



YOUR SCHOOLS

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Sweet Home Central School District

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

SWEET HOME SCHOOLS COMMUNITY SURVEY



ATTENTION PARENTS & COMMUNITY MEMBERS

Please take a few moments to complete the Sweet Home Schools Community Survey. The information gathered from this survey will be used to set the topics for discussion at the upcoming Sweet Home Board of Education Open Forum. The survey can be found on the district website at:

www.sweethomeschools.com

Thank you for your participation.



[www.facebook.com/
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Rachel's Challenge Coming to Sweet Home October 27-28

Sweet Home Superintendent of Schools **Anthony J. Day** is pleased to announce that Rachel's Challenge, a program for parents and students, is coming to Sweet Home later this month. Rachel Scott was the first person killed at Columbine High School on April 20, 1999. Her acts of kindness and compassion coupled with the contents of her six diaries have become the foundation for the most life-changing school program in America. Powerful audio and video footage of Rachel's Challenge will be shown to high school and middle school students on Thursday and Friday, October 27 and 28 that motivates them to positive change in the way they treat others.



Rachel Scott

On **Thursday evening October 27 from 7-8pm** in the High School Auditorium, parents and community members are invited to hear the same powerful message from Rachel's Challenge.

Auditorium, parents and community members are invited to hear the same powerful message from Rachel's Challenge.

Rachel has five challenges:

1. Look for the best in others - Eliminate prejudice
2. Dare to Dream - set goals - Keep a Journal
3. Choose Positive influences - Input determines output
4. Kind words and actions = Huge Results
5. Start a chain reaction with family and friends

Be sure to join us on **Thursday, October 27 from 7-8pm** in the High School Auditorium. For more information, please visit www.rachelschallenge.org or www.sweethomeschools.com.



*Superintendent of
Schools
Anthony J. Day*

A Message from the Superintendent of Schools...

I'm not sure that growing up and maneuvering one's way through adolescence has ever been easy and for some it is harder than for others. Add the pressures of higher academic standards, the instant communication available from technology and the power of social media and one could argue that navigating one's teenage years is harder today than its ever been. Amongst all our work to raise test scores, improve achievement, and help students meet college and career ready standards, we must continually recognize that we serve young people trying to navigate the difficult journey towards adulthood. Academic growth and achievement are certainly critical aspects of our work. However, their importance can never overshadow our need to recognize and protect their safety and emotional well-being.

Recent tragic events demand us to note the challenges of growing up and the feelings of alienation, isolation, hopelessness and withdrawal that may emerge during adolescence. Sweet Home is committed to building a community that supports our kids' need to feel physically and psychologically safe and provide the support they'll need if those feelings begin to take hold. Two programs taking place this month will provide students, staff, parents and our school community members with information that can help us prevent further tragedy.

As a community, we owe it to each other to take every step possible to prevent further tragedies and prevent other families from experiencing the deep sorrow of teen suicide. We must commit to look out for one another and be able to recognize the warning signs that indicate an increased risk of suicide. These factors include:

- Drug and alcohol use
- Feelings of distress, irritability and agitation
- Physical, psychological or sexual abuse
- Feelings of hopelessness and worthlessness that accompany depression
- Marked changes in eating or sleep habits; changes in/ loss of interest in schoolwork
- Lack of peer or parental support and feelings of isolation
- The presence of psychological disorders
- Difficulty dealing with a traumatic event

I would encourage all parents to attend a special program at Williamsville South High School on Tuesday, October 25th entitled "Out of the Darkness." This program, which will begin at 6:30 PM, will provide important information allowing parents and trusted adults to recognize the signs of depression and potential teen suicide.

The role of bullying in our schools has always been an important issue in our schools and in the front of the community's consciousness of late. Bullying- the repeated use of verbal, physical and virtual intimidation with the intent to hurt another- is a critical problem in our schools and unchecked can foster many of the same feelings identified earlier within its victims. Sweet Home is not immune to bullying and when identified, our administrators will take strong, appropriate action against its perpetrators. In our efforts to compact bullying in our schools, we've asked that our students and staff stay vigilant and help us identify bullying as it may occur in our schools. We tell our kids how important it is that the "bystanders" of bullying report it to an administrator, counselor or other trusted adult as it occurs. We must recognize and embrace the responsibility we have to protect one another and not shrug off harassment and intimidation as "not my problem."

