

THE SPARTAN SPECTATOR

Principal's Newsletter



Dear SHS Families,

Welcome to February. I hope this newsletter finds you and your family well as we enter the proverbial light at the end of the tunnel. With numbers trending down, it is truly our hope that a full return to normalcy is not too far away. Time will tell. Today is our second snow day of the year. Both will be made up in June. If we do not have school tomorrow, we will follow the remote learning schedule that is utilized on snow days with one adjustment; teaching will occur from 9:00-2:00 and additional teacher work time will be scheduled from 2:00-3:30 each day. Again, when all of the schools are shut down, all of the schools will operate on the same schedule. We hope this consistency helps parents to understand our individual school plans. Teachers will use this additional time to meet and work with students who need additional assistance.

Covid Reminder:

Please help us by reminding your student of the importance of continuing mitigation steps as we head into some tougher stretches over the next few weeks.

- Practice social distancing in the hallways.
- Wear masks that cover the nose and mouth at all times (except while eating at lunch and when outside during study hall mask breaks).
- Report directly to 1st period each morning, no roaming.
- Keep the appropriate 6ft distance from the teacher's desk unless told otherwise.

2021-2022 Course Selection Guide:

The Course Selection Guide is online for you to view. All students will begin the scheduling process over the next few weeks. Please take some time to review the guide. Course selection forms will be given to students and teachers will be making recommendations accordingly.

Winter Sports:

In keeping with our district policy for restricting outside access to the school buildings, Somers High School will be adhering to the recommendations of the CIAC in not allowing any fans in the gymnasium for our home basketball games during the winter sports season.

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Visiting fans will also not be allowed at any NCCC venue during this winter season. In order to provide access to our home basketball games, the high school is in the process of installing video equipment in the gymnasium that will allow live streaming of all home games. Specific viewing information will be provided on our high school sports website, and our coaches will provide more details in their team packets in lieu of in-person parents meetings. We will also provide information on all live streaming options for our away basketball games.

Tri-Town will be playing their home hockey games at Enfield Twin Rinks, where the facility is allowing only fans of the home team per the current state regulations for sports facilities. Ellington, East Windsor and Somers will be coordinating with parents of our Tri-Town athletes in allowing access to home games.

Grade 8 Night (Incoming 9th Graders):

In the past, 8th grade parents would come to SHS on a specific evening and hear presentations from about our 9th grade offerings at SHS. Now that we are in the COVID world, this will be done virtually. On February 8th, a link will be made available on the website for 8th grade students and parents to access. We ask that you please view the video. Beginning the week of the 8th, students will begin the registration process for next year. Additional information will be forthcoming.

Black History Month:

This month, we will be celebrating the contributions African-Americans have had on American history. Our Social Studies department will be emphasizing their role on our society. We will be doing daily announcements and displaying posters throughout the building to honor these American heroes.

In closing, we will continue to work diligently in order to improve services to both you and our students. This newsletter will be a monthly publication in order to keep you updated on the latest educational issues. 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 in helping to make our school the best it can possibly be.

Sincerely,

Gary M. Cotzin

Principal

Somers High School

ENGLISH NEWS

by Mindy Lajeunesse

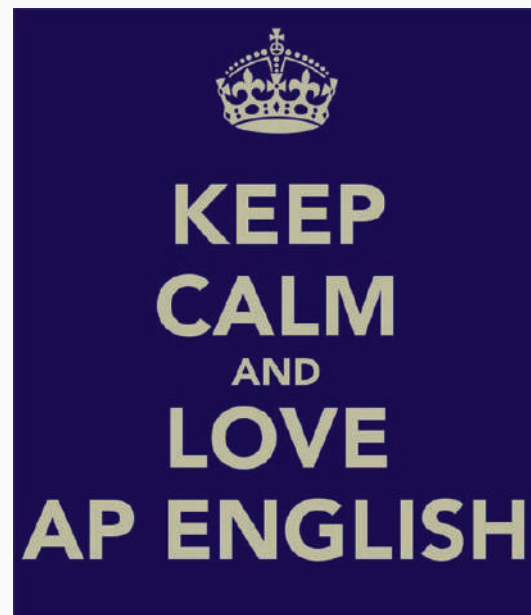
Grade 11 students have been consistently preparing for PSATs over the last 2 quarters. The review of skills comprising evidence-based reading and writing, grammar and usage, and vocabulary in context will benefit students on their upcoming PSATs, as well as the SATs.

