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Principal's Newsletter



Dear Parents/Guardians,

April? What happened to September through March? The year seems to be rocketing by. April is a good month for everyone to prep for the final events and assessments of the school year. People like to say that things are winding down, however, the opposite is the reality. NGSS testing, AP test, senior activities, finals are all coming soon.

Our new cell phone initiative seems to be working well. Your help in making this happen is greatly appreciated. Students are cooperating and understand the need to make sure the classroom is not the place for cellular disruptions.

On another note, please remember to **not** use the teacher lot to drop off children in the morning (7:00-7:45AM) and/or pick-up in the afternoon (2:00-4:55PM). It creates traffic issues, and I am concerned that an accident is waiting to happen. Your cooperation on these matters is greatly appreciated.

As always, should you have any questions and/or concerns, please let me know. My door is always open.

Gary M. Cotzin
Principal

Assistant Principal's Corner ***Mrs. Gustafson***

I would like to thank the students and faculty of SHS on a successful rollout of the new cell phone guidelines. Teachers are already noticing positive results in student focus and a change in classroom atmosphere during their lessons. Many students have also reported that it feels good to unplug during class time. Some have expressed that they aren't feeling quite as stressed about what it is happening on their phone because most, if not all of their friends, are not on their phones either. We are hopeful that this new shift will lead to increased engagement during instructional time and subsequent improvement in student achievement. I understand this is a big change and I appreciate everyone's collective efforts to make this a success and to support student learning.

Student Advisory Focus Group

Recently, student representatives from each grade came together to begin school-wide discussions about how to improve the advisory program. The group was tasked with discussing what has worked well during advisory and what areas need improvement. Students have suggested changes to scheduling and adding new topics that are relevant to each grade level. The group also discussed how SHS students might build their leadership profile by taking a role in facilitating advisory sessions. In addition to the inclusion of stress-relief and mindfulness activities, the focus group agreed that students would appreciate team-building and school spirit contests. In the coming weeks, these students will reconvene to outline some advisory lesson activities. For those students who are interested in getting involved, our next meeting will take place in late May. Stay tuned to student announcements for more details.

CAS High School Arts Awards Banquet

Congratulations to SHS Seniors Alexandra Delesio and Rose Karvandi. They were recognized on Tuesday, April 2nd at the Connecticut Association of Schools High School Arts Awards. Students from around the state were recognized for their passion, talent, and outstanding achievements in the arts. Alex was honored for her outstanding achievements in the visual arts and Rose for her leadership and dedication to the study of music.

Science News

Ms. Bonin's Anatomy and Physiology class completed their first dissection of the semester! So far in class, students studied the muscular, skeletal, and nervous systems. The class dissected cow eyes as part of a discussion of the nervous system and our senses. They were able to identify structures including the lens, retina, and the optic nerve. Students shared equal amounts of excitement and disgust as they began the process of cutting into the eye. Students could be heard making comments like, "It's so squishy" and "Whoa, look at that!" throughout the process. The students look forward to further dissections as they investigate the remaining body systems!



History in Action

The AP United States History students visited Washington, DC from March 29th to March 31st. Phil Goduti, Andy Drummey, Kristen Angelica and Tenley Stoltz were the chaperones on this trip with 29 students. With Cherry Blossoms in full bloom these students and their teachers walked nearly 23 miles through the national capitol. The highlight of the trip was going inside the White House to tour the building. In the ten times that SHS has gone to DC we have only been to the White House three times, making this a rare treat for the students. In the same day they toured the Capitol, they took a picture on the steps of the Supreme Court, thus visiting all three branches of government in one day. They also visited all of the monuments, Library of Congress, Pentagon, National Archives, four of the Smithsonian museums, Fords Theatre, and Arlington National Cemetary.





THE CONNECTICUT ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS GOVERNOR'S SCHOLARS PROGRAM

Now in its twenty-third year, the purpose of the Governor's Scholars Program is to recognize academically talented high school junior year students in schools throughout the state and present a select group of top scholars for special recognition to the Governor of Connecticut. All principals of CAS member high schools are given the opportunity to nominate one junior ranked in the top five percent of his/her class. An essay on an assigned topic is to be completed. Members of the Governor's Scholars Committee, who are professional educators from throughout Connecticut, judge the completed applications and assign a composite score to each based on PSAT scores and the student essay. These students will represent the top 5% of their class. In order to recognize this award, a number of colleges and universities throughout Connecticut have collaborated to provide the Governor's Scholars opportunities to further challenge their intellectual curiosity and special talents. These institutions invite the scholars to participate in gratis educational enrichment experiences on campus before graduating high school. The finalists are celebrated at a luncheon in May and will each be presented with a plaque. Semi-Finalists receive certificates and are recognized locally in their school communities.

Victoria Reid was selected as a FINALIST!

Career News from the Counseling & Career Center

Calling Future Architects and Engineers

Does your student have an interest in architecture or engineering? In February, five Somers students completed the 16-week ACE (Architecture, Construction and Engineering) Mentoring Program, where youth are mentored by professionals in these fields and complete a detailed design project. Our students participate in the after-school program that meets at Tecton Architects in Hartford. SHS alumni Gabby Bernier enrolled in this program in high school and went on to graduate from architecture school at UMASS. She is now an Architectural Associate with Tecton and a mentor with the ACE program, coming full circle! See pictures of Gabby and with our students below.



Job Shadowing

Students can shadow in many fields through the Job Shadowing program offered through the Counseling & Career Center. Typically, a student will spend a morning with a host organization to learn more about a career and job requirements. Youth receive release time from school for these learning activities. Recent job shadows took place at WFSB (Windsor, CT) and NETTTS (Somers, CT).



