mazza, our 2018 winner!



### Comets and Candy Canes

The candy canes are coming! December 19th-21st, the Interact Club will be selling candy canes during lunch in order to raise money for a telescope for the Somers Public Library. The telescope is part of the Aldrich Astronomical Society’s Adopt a Library program, and it will be available for people to check out. Please help support us in our efforts to provide people with the unique opportunity to explore the night sky from home.

The Music Department participated in the Holiday Giving Program through the Network Against Domestic Abuse. We were able to raise over \$1500 which allowed us to purchase Christmas gifts for family of four, in addition to donating money to the network to support additional families. We were blown away by the generosity of our students and community!

Future Business Leaders of America participated in the Holiday Giving Program through the Network Against Domestic Abuse. Three needy community children received gifts this holiday season.

### *ShopRite Act of Kindness Award*

SHS has teamed up with ShopRite of Enfield to present this award to one high school student each month. Teachers nominate students based on kindness behaviors that they have witnessed. On the 3rd Wednesday of the month, a ShopRite representative and myself will come to the recipient's classroom and present the award. The selected student also gets their picture posted in the Enfield ShopRite and a donation is made to a charity selected by the recipient.

October: Andrew J. Brewer  
November: Kilee Nutbrown  
December: Cadence Bidwell

### *Students of the Month*

#### September

Freshman: Dana Gall  
Sophomore: Dominic Zuccalo  
Junior: Tori Reed  
Senior: Bryan Bushey

#### October

Freshman: Kaede Wood  
Sophomore: Miguel Rodriguez  
Junior: Quinn Welch  
Senior: Kyle Beebe

***Please Feel Free to Contact us at:***

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#### Important Dates for December

December 11<sup>th</sup> Fall Sports Awards  
6:00pm

December 13<sup>th</sup> Beta Club Blood Drive  
(During the school day)

December 24<sup>th</sup>-January 1st  
Winter Break