Another critical piece of our efforts to curb bullying and reduce the potential for teen suicide is to foster a community of connections and caring. Our vision for our school includes a desire to have every single student participate each year in an activity, club, or sport that captures their interest. Participation in these activities helps students find their "niche," increases the number and quality of their relationships with other students and fosters a sense of belonging and connectedness. The more connected our students are, the better the support they'll have if and when times get tough.

On the 27th and 28th of this month, all middle and high school students will participate in a powerful event called the Rachel's Challenge program. Started by the family of the first student killed at Columbine High School in 1999. The Rachel's Challenge exists to collaborate with schools to inspire, equip and empower students to make a positive difference in their world. It is a powerful partnership that can replace bullying and violent behavior on school campuses with kindness and compassion so students can learn more in a safer, more respectful environment. The program offers a powerful message of hope and kindness that can serve as the foundation of a stronger school community. All students will be engaged in preliminary discussions in preparation for the event and in follow up conversations afterwards. A series of follow up activities will take place to translate the words and emotions of the program into concrete action.

All district parents are invited to take part in a special community presentation with the Rachel's Challenge staff on the evening of Thursday, October 27th at 7:00 in the High School auditorium. You'll gain insight into the program our students have experienced, learn more about follow up opportunities and how you can help. Preventing bullying and teen suicide requires the community and collaboration to prevent further tragedy. I hope that you will be able to take part in one or both of these programs.

**PARENT OPEN FORUM
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER
10th at 6:30pm**

The Sweet Home Board of Education is once again a hosting parent open forum on **Thursday, November 10** at 6:30pm in the Norman C. Vergils Community Center of the High School.

The open forum format allows parents to talk with the Board of Education on any topic. If you are interested in attending the open forum, please call the Office of the Superintendent of Schools at 250-1402 to reserve your space.



**CHANGES TO THE
2011-12 CALENDAR**



Please note that **Friday, January 27, 2012** was not listed as a 1/2 day for the elementary schools in the calendars mailed home to district residents in August.

Elementary students **only** will be dismissed at 11:15am on Friday, January 27, 2012. We apologize for any inconvenience.

Sweet Home Music News...

The following students will be representing Sweet Home at the NYSSMA All-State Conference in December. We are very proud of their accomplishments.

- Laura Ciminelli, double bass** - String Orchestra
- Lisa Gagnon, cello** - Symphony Orchestra
- Stephanie Izard, tuba** - Symphonic Band
- Alex Watts, soprano** - Women's Chorus
- Samantha Lorich, soprano** - Choral Alternate



Laura Ciminelli



Lisa Gagnon



Stephanie Izard



Alex Watts



Samantha Lorich



The Sweet Home Music Department is looking for new or used instrument donations. If you have any band or orchestra instruments that you would like to donate please contact Debbi Coniglio at 250-1368. Instruments can be dropped off at Central Office.



Please join us for one of our November 2011 concerts:

Willow Ridge 2nd & 3rd Grade Choral Concert
Wednesday, November 9, 7pm

High School Concert Orchestra, Symphonic Band, Mixed Chorus & Jazz Ensemble Concert
Wednesday, November 9, 7:30pm

Symphony Orchestra, Wind Ensemble & Concert Chorale Concert
Wednesday, November 16, 7:30pm

Grade 8 Band, Grade 8 Orchestra, Grade 8 Girls Chorus & Grades 7-8 Boys Chorus Concert
Thursday, November 17, 7pm

Glendale Chorus, Glendale Hand Chimes & High School Chorus Concert
Tuesday, November 29, 7pm

District Sets 2011-12 Tax Rates...

At its voting meeting August 23, the Sweet Home Board of Education set the school tax rate for 2011-12.

The School Board approved a 2011-12 property tax levy of \$36,339,225 at the voting meeting. The property tax rate established for homeowners in the Town of Amherst is \$14.28 per \$1,000 assessed value which represents a yearly tax bill of \$1,285 for a home assessed at \$120,000 with New York State basic STAR exemption which translates to a tax bill increase of \$92 from the previous year. The non-homestead rate for the Town of Amherst will be \$22.10 per \$1,000 assessed value for 2011-12.

