



YOUR SCHOOLS

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Sweet Home Central School District

March 2011 Your Schools - The Newsletter for the Residents of the Sweet Home Central School District

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Beginning March 1, Sweet Home Central School District will be on Facebook!! You can find our page by searching Sweet Home Schools on Facebook.com or by clicking on the Facebook link from the district website at www.sweethomeschools.com.

You'll find the latest district news, information on coming events and meeting and updates on the 2011-12 budget process on our new page.

Please find us, like our page and you'll receive all the news from Sweet Home in your news feed immediately!

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Board of Education to Host Second Community Budget Meeting March 8th

Superintendent Anthony J. Day and the Board of Education invite community members to the **second open 2011-12 community budget meeting** to learn about the overall budget process and to ask questions of the Board of Education. To date, the Board has seen two iterations of a proposed 2011-12 budget. Each is outlined on the home page of the district website at www.sweethomeschools.com.

Because of drastic cuts in state aid to Sweet Home, this budget season will prove to be one of the most challenging in Sweet Home History. The meeting will be held on **Tuesday, March 8 at 5:15pm** in the Norman C. Vergils Community Center of Sweet Home High School, 1901 Sweet Home Road in Amherst. The meeting is not a Board of Education meeting, but rather a chance for community members to learn more about budget plans and voice opinions. The special meeting is open to all district residents and child care will be available. If you have any questions regarding the open budget meeting, please call the Office of the Superintendent at 250-1402.

Here is a summary of the 2011-12 budget study season to date:

Thursday, January 20 - Open Community Budget Meeting #1

- Board receives feedback and input from community members on 2011-12 budget.

Saturday, January 22 - Board of Education Budget Study Session #1

- Board views budget draft #1, a straight program maintenance budget, and receives a projected New York State outlook for the coming year.

Saturday, February 12 - Board of Education Budget Study Session #2

- Board views budget draft #2, Governor's Executive budget and staffing and enrollment projections

IMPORTANT DATES FOR 2011-12 BUDGET DISCUSSION

Saturday, March 26 • 8am • Board Budget Study

Tuesday, April 12 • 7pm • 2011/12 Budget Adoption by Board

Tuesday, May 3 • 7pm • Budget Public Hearing & Board Candidates

Tuesday, May 17 • 12-9pm • School Budget Vote



*Superintendent of
Schools
Anthony J. Day*

A Message from the Superintendent of Schools...

Each month, we try to highlight some of the work or key issues that impact our schools and their work with kids. These attempt to describe the facts and help the reader understand how we're trying to make our vision of high levels of learning for all students a reality. As I move about the District, sometimes there are stories that perhaps do a better job for us.

District Music Festival.....On Sunday, January 30th, we celebrated another District music festival. Close to 1000 students performed that afternoon before a packed house at Alumni Arena. I always pay close attention to the elementary performance ensembles. For some, it is only their second or third concert and I'm always interested in their response. I could see one boy- a trumpet player fidgeting in his seat obviously nervous. But once they started playing, he was super-focused and intent on his music. He finished his piece and as the audience roared their approval. He looked up in the stands, caught someone's eye and smiled. He had made it- he did it! The excitement of the performance and the thrill of accomplishing something meaningful are pieces of data that aren't captured on a multiple choice test or easily quantified. It is the experiences we give our kids that matter most.

Reading Workshop.....I'm sitting with Joe- a fifth grader- talking about reading during his reading workshop. He's working through a book that he's really excited about. While his teacher works with a different group of students, I ask him how he likes his book and a big smile bursts upon his face. He begins to tell me every detail of the plot and describes the main character in the book. He tells me that the character reminds him of his brother because he can be nice and he can be mean all at the same time. I ask him what he thinks the author is trying to teach him through the story. He pauses a second and says, " He's telling us that if you have a dream and you want it bad enough that maybe it can come true." What a perfect lesson for a ten year old. Throughout this year, our efforts at the elementary are focused on literacy. Helping kids love to read and to know how to make sense of what they read. Our teachers are working to help kids build their understanding of how good readers engage books and text and then give them plenty of time to practice- by reading independently. Joe's spirit and his responses tell me that he is well on his way.