The English team is currently exploring a different way to implement and assess vocabulary within our curriculum. While we had high hopes for our new, digital Sadlier program, it was deemed unfavorable by many students. We listened! We are in the process of revising our vocabulary curriculum once again and will keep you updated.

AP English students will begin more intensive preparation for their AP exam in the spring. Parents of these students should expect to see more graded practices being reflected in Powerschool. At this point in the year, the students have completed many practices for all three sections of this 3 hour exam that includes multiple choice and free response questions.

We have 2 new course offerings that will be available to students in the 2021-2022 Course Selection Program: **AP Language and Composition for juniors and Honors English 12 for seniors.**

Course descriptions are available in our most updated SHS Course Selection Program that will be accessible very soon. Any specific questions about these courses may be directed to Mr. Serrell-Dube for AP Language and Composition and Ms. Denise Collins for Honors English 12. We are so excited that we were able to make these courses available to our students!





by Phil Goduti

The Somers High School Social Studies department is excited to offer two new Advanced Placement (AP) courses this school year.

AP Psychology and AP World History: Modern are terrific opportunities for students to take rigorous courses and help them prepare for college. These two classes join AP United States History to offer a total of 15 college credits if students pass the AP exams in May. “We are excited with the progress that students are making, especially with the Covid restrictions,” said Mr. Andrew Drummey, who teaches AP World History: Modern. Both classes had a strong start this year despite Covid restrictions, which could make it difficult to teach an AP course. In fact, AP Psychology has three sections. “It has real world practical applications while preparing students for college,” said Mr. Marc Dzicek, who teaches AP Psychology. The department is excited to develop these programs and offer opportunities for students for years to come.

[CLICK HERE TO ACCESS THE CT LEARNING HUB](#)

#LearnandGrowTogether

CT LEARNING HUB

High quality resources for ALL learners and families available anytime, anywhere!



WHY

We believe in providing supplemental high quality resources to accelerate learning and advance equity, access and opportunity for all children. To support children and family to learn from where they are 24/7.

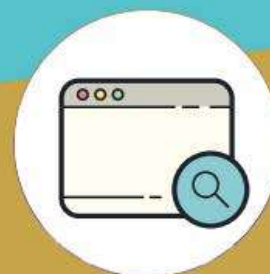
HOW

1. Select CT Learning Hub: <https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Academic-Office/CT-Learning-Hub>
2. Select a sub Learning Hub
3. Scroll to locate the folders to select information that answers your question or need
4. Select the plus sign (+) to expand the folder to see and use the available resources
5. Select a resource and explore

*provides both
online and
offline
Learning*



Scan the QR Code to access the CT Learning Hub



LEARN MORE: Where in the Hub? Scavenger Hunt

1. Select CT Learning Hub. Read the clues below and find answers in the Hub.
 - a. Locate the Parent Toolkit in the Parent Learning Hub
 - b. Locate Family Engagement with Friday Cafe' in the Social Emotional Learning Hub
 - c. Locate CT Public Television Learn From Home Resources in the Student Learning Hub
 - d. Locate one digital tool that can help your child at home in the Online Learning Hub



For questions, comments, or to share your feedback to assist in the ongoing design of the CT Learning Hub, please contact us at SDE.CTLearningHub@ct.gov

Physical Education + Health

by Eric Henne & Amanda Welch

The SHS Physical Education Department just finished a new unit, Yoga. At first, students were hesitant and unsure of this new and different unit. After completing several Yoga classes, students began to feel more relaxed and enjoyed learning new poses. Everyone's favorite pose seemed to be the corpse pose as it is very relaxing for the whole body. Instead of the usual assessment at the end of a unit, students created their own Yoga routine to present in front of the class. We were very impressed with how well the students did not only presenting it, but also teaching new poses to their peers.