The property tax rate established for homeowners in the Town of Tonawanda is \$30.49 per \$1,000 assessed value which represents a yearly tax bill of \$1,283 for a home assessed at \$56,100 with a New York State basic STAR exemption. The non-homestead rate for the Town of Tonawanda will be \$47.24 per \$1,000 assessed value for 2011-12. The Town of Tonawanda uses an equalized rate to determine assessments.

The tax rates are different than those projected in the 2011-12 budget adoption process primarily because assumptions about assessments have changed. When district officials crafted the budget in early March indications from both municipalities were that assessments would increase by 1 percent overall. Assessment figures were released to the District in August and total assessments decreased by a half percent.

Board Sets 2011-12 Monthly Meeting Presentation Calendar...

The Sweet Home Board of Education established its monthly meeting presentation calendar at its September voting meeting. These are presentations that the Board will hear from various stakeholder groups in the District. The Board of Education meets at 7pm on the second and third Tuesday of every month in the Vergils Community Center of the High School. The public is welcome to attend any Board of Education meeting.

November 8, 2011 Study Session

- District Configuration Task Force Report

November 15, 2011 Voting Meeting

- Rachel's Challenge
- Operations Improvement Planning: Transportation Routing

December 13, 2011 Study Session

- Operations Improvement Planning: Buildings & Grounds
- Capital Improvement Planning

December 20, 2011 Voting Meeting

- Literacy Program Report / Reading Workshop: K-12 Data and improvement Efforts

January 10, 2012 Study Session

- Freshmen Seminar Update

January 17, 2012 Voting Meeting

- Mathematics Program Report: K-12 Data and Improvement Efforts
- Federal / State Standards and Legal / Regulatory Changes

February 7, 2012 Study Session

- Shared Decision Making Plan Update

February 14, 2012 Study Session

- Social Studies Program Report: K-12 Data and Improvement Efforts

March 13, 2012 Study Session

- Special Parent/Community Budget Meeting prior to BOE Meeting
- Middle School Schedule Update

March 20, 2012 Voting Meeting

- Report: Implementation of Parent Involvement Task Force Recommendations

April 3, 2012 Study Session

- Race to the Top: Inquiry / Data Teams

April 17, 2012 Voting Meeting

- Budget Adoption & 2012-13 Calendar

May 1, 2012 Study Session

- 2012-13 Budget Hearing & Meet the Candidates
- Science Program improvement Update

May 8, 2012 Voting Meeting

- Integrated Co-Teaching

June 12, 2012 Study Session

- Attendance Policy Review
- Code of Conduct Review

June 19, 2012 Voting Meeting

- No presentations schedule at this time



Out of the Darkness: Parent Forum on Adolescent Depression & Suicide Awareness...

Tuesday, October 25th, 6:30pm at Williamsville South High School

Sweet Home along with Williamsville, Clarence and Amherst Central School Districts have partnered to provide an important program to provide parents with information about adolescent depression and suicide, including risk factors, warning signs and supports.

The program will provide parents information about adolescent depression and suicide, including risk factors, warning signs and supports. Tips on how to talk to family members and where to get help if needed, will also be shared. The program will consist of a resource fair with displays and representatives from community service agencies and youth programs that provide assistance and support to families and promote positive mental health and wellness for children and teens. This is followed by a panel discussion at 7pm with Eric Weaver, American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, Phil and Linda Chearmonte, parent survivors and Lynda Battaglia, New York State Office of Mental Health. After the panel there will be a 30 minutes question and answer session.

Once again, the program will take place on Tuesday evening, October 25th, from 6:30-8:30pm at Williamsville South High School, 5950 Main Street. Please note that this event is geared toward an adult audience and childcare will not be provided.

HIGH SCHOOL REMEMBERS SEPTEMBER 11, 2001

Sweet Home High School students, with the help of the social studies department faculty, commemorated the 10-year anniversary of the September 11th attacks by placing nearly 1,000 flags on the north lawn of the high school. The flags were in place for the entire September 11th weekend.



Board of Education Establishes 2011-12 Goals...

At its September 2011 voting meeting, the Sweet Home Board of Education established the following goals for the 2011-12 school year.

Excellence and Accountability

100% of Sweet Home students will graduate from high school in four years prepared to successfully continue their education.