Girls and STEM

It's a fact that girls and women are underrepresented in many STEM fields. To encourage girls in STEM and to have more access to programs and opportunities that support this initiative, Meg Duffy, our Career Specialist, is serving on the Girls and Women in Science Steering Committee at the CT Science Center. In February, three of our girls attended the *Inspiring Women in Engineering & Medicine Career Day* at the UCONN Health Center and participated in hands-on workshops led by professional women in these fields.

Career Assessments

All sophomores have now completed the DWYA (Do What You Are) Career Assessment that is part of our Naviance Program. This Myers-Brigg assessment, adapted for high school use, analyzes personality type. Careers are suggested to prompt teens to think about their futures, course selection and post-secondary options. Ask your child to share their DWYA profile with you as a conversation starter. Students can also access other

career assessment tools, based on interests and strengths, through Naviance.

The Future: Advanced Manufacturing

In March, the Counseling & Career Center partnered with the Tech Ed Department to explore cutting-edge manufacturing careers. Ten students visited Asnuntuck Community College to learn about opportunities in advanced manufacturing, robotic welding and electro-mechanical careers. These viable careers require 1-2 years of training and appeal to students with an interest in manufacturing and robotics.



For More Information on these and other programs:

Contact the Meg Duffy, Career Specialist, in the Counseling & Career Center at meg.duffy@somers.k12.ct.us .

Somers District Art Show 2019

Somers Public Schools will hold its annual District Art Show at the Somers Public Library from Thursday, April 25th to Saturday, May 11th. An Opening Reception will be held on Thursday, April 25th from 6 pm – 7:30 pm. Artwork from students in grades K – 12 will be represented. The art may be viewed during library hours. Please come and enjoy the show !

Architectural design

Students learn stick-framing techniques through scale model creation:

Students in this year’s architectural design class just wrapped up a multi-week scale model project where they learned the basics of “stick framed” construction techniques. Through this process, every student was responsible for one aspect of a construction project, whether it was an interior or exterior wall, roofing or flooring system. They had to create their portion of the house to scale following a set of prints. Once they finished, everyone in the class brought their piece of the puzzle together to create a full-fledged stick framed house that taught them about modern

construction techniques, as well as the importance of precision and accuracy. Although it was small scale in nature, the students learned skills that can be directly taken to the workplace in the real world.



Student Recognition

ShopRite Act of Kindness: AJ Brewer (October), Kilee Nutbrown (November), Cadence Bidwell (December), Dominic Zuccalo (January), Wula Cham (February), Trevor Parks March)

Student of Month:

<u>Freshmen</u>	<u>Sophomores</u>	<u>Juniors</u>	<u>Seniors</u>
<i>Luke Boudreau</i>	<i>Aiden Devine-Baillargeon</i>	<i>Nancy Strever</i>	<i>Kylie Thompson</i>
<i>Jack Denehy</i>	<i>Halla Raina</i>	<i>Summer Nadler</i>	<i>Alyssa Albano</i>
<i>Katiya Zawronty</i>	<i>Maddie Mancuso</i>	<i>Kylie Raymond</i>	<i>Luke Phillips</i>
<i>Rachel St. Germain</i>	<i>Shawn Gentilcore</i>	<i>Matthew Grandpre</i>	<i>Tori Augeri</i>
<i>Kaede Wood</i>	<i>Miguel Rodriguez</i>	<i>Quinn Welch</i>	<i>Kyle Beebe</i>
<i>Dana Gall</i>	<i>Dominic Zuccalo</i>	<i>Tori Reid</i>	<i>Bryan Bushey</i>

Library Media Center Goes on a Field Trip

by Ms. Stoltz

Last weekend I had the privilege of being a chaperone on the AP US History classes' trip to Washington, D.C. Everywhere you looked on the trip you were reminded of important events and people in our nation's history. What I enjoyed the most was having the chance to see the different libraries. In the Rotunda of the National Archives we were able to view the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and the Bill of Rights- documents upon which our country was built. At the Smithsonian Museum of American History, I had the opportunity to peek into the Dibner Library of the History of Science and Technology, which houses over 35,000 rare books and almost 2,000 manuscript groups. On our tour of the White House we passed by the library. It was amazing to think that such an elegant room was once where the laundry was done. The Ford's Theater Center for Education and Leadership has a 34 foot tall tower made out of books about Abraham Lincoln. Containing 6,800 books, it is only a fraction of the 15,000 titles that have been published about the 16th president. For me though, the highlight of the trip was the visit to the Library of Congress, the world's largest library. Mr. Goduti and I were able to get our library cards, which gave us access to the Main Reading Room. I felt like I had walked into a scene from the movie, *National Treasure*! Overall, it was an incredible weekend and I'm grateful I had the chance to be a part of their trip.



Spartan Sports

Spring sports started this past Saturday with our softball team playing at Valley Regional to start the season. Home games this week showcased our softball team winning over defending Class S state champion Stafford, and our boy's lacrosse defeating Suffield and our girl's lacrosse team defeating Ellington. After starting the season on the road at Stafford, our baseball team opens at home this week vs. Windsor Locks. Our track and field team competed at Coventry High School this past Tuesday with several athletes already qualifying for the NCCC and state championships. Weather and course conditions permitting, our golf team will have their first meet next Monday vs. SMSA at Grassmere Country Club. Our boy's co-op tennis team with Enfield won their first match vs. NW Catholic, and will play their home matches at Enfield High School. Please refer to the school sports website for links to all schedules and sites.