As we say goodbye to our semester one students, we are excited to welcome a new group of students. We continue to follow COVID protocols while still doing our best to deliver quality instruction. This upcoming semester we will continue to introduce new "lifetime" activities to students as we physically distance ourselves. At the end of each class, students sanitize the equipment and their hands. Students need to make sure they wear proper sneakers and clothing to PE class every day as no one can use the locker rooms to change for class. They will not be allowed to participate in the physical activities if they do not have sneakers with them and it will impact their grade.



We continue to work on a new website dedicated solely to the Physical Education/Health department. Once the website is completed and created we will share with parents, families, and students!

IT'S ALMOST TIME FOR COURSE SIGNUPS! THE SHS BUSINESS DEPARTMENT

Business courses count towards STEM or General Elective graduation requirements.
Computer Apps 1: Personal Finance meets personal finance graduation requirement beginning with current freshmen class.



INTRODUCTION TO BUSINESS (full-year)

Real-world, hands-on activities focusing on skills essential for all career choices. Topics are not limited to: Interviewing skills, crafting effective cover letters & resumes, labor unions, ethics, business ownership, management, marketing improving quality, etc.



ACCOUNTING 1 & 2 (full-year)

These courses cover the entire accounting cycle in addition to other accounting concepts. Excellent for any business-related career, those majoring in business at college, and those considering owning a business.



BUSINESS LAW 1 & 2 (1/2 year)

Everyone should take this course to have a better understanding of the laws impacting consumers, employees, and employers. This course utilizes real-world cases and videos to bring the content alive.



MARKETING or ENTREPRENEURSHIP (1/2 year)

Fun hands-on activities and projects, from advertising campaigns to business plans. Marketing is an excellent choice for all students. Entrepreneurship should be chosen by anyone who would ever consider owning a business.



COMPUTER APPLICATIONS 1: Personal Finance (1/2 year)

COMPUTER APPLICATIONS 2: Integrated (1/2 year)

Self-paced courses with no homework! The first focuses on personal finance (student loan debt, credit card debt, investing, credit scores, negotiating a car deal, and many more). The second course focuses on technical skills applicable to running a business.



THE SHS YEARBOOK TEAM (full year)

Want to be part of the award-winning SHS Yearbook team, in charge of designing, selling, and distributing the next yearbook?

See Mr. Clement directly for an application!



Ask Mr. Mayo About
Joining FBLA!

Their favorite personal finance tips from Computer Apps 1!



Tech Ed

During the first semester the students in the **Advanced Manufacturing** class have been hard at work on their projects. These students have been honing their woodworking skills to create hardwood jewelry boxes. For the projects, students worked off a basic set of plans and added their own style by selecting different species of hardwood to create color contrast. Some of the students choose to add to their designs by laser engraving text or images into the lid. As the boxes came together, the students explored different joinery and assembly techniques, while working to develop their measurement abilities as well as their tool and machine procedural skills. After the completion of the first project, students moved on to projects of their own design. Some students have made custom cutting boards, others are turning wooden pens and some have designed their own unique projects. As the semester wraps up students are putting the final touches on their projects and they look outstanding.



ZMC update

Ms. Collins and Ms. Stoltz are pleased to announce the success of the first **SHS Reads Book Club!** Almost 20 students and teachers joined the "breakfast with a book" discussion of the novel *Past Perfect Life* by Elizabeth Eulberg earlier this January. Ms. Eulberg generously donated 20 signed copies of her book to help us get the book club going this year, and this past Thursday she joined us on a Zoom call from her flat in London. Students enjoyed the experience and really thought it was interesting to see where the idea for the book had come from and to hear about Ms. Eulberg's writing process. Our next book will be 2021 Nutmeg Nominee *Dread Nation* by Justina Ireland.



Food Services

The **Food Service Management 1** students just completed this recipe for their lab in January. Since students are working independently and not in groups currently the recipe is for one.