The Teacher Round.....I walk into a room full of eighth grade students studying Living Environment. They have already created- not just copied- some very complex and thoughtful notes and engaged in a variety of different activities that not only helped them to recall the information but to also make great connections and engage in complex thinking processes such as comparing and abstracting. Their teachers are a team of science teachers that have tried to figure out the best way to teach the topic using a variety of research-based strategies. As I enter towards the lesson's end, I can see the work of the kids on their desks and on the walls. The work is impressive to read and a pleasure to see in action in one of our classrooms. The process is so impressive that a national leader in teacher development has captured the event on film for distribution to other educators around the country. The teacher round- a model for helping teachers improve instruction- has taken root in our middle school and our teachers have truly embraced its spirit of collaboration to improve instruction.

Student Advisory Group..... Each month, I invite 10-12 high school juniors and seniors to my office for lunch and a chance to get their perspective on a number of issues related to the high school and to our District. Sometimes I pick the topic; sometimes the kids do. I think of the diverse ideas that are expressed and the different approaches of the kids to participate in the dialogue. One young lady is ready to offer ideas on most every topic. She has a bright smile and strong opinions but they're usually backed by facts or experiences. One young man sits pretty quiet most meetings but when you look at him- he'll tell you what he thinks. The conversation is always lively and their energy is contagious. By the time we get everyone there and get started, we normally have 30 minutes to talk. It's the fastest 30 minutes of the week and the most enjoyable. We seek to increase our kids' opportunities to talk and express themselves- to see different perspectives and to advocate for themselves. Classroom curriculum that engages, challenges and stimulates kids will build thinking skills and habits of mind they'll use throughout their lives.

Community Budget Meetings.... Last month, the Board of Education conducted several public sessions to discuss this year's budget process. Sweet Home, not unlike other districts across the state, has a significant gap to fill between shrinking revenues and growing expenditures and, in this "perfect storm," our Board members are interested in hearing from our community about their thoughts and feelings about how to challenge this dilemma. On January 20th, over 45 community members joined a forum to hear information and provide their thoughts. One couple really stood out for me. During the presentation of information, they were very attentive and truly engaged. During opportunities for table discussion they were intent on listening to others but had strong feelings themselves. They clearly loved Sweet Home and wanted the best for the kids but understand the difficult problem we face. Like the others in attendance that night, they were simultaneously thoughtful and passionate about what they believe and what they want for their kids and their community.

This small set of stories highlights what I love about our District. We have caring teachers that are committed to helping kids and willing to do whatever it takes to try and improve their work with them. We have a strong community that is vested in our work and dedicated to Sweet Home. And, finally, we have wonderful kids. In every building, you have young people that when engaged in work worth doing will set their mind to it and blossom. These are the stories that we hope to increase and make happen every day in each of our classrooms.

**“PROJECT SUCCESS:
COMING TOGETHER FOR
OUR CHILDREN”**

**Meeting with Current 8th
Grade Parents**

The presentation of the required drug and alcohol education program for parents of incoming 9th graders for the 2011-2012 school year is scheduled for **Wednesday, March 23 from 7-8:30pm** in the Sweet Home District Office-Norman Vergils Community Room. Presenters include representatives from Amherst Town Court, Amherst Police, Erie County Council for the Prevention of Alcohol and Substance Abuse and the school district. Attendance to the program is necessary if the new 9th grade students are to attend any dances at the High School. Parents of current 9th and 10th grade students are also encouraged to attend if they have not yet done so. A letter will be sent out to all 8th grade parents in the near future further explaining the reasons for this district initiative. Please contact Mrs. Reinholz, Sweet Home high School Principal, with any questions at 250-1200.

**HARKNESS STUDENT OF
THE MONTH**



Congratulations to **Joey Rhodes** on being named the Harkness Student of the Month for December. Joey was described as someone who takes initiative to help struggling students, earns excellent grades and for always having a great attitude.

**8th Grader’s Art Selected for
Permanent Display...**



Congratulations to 8th grader **Iлона Ilyenko** on having her artwork selected to be part of the permanent collection for the New York State School Board Association in Albany. Iлона is currently student in Mrs. Lawson’s art class at the middle school.