Proposed Actions:

1. Establish a set of indicators representative of progress towards the goal and interpret data collected against them.
2. Connect every District initiative to the goal. Monitor the effectiveness of district initiatives utilizing varied measures of student achievement towards those indicators.

Community Partnership

The Sweet Home Board of Education will strengthen partnerships with the school community including: parents, students, residents, businesses, legislators, community agencies, SUNYAB and other neighboring schools.

Proposed Actions:

1. Utilize targeted public relations efforts including brochures and news releases to proactively promote the work of students and staff in areas related to District initiatives.
2. Implement the use of electronic and paper surveying of community and staff and targeted discussions with representative focus groups to gauge stakeholder satisfaction with the school district.
3. Increase the number of successful partnerships with community resources including local colleges and businesses to assist in achieving District goals.

Fiscal Responsibility

The Sweet Home Board of Education will direct resources efficiently in alignment with district educational goals and district priorities.

Proposed Actions:

1. Utilize pre-established program priorities to develop a fiscally responsible budget for the 2012-13 budget year that improves financial efficiency and maximizes student learning opportunities.

Several District Buildings Earn EPA's Energy Star®...

Five of the district's seven buildings have earned the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) prestigious ENERGY STAR, the national symbol for protecting the environment through superior energy efficiency. **All four of the district's elementary schools and the middle school earned the distinction.** The district transportation building was exempt from the study. This signifies that the buildings perform in the top 25 percent of similar facilities nationwide for energy efficiency.



"Sweet Home is pleased to accept EPA's ENERGY STAR in recognition of our energy efficiency efforts," said Keith Langlotz, Supervisor of Buildings & Grounds. "Through this achievement, we have demonstrated our commitment to environmental stewardship while also lowering our energy costs."

Commercial buildings that earn the ENERGY STAR use an average of 35 percent less energy than typical buildings and also release 35 percent less carbon dioxide into the atmosphere. Sweet Home improved its energy performance by managing energy strategically across the entire organization and by making cost-effective improvements to its building(s).

EPA's ENERGY STAR energy performance scale helps organizations assess how efficiently their buildings use energy relative to similar buildings nationwide. A building that scores a 75 or higher on EPA's 1-100 scale is eligible for the ENERGY STAR. Commercial buildings that can earn the ENERGY STAR include offices, bank branches, financial centers, retail stores, courthouses, hospitals, hotels, K-12 schools, medical offices, supermarkets, dormitories, houses of worship, and warehouses.

ENERGY STAR was introduced by EPA in 1992 as a voluntary, market-based partnership to reduce greenhouse gas emissions through energy efficiency. Today, the ENERGY STAR label can be found on more than 60 different kinds of products, new homes, and commercial and industrial buildings. Products and buildings that have earned the ENERGY STAR prevent greenhouse gas emissions by meeting strict energy-efficiency specifications set by the government. Last year alone, Americans, with the help of ENERGY STAR, saved nearly \$17 billion on their energy bills while reducing the greenhouse gas emissions equivalent to those of 30 million vehicles.

This is the second year in a row that these five buildings have received such a distinction. For more information about ENERGY STAR visit www.energystar.gov/buildings.

Happy 90th Birthday Mary!!...



Members of the Girls Athletic Association surprised long-time Sweet Home employee **Mary Scalisi** with a cake and balloons for her 90th birthday. Mary has worked for 30 years as a laundress for the District and she was recently featured in an edition of the Amherst Bee.

Heart Healthy at Sweet Home...



The University at Buffalo's Medical School's Healthy Heart team has made rounds through the district's elementary schools. Students rotated through various stations learning about the respiratory and circulatory systems, the importance of diet and exercise and the dangers smoking. Students even got to see and touch a human heart.

Sports Hall of Fame Enshrines Seven...

Ceremonies of induction for the Sweet Home Sports Hall of Fame took place Friday, September 23 at Classics V Banquet Center in Amherst. This year 7 athletes were inducted.

The athletes in the Class of 2011 are:

Mark Edinger (Class of 1983) – Mark played volleyball, basketball and tennis for the Panthers from 1980-1983. He was a member of the 1983 Sectional basketball team and was named Town of Amherst Male Athlete of the Year in 1983. After graduating from Sweet Home, Mark attended Ohio State University where he played on the OSU volleyball team from 1984-1987.