[Click here for the Chicken Stir Fry Recipe](#)

NEWS FROM THE

Counseling & Career Center

Girls in STEM

(Science, Technology, Engineering & Math)

What can we do to encourage more young women in STEM? It is a well known fact that throughout Connecticut and the U.S. girls continue to be underrepresented in these fields. We can do our part by reaching out and involving more girls in STEM career activities. We would like them to gain exposure to the exciting, challenging, inspiring and leading-edge plethora of opportunities out there for women, and can gain confidence in themselves and their abilities to succeed in these fields.

On January 28th, 20 girls, as well as boys, from Somers High School participated in the CT Science Center Virtual STEM Career Showcase open to students from throughout the state. Computer professionals, engineers and scientists from the Hartford and Boston areas led Showcase sessions highlighting their careers and training, and answering questions from students. According to one of our female students, "I learned that there are a ton of different paths one can go into when choosing a career in STEM." Another stated, "I see myself applying the information learned today. I see me exploring different avenues of biomedical engineering now that I know the many different paths there are."



In order to build on this experience, a **virtual Girls in STEM Club** is forming. The Club will be led by Rose Karvandi who graduated from Somers High School in 2019 and is a sophomore Honors student at UCONN majoring in Physiology & Neurobiology. Rose says, *"I am passionate about STEM fields and female empowerment and believe that those two should go hand-in-hand. I enjoy mentoring other students through recognizing their strengths, passions, and future goals. I would love to share my experiences, while serving as a resource for students as they work towards their success in high school and prepare for their transition after high school."* The first meeting will be held on Thurs. Feb. 18 at 2:30. Interested students should contact Ms. Meg Duffy in the Counseling & Career Center.

Notes from the Nurse



February is Teen Dating Violence Awareness month so to align with the theme here are some resources for parents on online dating and the risks as well as internet safety tips.

[Internet safety for Teens](#)

[Internet Safety for Parents](#)

[Risks of Online Dating for Teens](#)



What Parents Can Do To Promote Safety Online :

- Teach your teen to protect personal information such as their full name, phone number, address, birthdate, and school name. Remind them to turn off “location” in her apps, which allows others to see where she is when she posts.
- Ask them to identify a trusted adult they can approach (hopefully you) if they ever feel uncomfortable about an online encounter.
- Encourage them to trust their instincts. If something feels creepy, it probably is.
- Focus on [cyber safety](#) rather than on individual apps, since new apps are always popping up.
- Check their phone and online history. Know where they’re going online.
- Rely on open communication as opposed to programs that block apps or sites.
- Draw the line. Especially with dating apps, It’s okay to say “no.”

SPARTAN SPORTS



Winter sports officially began for basketball, ice hockey and indoor track on January 19th, while wrestling unfortunately will not be able to compete during this winter season. Our indoor track athletes are allowed to practice during the week, however, meets will not be held at any indoor facility during February. Our varsity basketball teams will be playing a (12) game regular season in their regional pod, followed by a league playoff format that will be finalized as the season progresses in February.




Tri-Town hockey will also be playing (12) games in the CCC this season, and will also participate in a league playoff format. The CIAC has decided not to have any postseason state tournaments, and the season is scheduled to end on March 28th. Our district and league will provide more information on winter sports over the next week, including posting more specific information on the high school sports website.