Iлона was recognized for this outstanding accomplishment at the February 8, 2011 Board of Education meeting.

District Music Festival Another Hit...

The District Music Festival proved yet again to be a highlight of the district calendar. All of the district music ensembles performed to a huge crowd at UB’s Alumni Arena on Sunday, January 30. District Music Coordinator **Mrs. Debbi Coniglio** and the rest of the music staff are to be applauded for another great afternoon of music!



**PTA/PTO COUNCIL FISH FRY & CHICKEN FINGER
DINNERS MARCH 9 & APRIL 1**

The Sweet Home PTA/PTO Council will hold the two Lenten fish fry and chicken finger dinners on **Wednesday, March 9 and Friday, April 1 from 4-7pm** in the main gymnasium lobby of Sweet Home High School, 1901 Sweet Home Road in Amherst.



The dinners are take-out only. The fish fry dinner is \$8.50 and is served with cole slaw, french fries, rye bread, tartar sauce and ketchup. The chicken finger dinner is \$6.50 and is served with two fingers, bleu cheese, carrot and french fries. Please support the Council as all proceeds benefit their scholarship fund.

Kindergarten Registrations for 2011-12...

Kindergarten registration will be held throughout the month of March for any child that will be 5 years old by December 1, 2011. Parents of eligible students who are not already enrolled in the district's Universal Pre-K Program should have received a registration packet in the mail. Children already attending our UPK program are already registered for Kindergarten and are being asked to provide updated medical information to the elementary school.

If you have not yet called to schedule an appointment to register your child please do so as soon as possible. Call the Central Registration office at 250-1600. If you did not receive a registration packet and your child will be eligible for Kindergarten in September 2011, please call Elaine at 250-1414 to request a packet.

Registration for Universal Pre-K for the 2011-2012 school year will take place in May. Registration information will be mailed out to homes in April. If you have a child that is eligible, they will be 4 years of age by December 1; you may call Elaine at 250-1414 to make sure your child is on the mailing list. The mailing list is compiled by census forms sent home to families requesting information about ages of children in the home. If you did not receive one of these forms or did not return one, then you may not be on the mailing list.



High School Inducts 74 into National Honor Society...

Sweet Home Senior High School is pleased to announce that seventy-four juniors and seniors have been inducted to the National Honor Society. Inductions took place Wednesday, January 12 in the high school auditorium. In order to be inducted to the National Honor Society, students must maintain an average of 90 percent and demonstrate qualities in scholarship, service, leadership and character.

The 2011 Sweet Home High School National Honor Society inductees are as follows: **Jesse Alt-Winzig, Michael Barnas, Megan Barone, Sarah Battaglia, Alexander Beahan, Benjamin Beal, Michael Biggane, Erin Boldt, Brianna Bozeman, Danielle Bruch, Bridget Burch, Sabrina Bush, Yibelle Caminero, Joshua Carroll, Kelsey Covell, Joanna Cross, John Davies, Veronica Denisovich, Sarah Fiordaliso, Rachel Firzak, Ian Ford, John Forrestel, Carly Foster, Jasmine Foye, Rachel Frase, Joseph Freiart, Ashley Gangi, Gary Gellerson, Lacey Gennamore, Hunter Gilmour, Patrick Griffin, Katelyn Harding, Angelica Harrison, Stephanie Izard, Janelle Johnson, Troy Kaderbeck, Tiffany Kalisz, Katherine Keefe, Zachary Kinnaird, Emily Lambe, Michael Leto, Daniel Lewandowski, Victoria Link, Mark Mackowski, Leyla Mamedova, Amanda Manzella, Kalie McHenry, Kristen Milleville, Karen Mittlefehldt, Amanda Moore, Nathan Ostrye, Benjamin Paswik, Leonard Ranallo, John Rein, Jennifer Rizzo, Brian Rosiek, Michele Said, Anna Sampayo, Nicholas Sciandra, Jake Sinclair, Kristin Skoney, Christopher Stiver, Katherine Stoll, Joseph Szabo, Heather Titanic, Taylor Vaughan, Grozdana Vidovic, Abileen Ward, Kaylah Warda, Stephen Weinheimer, Emily Wesolowski, Cassie Williams, Jeffrey Wojtkowski and Jeremy Young.**



74 High School students were inducted into the National Honor Society on Wednesday, January 12.

PTA Council Seeking Nomination for Sid Oberacker Award...