Ted Wilkinson (Class of 1984) – Ted played varsity football, wrestling and lacrosse for Sweet Home in 1983 and 1984. He was 1st Team All-ECIC in 1984 in both football and lacrosse. Following graduation, Ted attended Virginia Military Institute on the first lacrosse scholarship given at VMI.

Greg Gegenfurtner (Class of 1984) – Greg was a member of the varsity boys volleyball team from 1984 to 1987. He was named MVP in 1986 and 1987 and Volleyball Monthly Fab 50 Selection ranked him #11 in the nation in 1988. He attended George Mason University.

Paul Byrnarski (Class of 1991) – Paul played varsity football, basketball and baseball for the Panthers from 1989-1991. He was All-WNY Honorable Mention in basketball and 1st Team All-WNY in baseball. He set records in basketball for nine three pointers in one game and scoring 45 in another. Following graduation, Paul attended Monroe Community College where he played baseball for two years.

Jim Garnham (Class of 1993) – Jim ran cross country, indoor and outdoor track and played football for the Panthers from 1989 – 1993. He was two time all-league in cross country and was all-league in a number of events in both indoor and outdoor track. He was the outdoor pentathlon State Champion in 1993, where he still holds the state record. He was named a high school All-American in the pentathlon three times. After graduating from Sweet Home, Jim attended the University of Nebraska where he was the #2 freshman in the country in the decathlon.

Rob Tresp (Class of 1993) – Rob ran indoor and outdoor track and played football for the Panthers from 1990-1993. He was a State Champion in indoor track in 1992 and in outdoor track in 1993. He was all-league in football in 1992. He still holds the shot put record at Sweet Home of 59' 11 ³/₄". Following graduation, Rob attended the University of Nebraska.

Jaquelyn Sedgewick (Class of 1994) – Jaquelyn ran indoor and outdoor track and played field hockey for Sweet Home from 1990-1994. She was a Western New York and State Champion for the shot put in 1993 and 1994. She still holds the shot put record of 46'1" at Sweet Home. After graduating from Sweet Home, Jackie attended Northeastern University where she ran track for four years.

Each inductee was presented a Hall of Fame plaque and was honored at halftime of the Sweet Home-Starpoint football game on Saturday, September 24.



*Class of 2011 Sweet Home Sports Hall of Fame
Front Row: Paul Byrnarski, Jaquelyn Sedgewick; Back Row: Jim
Garnham, Greg Gegenfurtner, Ted Wilkinson, Mark Edinger*



*Asst. Superintendent
for Instruction
Larry J. Leaven*

An Update from the Office of Instruction...

“Where does the time go?” I often hear myself asking that question out loud as if hoping that someone within earshot will provide an answer that will satisfy and magically provide more time to my day! In her book, *Writing Life*, Annie Dillard writes, “How we spend our days is, of course, how we spend our lives. What we do with this hour, and that one, is what we are doing.” This being true, it is imperative that we spend our time as parents and as educators thoughtfully and purposefully to ensure that our children are empowered as readers, writers, mathematicians and thinkers!

In his “Back to School Message,” John King, Commissioner of Education for the State of New York, had a simple message for students: work hard and get smart—come to school each day eager to learn and grow. For parents he had a different message: how we use our time, how we use our words, how we frame the learning journey for our children will *teach* them what we value and who we are as learners. The Commissioner’s charge to parents:

For parents I have a somewhat different message, which is, take this year as an opportunity to dive into your students’ school experience. What are they working on at school? Ask everyday, what did you learn today? And ask not just as a cursory start of the conversation but really listen to the answer. Probe deeply. How do you know? What does that mean? How does that connect to other things that you’ve learned? Take the opportunity to go to a museum on a Saturday instead of the movies. Take an opportunity to read a new book together. Figure out an opportunity with your child what you can learn together through text which is exactly what we are trying to emphasize in the English Language Arts classroom and in the Science and Social Studies classroom. Go to a baseball game and talk about what a batting average really means. What is it telling us? What do we know from a batter’s batting average about their performance? See, those academic conversations really matter. Those are a way that you as a parent can engage in your child’s education and work alongside their teachers to help support their academic achievement. We have a huge opportunity to make a difference for our children as parents or as students to roll up our sleeves and take every advantage of the learning opportunity in the year ahead. This is an important moment to acknowledge, to celebrate.