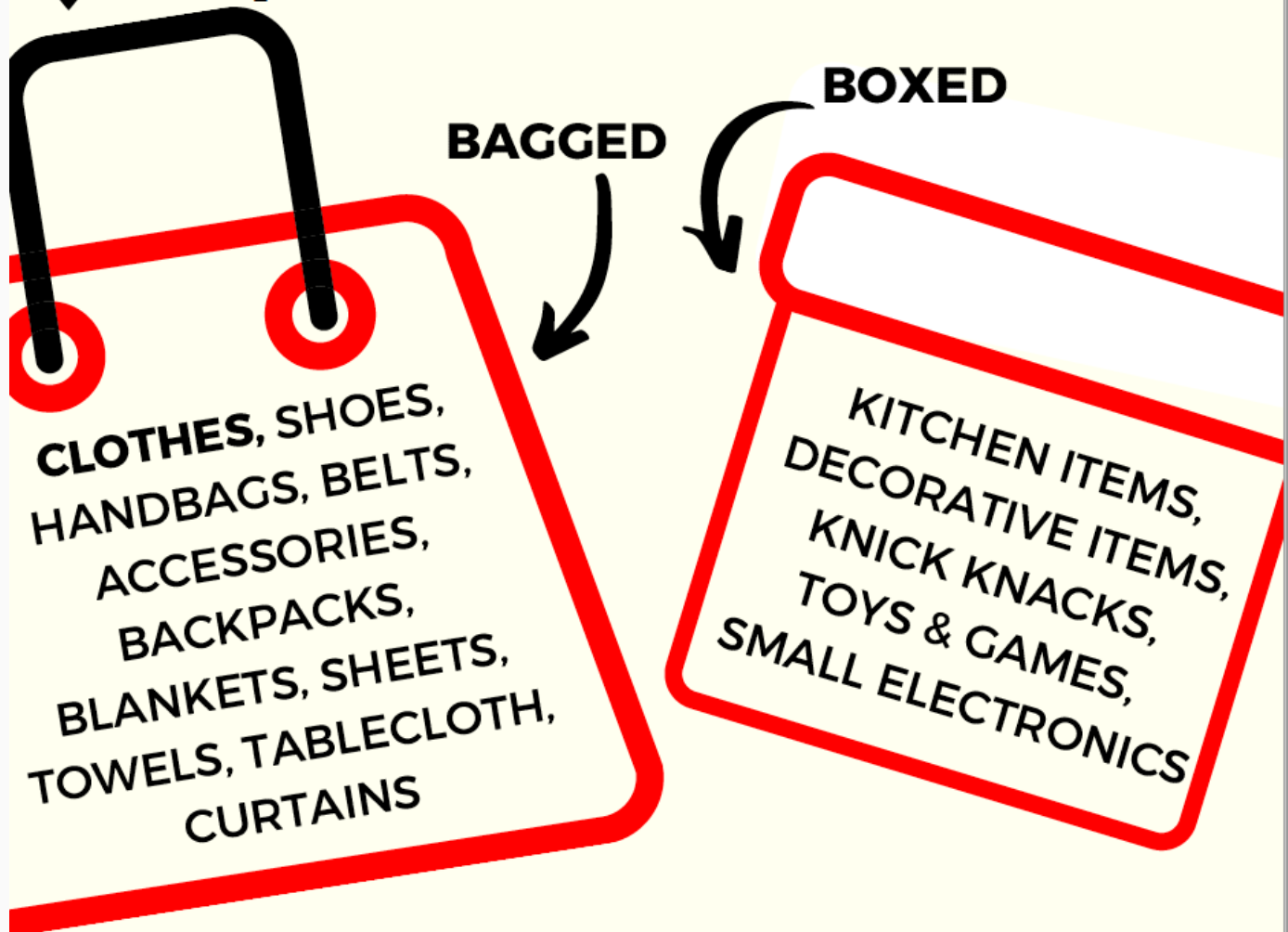
Clubs & Activities

Clothing Drive!

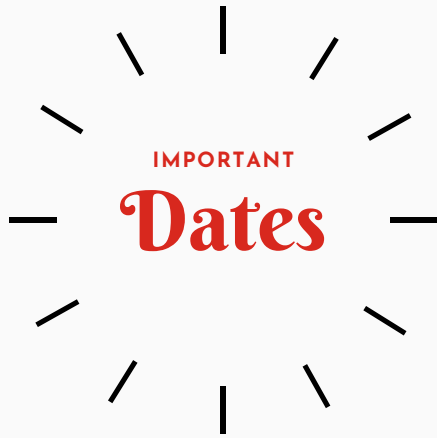
Support
the SHS
Class of
2021!

 **JAN 1 - FEB 25**

 **Drop off in front of SHS**



Pasquale Dematteo (pasquale.dematteo@somers.k12.ct.us)
Andrew Slater (andrew.slater@somers.k12.ct.us)



First Day Q3/S2 (12:00) - 2/1
Early Release PD (11:00)- 2/10
Presidents' Day (no school)- 2/15
PD (no school)- 2/16

USEFUL

Contact Information

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