The Sweet Home PTA Council's, Leon "Sid" Oberacker School-Community Service Award is a way of citing those who, with no regard to tangible reward, have made outstanding contributions toward the improvement of the Sweet Home schools and community. Because of their efforts, our schools and community are not only closer, they are better.

This award bears the name of Leon "Sid" Oberacker, the district's former Superintendent of Educational and Community Services. It is a tribute to his selfless and tireless efforts on behalf of our school and community. These efforts consistently went well beyond the scope and demands of Mr. Oberacker's job. The award is given each year to honor an outstanding individual that exemplifies his volunteer spirit, and to serve as a cornerstone pronouncement that the Sweet Home School District is a community of people who recognize both the joy and importance of working together for the good of our families and children.

Please assist the PTA Council in honoring an exemplary Sweet Home volunteer that you may know by nominating him or her for the Leon "Sid" Oberacker School and Community Service Award. A nominee may be anyone who has rendered outstanding service to our schools and community. It may be a District employee, a parent, a resident, a business person, a service provider or a student. He or she does not need to be a member of a PTA/PTO to qualify. The award may be given to co-recipients or posthumously if the selection committee so chooses.

Nominations must be made in writing on the application form and received **on or before April 12, 2011**. Applications are welcome and encouraged from PTA/PTO's, individuals and/or organizations throughout the Sweet Home community at large and are available in each of the district schools' main offices.



DOLLARS FOR SCHOLARS CRAFT FAIR SATURDAY, APRIL 9

The Sweet Home chapter of Dollars for Scholars will be hosting its annual Spring Craft Fair on Saturday, April 9. The fair will take place at Sweet Home High School from 10:00am to 4:00pm. The cost of admission is \$2 and all proceeds from the show will benefit the scholarship fund for graduating Sweet Home seniors.

This year's show will feature over 110 crafters, with many of them being new! In addition, the PTA/PTO Council will be hosting its famous theme basket auction with over 50 baskets available to win.

The Sweet Home Family Support Center will also host its annual Community Services Fair from 10am - 2pm with a number of agencies providing information on programs available to you and your family right here in our community!



DePoint to Play in All-Eastern Honors Orchestra on April 3...

Approximately 150 students are selected to perform in The Music Educators National Conference (MENC) Eastern Division Orchestra and Sweet Home's **Joshua DePoint** is one. The musicians have all participated in their home All State Festivals. The Orchestra is made up of students from the Eastern Seaboard. Josh is one of the few students in the history of SH to have achieved the distinction of being selected for this elite ensemble.

Josh has played Bass for nine years and plans on attending college for music performance. He was for selected for NYSSMA All-State Orchestras both Junior and Senior year and appointed principal bass both years (based on seating auditions).

He was selected as winner of the Greater Buffalo Youth Orchestra (GBYO) Concerto Competition and will perform the Bottesini Concerto with the orchestra on May 15, 2011.



Maplemere Battle of the Books Winners...

Congratulations to the winners of the Maplemere Elementary Battle of the Books competition for fifth grade held on Monday, January 24.

Pictured are members of the winning team from Mrs. Bassano's and Mrs. Scully's 5th grade class : (l to r) **Jacob Stablewski, Alyssa Damstetter, and Jared Schmucker.**



Daddario Signs National Letter of Intent...

Matt Daddario, a member of Sweet Home's Section VI Class A Champion soccer team signed a National Letter of Intent to play soccer for the Daemen College Wildcats in the fall.

Pictured with Matt are his parents Patty and Paul, varsity soccer coach Scott Martin, Principal Joleen Reinholz and Athletic Director Chris DeMarco.

Daddario was named team MVP this past season and was a member of the ECIC II 1st team.

Matt was also an honorable mention member of the All-WNY scholar athlete team.

Best of luck at Daemen in the fall Matt..



Glendale Elementary Hoops it Up...