The Commissioner’s message to educators is similar. He is asking each of us to raise the bar and to find thoughtful and creative ways to structure our days so that our time is well spent and our students are well-served. Over the past several months I have shared information regarding the shifts in literacy instruction as we strive to address the new expectations under the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). There are similar shifts in mathematics and I believe that it is important that you understand these shifts so that you can support your child’s learning each day.

The CCSS expectation for mathematics at the elementary is a greater emphasis on focus and coherence. This shift is to help students understand the “why and how” of math in addition to knowing the “steps” of discovery. At the middle level many concepts culminate and make math instruction in the middle years crucial. The standards are fewer but more rigorous and rely on more background knowledge from the elementary years. In middle school the concepts become more abstract and it is imperative that students have a strong foundation in numbers and operations. At the high school level many of the trends from middle school will still carry over into high school in terms of standards becoming more rigorous. I am happy to be working with Mr. James Bialasik, High School Math teacher and Teacher on Special Assignment (TOSA) for Mathematics as we work to refine our curriculum, planning, instructional expectations and assessments for the CCSS shifts in mathematics. The six instructional shifts in Common Core Mathematics are as follows:

Shift 1: Focus

Teachers use the power of the eraser and significantly narrow and deepen the scope of how time and energy is spent in the math classroom. They do so in order to focus deeply on only the concepts that are prioritized in the standards so that students reach strong foundational knowledge and deep conceptual

Continued on Page 9

understanding and are able to transfer mathematical skills and understanding across concepts and grades.

Shift 2: Coherence

Principals and teachers carefully connect the learning within and across grades so that, for example, fractions or multiplication spiral across grade levels and students can build new understanding onto foundations built in previous years. Teachers can begin to count on deep conceptual understanding of core content and build on it. Each standard is not a new event, but an extension of previous learning.

Shift 3: Fluency

Students are expected to have speed and accuracy with simple calculations; teachers structure class time and/or homework time for students to memorize, through repetition, core functions such as multiplication tables so that they are more able to understand and manipulate more complex concepts.

Shift 4: Deep Understanding

Teachers teach more than “how to get the answer” and instead support students’ ability to access concepts from a number of perspectives so that students are able to see math as more than a set of mnemonics or discrete procedures. Students demonstrate deep conceptual understanding of core math concepts by applying them to new situations, as well as writing and speaking about their understanding.

Shift 5: Applications

Students are expected to use math and choose the appropriate concept for application even when they are not prompted to do so. Teachers provide opportunities at all grade levels for students to apply math concepts in “real world” situations. Teachers in content areas outside of math, particularly science, ensure that students are using math – at all grade levels – to make meaning of and access content.

Shift 6: Dual Intensity

Students are practicing and understanding. There is more than a balance between these two things in the classroom – both are occurring with intensity. Teachers create opportunities for students to participate in “drills” and make use of those skills through extended application of math concepts. The amount of time and energy spent practicing and understanding learning environments is driven by the specific mathematical concept and therefore, varies throughout the given school year.

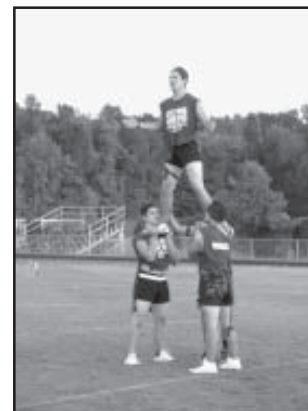
I am excited about the work that lies ahead and I am certain that the *time* we have will be used to benefit the learning journey of your child. As always, I welcome your feedback on our instructional programs and encourage you to meet with your child’s learning team should you have any questions about his/her school experience. I can be reached through email at lleaven@shs.k12.ny.us or by phone at 250-1422.

Powder Puff Football Game Benefits Breast Cancer Research...

The week preceding homecoming at the high school has long been known as Spirit Week. Students might dress as their favorite super hero one day, in pajamas another and always in blue and gold to conclude the week.

Not only to the students show a tremendous amount of school spirit of the course of the week, they have brought a keen sense of community spirit into the celebration as well.