Five students from Glendale Elementary School competed in the Amherst Elks Hoop Shoot contest on January 8, 2011. In the 10 and 11-year-old division, **Brian Lovering** won first place, **Joey Serrano** finished third and **Giovanni Gilchrist** finished in fourth place respectively. In the 8 and 9-year-old division, **Tahron Gouldelock** won first place and **Destin Alexander** finished in third place.

The following week, Brian and Tahron went on to compete at the district level competition held at the Burt Flickinger Center on the ECC downtown campus. This competition featured first place finishers from all across WNY. There, Brian again finished in first place, sinking 20 of 25 shots and Tahron finished in third place.

Brian's first place finish qualified him for the regional competition held in Pen Yan on February 12th. There, he finished fourth, ending his run toward enshrinement in the Basketball Hall of Fame. It was quite an accomplishment to make it that far! Congratulations to Brian and all of the Glendale competitors.



*Left to right:
Tahron Gouldelock and Brian Lovering*

Middle School Posters Promote Health Safety & Environmental Responsibility...

Students in 8th grade science classes spent the week of January 17 working before and after school on a poster contest to promote safety, health and environmental responsibility. Over 150 posters were created and sent to a local company (Watson Bowman Acme) for judging. First place went to **Stephanie Hanaka, Kali Princess-Hash and Julia Partsch**. Second place winner was **Hannah Hamilton**. Third place was given to **Bethanie Jones** and honorable mention was awarded to **Mitchell Thomas, Megan Shoemaker, Sarah Molefe, Ashley Bassett, Alexandria Kamieniarz and Kassy Steiger**. the students will be treated to a pizza party for their efforts, a tour of the Watson Bowman Acme plant and a Barnes and Noble gift card.



Danielle Dispenza and Mandy Rajczak work on their posters.

High School Tech Club Competes at NCCC Tech Wars...

On January 15 Sweet Home High School Tech Club competed against over 600 students from schools all over Erie and Niagara Counties in the annual NCCC Tech Wars competition. Sweet Home students had entries in the 20 lb Sumo robot, Musical Instrument, King of the Hill and on site parametric modeling.

Senior **Jen Green** took 3rd place in the Musical Instrument category. Jen made an Appalachian style dulcimer, gaining extra points for repurposed materials for screws used as tuners and welding rod for frets. Jen played the theme from the movie Halloween on the dulcimer for the performance.

Junior **Tim Gerst** drove to 4th place in the 20lb Sumo competition aided by his pit crew of Kelsey Hinterberger and Patrick Rosner. The Sumo competition was a strong field of 26 robots and experienced drivers. A new twist to the event this year was that the first three rounds were one on one on one, three robots in the ring at a time. This made for some interesting strategy and crowd pleasing matches. The Sweet Home robot was a force to be reckoned with in the first rounds, winning every match until the semi finals. In the semis, Sweet Home faced a very tough robot from Grand Island that eventually won the event.

King of the Hill entrants Lucas Bell and Mike Nowak were forced to drop out due to mechanical problems and Parametric Modeling entrant Charlie Loweecy made a good effort but was plagued with computer issues.



Tim Gerst drives his robot in the 20lb Sumo competition while his pit crew looks on.

Have Books, Need Bookcases...

The Middle School Technology Club has spent the better part of 2011 working before school to create bookcases for the ELA classrooms for the school's nine grade level teams. Under the direction of Mr. Tom Smith, Mr. Kevin Schleicher, Mr. Morris Fried and Mr. Ed Hayes the following students have been hard at work on finding homes for the books in the ELA classrooms: **Courtney Koch, Anthony Tripoli, Chris Nowak, Chuck Chimera, Patrick Boyle, Joey Duffy, Joey Lovering and Sean Fazekas**.





Asst. Superintendent
for Instruction
Larry J. Leaven

An Update from the Office of Instruction...

“While life must be lived forward, it can only be understood backward.”
Søren Kierkegaard

It has been said that storytelling is the most basic form of communication. As an educator, perhaps storytelling is one of the most powerful perspectives that I may have at my disposal. Being a new member of the Sweet Home learning community, I do not yet have the privilege of my own “Sweet Home” story. However, over the past several months, I have had the opportunity to listen to the stories of those who grew up here, were schooled here or have worked in Sweet Home for a number of years. Listening to those stories has helped to shape my thinking around what is valued and appreciated at Sweet Home and what I need to focus on to help move our learning community forward.

Recently, I had the opportunity to have lunch with a group of Sweet Home High School seniors. During our time together I listened to the students share their stories of growing here, the joys of completing 13 years of learning and the many challenges of preparing for the next phase of their lives. The honesty and power of their individual stories provided me with a unique perspective into what they have cherished during their time in Sweet Home and what they will reflect upon as they graduate. I believe that listening to the voice of our students, hearing their story, will provide us with insights into ways for improving our approach to teaching and learning.

Over the next several months, I will be collaborating with 35 teachers and administrators from across the district and across all curricular areas as part of our ongoing Comprehensive District Education Planning (CDEP) teamwork. The CDEP collaboration process is a means of focusing our vision on school improvement strategies, prioritizing our needs, and ensuring that our school improvement goals inform all school decisions. A critical part of our vision includes adjusting our practice based upon the needs of our students. This will involve an ongoing review of learning data as well as the gathering of student response data through the process of student surveys.

Professionals in other fields have long used surveys to help them better meet the diverse interests and needs of their customers. We, too, must keep the needs of our customers in mind when adjusting our instructional frameworks and when making changes and innovations to our staff development experiences. The work of our district CDEP team over the next several months to develop, distribute and assess student surveys will help us gain a greater knowledge and appreciation of students’ needs from each of the critical levels within our learning community. Once all data has been compiled, we will share the results and move forward where possible and as necessary. I look forward to hearing the many and varied stories of our Sweet Home students.

As always, I welcome your input to the instructional programs here in Sweet Home and encourage you to meet with your child’s learning team should you have any questions about your child’s school experience or I can be reached through email at lleaven@shs.k12.ny.us or by phone at 250.1422.

The Baker’s Dozen at Heritage Heights...

In the Dutch colonial town later known as Albany, New York, there lived a baker, Van Amsterdam, who was as honest as he could be...

Adapted from the original Dutch colonial tale of Saint Nicholas, the Heritage chorus, instrument ensemble, and drama club under the direction of music teacher Mrs. Debbie Imiolo-Schraver performed **The Baker’s Dozen** on Wednesday, December 22. The performance was outstanding, very creative and everyone in attendance enjoyed. Congratulations to Heritage and Mrs. I on a great holiday showcase!



(Left to right): Stephen Hodges III, Summer Mantione (front), Alison Bell (back), Louis Schraver, Jenelle Ranallo, Elizabeth Ratinski

A Closer Look at January's Staff Development Day...

Teachers from around the District spent January 28 in small group meetings as part of Staff Development Day. Here's a closer look at what they did during the course of the day:

Grades K-2, Kristine Short

Building upon the learning from the November Conference Day and other building-based experiences where teachers looked closely at the data from the Early Literacy Profile (ELP) and various running records, teachers worked with Kristine Short (Orleans/NiagaraBOCES Reading Recovery Trainer) to discover ways to skillfully use data to make predictions of progress for individual students and plan instruction to meet those predicted goals.

Throughout the day, teachers worked in cross building, grade level teams to analyze student data together and construct a "next steps" plan for readers based on the analysis of strategic problem solving behaviors, word work needs, and over all meaning making.

Knowing that teachers can ensure that students apply letter/sound/word knowledge when reading and writing, at the close of the day, Kristine gave a brief overview of how children learn to look at words. Teachers were provided with a picture book where they collaboratively planned word work and explored methods for targeted word study and application.



Ginny Lockwood works with grades 3-8 ELA teachers.

Grades 3-5 and Grades 6-8 ELA, Ginny Lockwood

Following the Keynote presentation, "Looking Closely at What We See and Listening In to What We Hear: Meeting Readers Where They Are and Giving Them What They Need to Soar", by Literacy Consultant Ginny Lockwood, teachers worked in cross grade level groups around our ongoing intermediate literacy goals. Ginny helped to clarify the purpose and structure of the reading workshop, outlined better ways for teachers to know readers well and teach according to student assessment data and organized tools and structures to deepen the overall literacy work at the intermediate level.