One of the highlights of the week is the annual powder puff football game. The game is a complete opposite of the actual Homecoming game that happened on Saturday, September 24. The Powder Puff football game pits the girls of the junior and senior classes against one another, with their male classmates serving as cheerleaders. This year’s game was played on Tuesday, September 20 in front of a huge crowd.



Spectators made a donation to take in the game and as a result, nearly \$2,500 will be donated to the American Cancer Society’s Making Strides program in support of breast cancer research. In the month of October, a number of Sweet Home sports teams will be sporting pink uniforms and the entire school will ‘pink out’ in support of the cause, so the total dollar amount donated to the American Cancer Society will increase. More information will follow in coming editions of Your Schools. Congratulations to the High School on a terrific Homecoming Week!



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

Health & Wellness Corner...

Health Office Updates

Health Screenings

New York State Education Law requires that students receive vision screening as part of the school health services provided by each public school district. The purpose of this requirement is to detect the presence of vision problems likely to impede a student's learning. Vision screening, as well as hearing screening, has begun and parents will receive written notification if follow-up evaluations are needed or recommended.

Physical Examination and Dental Health Certificates

Students are required to receive a physical examination if entering Grades PK, K, 2, 4, 7, 10, as a new entrant to the district, and for those students entering a Committee of Special Education Program. Parents are asked to submit a Health Appraisal Report to their child's building School Nurse at the beginning of the school year. Students who do not have documentation of a physical examination on file can receive their examination in school by a school physician or nurse practitioner at no cost. Contact your building School Nurse for further information.

Flu Season and Illness

Parents should monitor their child's health before leaving for school in the morning. Students should stay home when they have a fever, and may return to school only if fever free for 24 hours non-medicated. Also, students with undiagnosed rashes need a medical note to return to school.

Classroom School Snacks

School children are learning of the new nutrition guidelines and MyPlate. [MyPlate is a USDA resource that offers nutrition recommendations symbolized by a plate with four sections: fruits, vegetables, grains and proteins, with an attached glass of milk- symbolizing a healthy, balanced diet.]

Employees and students are encouraged to bring healthier snacks to school for better nutrition and to help reduce cross contamination of food allergens in the classroom. Many of our students have food allergies and it is becoming a challenge in certain situations to keep our students safe and their environment allergen-free. While some students with food allergies may react mildly to exposure, others may experience an anaphylaxis reaction that is life threatening.

Please help keep our students safe while providing better nutrition for your children. Fruits, vegetables, cheese, yogurt are examples of healthier and safer choices. Prepackaged processed snacks must be in the purchased package with the label stating it is nut free and not processed in a facility with nuts.

Baked goods from home are discouraged and will be served during your child's lunch period in the cafeteria [not in the classroom] if the food is not prior approved by your building nurse, and students with allergies will be excluded from the treat.

Special occasion treats do not have to be food; children are delighted with non-food treats such as pencils, stickers and activity or coloring booklets or pages. Our food service program can offer packaged approved snacks available in the cafeteria or provide an allergen free treat by contacting our Food Service Manager.

New Nutrition Guidelines- Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2010 and My Plate

On January 31, 2011, USDA (United States Department of Agriculture) and HHS (Department of Health and Human Services) announced the release of the 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans. Dietary guidelines for Americans were first published in 1980, and are reviewed and updated every 5 years. The recommendations are the basis of federal nutrition policies, including food assistance programs.

'Because more than one-third of children and more than two-thirds of adults in the United States are overweight or obese, the 7th edition of Dietary Guidelines for Americans places stronger emphasis on reducing calorie consumption and increasing physical activity.' The guidelines are nutrient dense, energy balanced, are portion controlled, and emphasize vegetables, fruits, and high fiber whole grains.

The guidelines have chapters on which foods to reduce and which foods to increase. More seafood is recommended. Moderation is the



motto when it comes to lean meats, poultry, and eggs. Low-fat and fat-free dairy products are best. Cut down on solid fats and added sugars because they offer fewer nutrients and guarantee more calories. Watch your salt intake. And exercise: we don't get enough; we need to do more.'

'Reduce the average daily salt intake of 3400 mg sodium to under 2300 mg sodium daily, the amount of sodium in 1 tsp of salt. Anyone 51 and older needs to further reduce intake to 1500 mg daily, which is three-fourths a teaspoon of salt. That is also the desirable maximum for blacks of any age, and anyone with high blood pressure, diabetes, or chronic kidney disease.'