Grades 6-12, Building-based Learning Goal Initiative

Middle and High School building administrators worked with grades 6-12 teachers as part of our ongoing Learning Goals Initiative. Throughout the Learning Goal study and development, teachers have been working to create learning goals that are clear, focused and based upon New York State Learning Standards. Teachers across all curricular areas worked to find appropriate ways of communicating those learning goals so that students understand the goals and can see classroom activities as a means to accomplishing specific learning goals. Teachers spent time discovering the many ways of tracking student progress on learning goals using formatively-based assessments and authentic ways to clearly celebrate both knowledge gain and status at the end of a unit of instruction. This is an ongoing initiative that will grow in the months and years ahead.



Left: Vic Klein works with 8th grade science teachers on learning goal initiatives; Right: Kristine Short works with K-2 teachers on literacy initiatives.



Health & Wellness Corner...



*Beverly Ann Shipe, SNT/P
District Nurse
Practitioner &
Health Teacher
250-1269*

School Health Office Update...

At this time of year, we are seeing a rise in strep throat and viral illness. Parents should confer with their child's Health Care Provider for evaluation of sorethroat, vomiting, diarrhea and fever.

Children should stay home for symptoms of fever, vomiting, diarrhea, and the start of antibiotics for at least 24 hours and until they are symptom-free before returning to school. Students who are sent to school medicated with over-the-counter analgesic/antipyretic (fever-reducing) agents for previous night symptoms will not be ready to learn, may be contagious to others, and will be sent home.

Parents should inform the school nurse of communicable conditions such as head lice, strep throat and "pink eye". This helps to service your child as well as other students in the building.

Just an FYI on rashes- seeing a little bit of everything, and with spring around the corner, much more to follow. Keep your building nurse informed. All undiagnosed rashes need to be referred to HCP for evaluation and Tx if necessary. A medical note is required for return to school.

February is Dental Health Month

Our elementary students receive dental health education by community dental health professionals, in addition to classroom teacher instruction. Dental Hygienist Cheryl DiVita, RDH from University Pediatric Dentistry provides many elementary classroom dental health lessons, as well as Dr. Meelin Dian Chin Kit Wells, DDS. Dr. Wells and her UB School of Dental Medicine students provide Dental Health Fairs/Carnivals, which include stations of activities and demonstrations on dental care and cavity prevention. The students have much fun while learning.

Dr. Wells offers a tip for guiding young children with oral care, "One tip about flossing is to leave a little toothpaste on your teeth and floss the tooth paste between your teeth, that way all that healthy fluoride in the toothpaste gets right where it's needed most. Don't swallow the toothpaste, as fluoride is good for your teeth, but not good for your 'tummy'."

See link for dental info- <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/dentalhealth.html>

Genetic Discovery and How People Learn Language.

'Researchers at the University of Edinburgh have found a gene - called ROBO1 - linked to the mechanism in the brain that helps infants develop speech. They say identifying the gene could help us explain how some aspects of language learning in infants are influenced by genetic traits rather than educational factors.' <http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/216067.php>

Spina Bifida Surgery More Effective Before Birth

'Babies who undergo surgery to repair the most serious form of spina bifida while still in the womb develop better and have fewer complications than babies who have corrective surgery after birth, said US researchers reporting on an eight-year trial that stopped early because the results were so positive.

Doing the surgery on the babies while they were still in the womb rather than after they were born also resulted in better mental development and function and increased the chance they would one day walk unaided, said the researchers.'

<http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/216133.php>

Left-Side Sleeping May Help Calm Nocturnal Heartburn

People who suffer with heartburn find their symptoms are aggravated when they sleep on their right side, while sleeping on their left side seems to calm things down, study data show. Physicians often recommend that people with nighttime heartburn sleep on an incline to help keep stomach acid where it belongs.'

http://www.nytimes.com/2010/10/26/health/26really.html?_r=1&ref=health

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Caffeine Consumption Common in Kids, But Not Recommended

'Even young children appear to be consuming more caffeine, so much so that caffeine could be contributing to sleep problems in primary school children, researchers found.'