The new guidelines include 23 Key Recommendations for the general population and six additional Key Recommendations for specific population groups. Some 'tips that will be provided to help consumers translate the Dietary Guidelines into their everyday lives:

Balancing Calories

1. Enjoy your food, but eat less.
2. Avoid oversized portions.

Foods to Increase

3. Make half your plate fruits and vegetables.
4. Make at least half your grains whole grains.
5. Switch to fat-free or low-fat (1%) milk.

Foods to Decrease

6. Compare sodium in foods like soup, bread, and frozen meals – and choose the foods with lower numbers.
7. Drink Water instead of sugary drinks.'

<http://www.health.gov/dietaryguidelines>; <http://www.choosemyplate.gov>;
<http://www.medscape.com/viewarticle/737199?src=ptalk>

Harvard School of Public Health's Food Plate- Simplified For Adults

'Harvard's plate also has the same four sections but with more detailed information on what foods to eat, and which ones to avoid. For example, in place of the grains section, Harvard's includes a whole grains section.

"There's a distinction between any old grains and whole grains," Willett said. Eating too many refined grains, such as white bread and white rice, can increase the risk of heart disease and type 2 diabetes, he said.

The Harvard School of Public Health says its new Healthy Eating Plate offers information missing from the USDA's new plate icon.

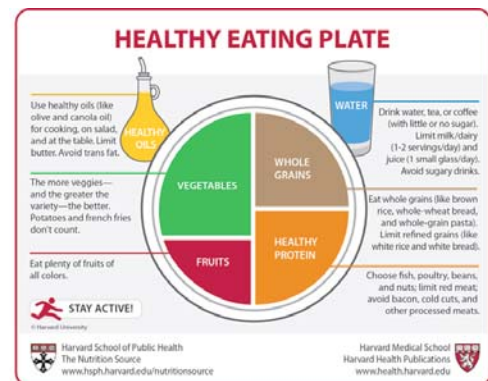
Other differences include an explanation of what proteins are healthy — poultry, fish, beans and nuts — emphasizing the need for healthy fats, such as olive and canola oils and explaining that potatoes aren't a healthy vegetable choice.

Harvard's plate also replaces milk with water and recommends only one to two servings a day of low-fat milk.

"Modest dairy consumption is OK, but having a glass of milk with [sic] every meal is excessive [sic] and does not reduce the risk of osteoporosis and fractures," Willett said.' Walter Willett is Professor of Epidemiology and Nutrition at Harvard.<http://abcnews.go.com/Health/harvard-researchers-offer-alternative-usdas-myplate/story?id=14519983>

'When it's time for dinner, most of us eat off of a plate. So think of the new Healthy Eating Plate as blueprint for a typical meal: Fill half your plate with produce—colorful vegetables, the more varied the better, and fruits. (Remember, potatoes and French fries don't count as vegetables!) Save a quarter of your plate for whole grains. A healthy source of protein, such as fish, poultry, beans, or nuts, can make up the rest. The glass bottle is a reminder to use healthy oils, like olive and canola, in cooking, on salad, and at the table.

Complete your meal with a cup of water, or if you like, tea or coffee with little or no sugar (not the milk or other dairy products that the USDA's MyPlate recommends; limit milk/dairy products to one to two servings per day). And that figure scampering across the bottom of the placemat? It's your reminder that staying active is half of the secret to weight control. The other half is eating a healthy diet with modest portions that meet your calorie needs—so be sure you choose a plate that is not too large.' <http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/nutritionsource/what-should-you-eat/pyramid/index.html>



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Homecoming 2011

A great day was had by all in attendance at the annual Sweet Home Homecoming / Community Carnival on Saturday, September 24. Everyone enjoyed free cotton candy, popcorn and snowcones. Younger guests enjoyed free face painting, arts and crafts, climbing on the rock wall, bouncing in the bounce houses and making their way through a giant inflatable obstacle course.

The festivities concluded as everyone packed the stands to see the Panthers defeat the Starpoint Spartans 22-14 to improve their record to 4 wins and 0 losses.

Please plan on joining us next year for another great Homecoming / Community Carnival!



**GO
PANTHERS!**

**GO
PANTHERS!**