The more caffeine children consumed, the fewer hours they slept on average (P=0.02), the researchers reported online in the Journal of Pediatrics, although not drawing a causal link.

'The average intake was two or three times higher than the 22- to 23-mg daily average reported nearly a decade ago, they noted.'

"There's really no role for caffeine in kids," Marcie Schneider, MD, of the Albert Einstein College of Medicine in New York City, emphasized in commenting on the study. "We know that caffeine raises your blood pressure, raises your heart rate, and can be addictive."

<http://www.medpagetoday.com/Pediatrics/GeneralPediatrics/23945>

Traveling Tips For Bed Bug Prevention

'Bed bugs are very successful hitchhikers, moving from an infested site to furniture, bedding, baggage, boxes, and clothing. Although they typically feed on blood every five to ten days, bed bugs can be quite resilient; they are capable of surviving over a year without feeding.

A few simple precautions can help prevent bed bug infestation in your home:

- Check secondhand furniture, beds, and couches for any signs of bed bug infestation, as described above before bringing them home.
- Use a protective cover that encases mattresses and box springs which eliminates many hiding spots. The light color of the encasement makes bed bugs easier to see. Be sure to purchase a high quality encasement that will resist tearing and check the encasements regularly for holes.
- Reduce clutter in your home to reduce hiding places for bed bugs.

When traveling:

- In hotel rooms, use luggage racks to hold your luggage when packing or unpacking rather than setting your luggage on the bed or floor.
- Check the mattress and headboard before sleeping.
- Upon returning home, unpack directly into a washing machine and inspect your luggage' carefully.

<http://www.epa.gov/pesticides/bedbugs>

High School Presents *The Wiz*...

The Sweet Home High School Music Department will present *The Wiz* on March 25-27. Show times are 7:30pm on Friday, March 25 and Saturday, March 26 and 2pm on Sunday, March 27th.

The characters and story line of *The Wiz* are largely faithful to the 1939 movie version of *The Wizard of Oz*. Dorothy, played by **Bethany Wolf**, is picked up by a tornado and lands in Oz. The good witch Addaperle (**Toni Wright**) directs Dorothy to follow the yellow brick road to find the Wiz in the Emerald City. The Wiz will help Dorothy get back to Kansas. On her way to the Emerald City Dorothy encounters a hip Scarecrow (**Matt Rao**) who wants to join Dorothy because he feels he isn't going anywhere, an uptight Tin Man (**Tom Romans**) who needs Dorothy's help to hang loose and a cowardly Lion (**Gary Gellerson**) who has lost faith in the psychiatric help he's been getting from an owl. Together the 4 friends seek help from the Great Wiz played by **Alex Watts**. The Wicked Witch of the West, Evillene (played by **Hannah Mesches**) and her winged monkeys complete the mysterious and fanciful story written by William F. Brown. The music, written by Charlie Smalls, is a lively mixture of rock, gospel and soul.

Tickets are \$8 presale and are available March 5 by calling 250-1311 or \$10 at the door.

**SWEET HOME CENTRAL SCHOOLS
OF AMHERST & TONAWANDA**

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Scholar Athletes...



Sweet Home High School is pleased to announce that the following students have been named to the All-Western New York Scholar Athletes team for the Fall of 2010. In order to be a member of the team, students must maintain an average of 90% for their first three years of high school and be a starter or an important reserve on a varsity sport. Connor Orrico, Yekaterina Kukhto and Grace Pan were members of the team, while all others were Honorable Mention recipients.

Front row: Erica Sitek, Kristine Ellsworth, Tyler Hayes, Mackenzie Mann, Grace Pan, Connor Orrico, Yekaterina Kukhto, Jennifer Strom, Sarah Hickey, Emily Plewniak, Hannah Hagen

Standing: Henry Fumerelle, Sarah Willer, Faryal Sahibzada, Myriah Ruiz, Andrew Ludwig, Matthew Daddario, Ryan Scott, Billy Hyland, Sarah Lewandowski, Shaina Kantor, Amy Grogan, BethAnn Jasen, Laura Payne.

Missing: Austin Bradt and Jennifer Panaro