Sandy Creek Central School
Board of Education:
President: Greg Ivison
Vice President: Brian MacVean
Jean Bonhotal
John Clark
Michael Hovey
Lynn Miller
Deanna Soule
District Office:
Superintendent:
Mr. Stewart R. Amell
Business Office:
Business Administrator/
District Clerk:
Shelley H. Fitzpatrick
Assistant: Vicky Stoker
Treasurer: Mike Cambareri
Sr. Account Clerk: Lori Krebs
 Principals:
Elementary: Sue Ann Archibe
Middle School: Joanne Shelmidine
High School: Maureen Shiel
Superintendent of Buildings &
Grounds:
Chris Ouderkerk
Cafeteria:
Cook Manager: Debbie Archibe
Transportation:
Supervisor: Deb Stevens
Technology:
Coordinator: Paul Goulet
Athletics:
Coordinator: Mike Stevens
Testing:
Coordinator: Amy McCormack
Special Education:
Coordinator: Janice Burns

Board of Education Busy
Implementing 2006-2007 Goals

What a busy year for the Board! As I
mentioned to you in the August
Newsletter, the Board of Education set
some very challenging goals for the school
year. So far, they haven’t missed a beat.

All of them work all day then find themselves here serving on subcommittees
at the District Office in the evening discussing ways they can improve the School
District. I commend them for their dedication to our students and families, but most
of all, their willingness to not only set goals but follow through on them.

During the month of September and October, the Board has tackled several
issues. They are presently learning more about the Transportation Department. Our
Bus Drivers are very committed to their professions. The Board will address staffing
needs, bus routes, bus replacement plans, the financial needs of the department, and
driver training needs, just to mention a few.

In September, the Guidance Department presented their activities to the full
Board. Wow! That was an eye opener to many. I think the Board realizes that
counselors no longer just spend their time developing student class schedules. Each
counselor is responsible for 350 students. That’s a big job.

Another area that the Board is researching is the cost of health insurance.
The subcommittee is meeting with all the employee units along with a health insurance
consultant reviewing options to cut down on these costs. We hope our work will pay off.

During the month of October, the District’s External Auditor completed their
examination of our financial records. I am pleased to say that our Business
Administrator, Shelley Fitzpatrick and her staff, Lori Krebs, Victoria Stoker and
Michael Cambareri do a fantastic job. The Audit subcommittee met personally with the
Auditor to review the final report. I’m proud to say that our books are in order and the
District is in sound financial shape.

One of the most important goals that the Board has tackled is how can we, as
a District, improve student performance on the state assessments. I realize that there
are differing views on whether we really need state tests, but the reality is our
students must take these exams and our parents and community members expect their
children to do well compared to other schools. I can safely say that our faculty and
staff are working hard to improve our student results on these tests. I have never
worked with such a dedicated group of educators. They strive to help our children
meet the state standards in all academic areas.

As you can see, the Board is working hard on behalf of the community as a
whole. They are a dedicated group of individuals. As a Superintendent, I am very
fortunate to have these folks representing the District.
IVISON’S INSIGHTS

The Board of Education (BOE) continues to have two (2) meetings a month generally on the 2nd and 4th Thursdays and the public is welcome to attend.

In addition, the BOE has taken on an additional level of leadership in volunteering (some will argue they were strong armed!) for one or more of the following BOE sub-committees: Transportation, Curriculum/Assessment, Finance, Negotiations, and Operations. I would like to thank John Clark, Lynn Miller, Deanna Soule, Jean Bonhotal, Mike Hovey and Brian MacVean for taking on the added responsibility and time commitment to their already hectic work and family schedules. I would also like to thank the administrators and staff at SCCS. These meetings are often in the evening or at night, which limits their family time.

Fall sports should be wrapped up (if the weather cooperated) and winter sports will be starting for another school year. The maintenance and operations staff has had a busy fall trying to stay ahead of the sloppy conditions. I’m beginning to think SCCS needs to add an additional technology course titled: Ark Building 101. Hopefully, Mother Nature will show some self-control and not unleash her fury on us like she did in the Buffalo area.

If you are not aware, all school districts in NYS are facing greater accountability with regard to student achievement by the State Education Department and to some extent our politicians (although I have to wonder if Albany has any accountability). While I firmly believe SCCS and its’ staff are providing a quality education, our test scores have not met everyone’s expectations. So what can SCCS BOE do to improve student achievement? As stated above, the BOE has a subcommittee on Curriculum/Assessment. The following excerpts of a recent article in the NYS School Board Association Online Journal bring to light traits that high performing districts exemplify. These are some of the topics that this subcommittee will be reviewing:

1. Consistently expressed the belief that all children can learn and did not make excuses for lack of student success

2. Dynamic Leadership, starting with the BOE, the Superintendent, and the Administrators

3. Harmonious relationship with the Superintendent

4. Greater understanding of the need for improving goals, curriculum, instruction, assessments, staff development, ensuring we have a supportive workplace, and continuous improvement.

These and 13 more traits we anticipate covering in future Comet’s Tale editions. If you’d like to compare SCCS with other districts in the state, I recommend you visit the following website: http://www.nysed.gov/.
During Fire Prevention week all students in Kindergarten, First and Second grade were treated to visits from our local Volunteer Fire Fighters. Representatives from the Lacona Fire Department met with Kindergarteners, showing them their Rescue and Ladder Trucks, and instructing them in safety techniques should they ever be in a fire. The emphasis was to make students aware of what they might see or hear in the event of an emergency, so that they would not be frightened.

First and Second grade received a similar presentation from members of the Sandy Creek Fire Department. They had an opportunity to learn how to crawl out of a fire and what firemen look and feel like when you encounter them this way. This demonstration gave students first-hand experience with safety gear and procedures.

In addition to these presentations, our PreKindergarten classes were visited by a New York State Trooper and the NOCA crew. This presentation focused on personal safety and wellness, and gave our students a chance to sit inside the ambulance and patrol vehicle. All students gained a better understanding of how these community helpers work to keep us safe and healthy.

We thank all the representatives and their departments for supporting education and our youth. Opportunities like these help us all understand how important safety and health are to our community.
Caught You Award

Front: Ian Paddock

Each month the 8th grade teachers recognize students for being prepared and participating in the classroom with an award called the "Head in the Game Award."

There is another award for doing a random act of kindness called the "Caught You Award."

These two pictures capture our 8th grade recipients for the month of September. Awards were distributed during the 8th grade mini pep-rally held in the high school auditorium on October 2nd.

Way to go, 8th Graders!
Where is the time going? —Joanne Shelmidine, Middle School Principal

As I write this, I am amazed that October has come and gone. So much has happened in such a short time that I hardly know where to start.

First, I want to thank all of you who made our Open House a success. The weather outside might have been wet and miserable, but there was no sign of that in the middle school hallway. Please keep in mind that you do not have to wait for an event to contact any of your child’s teachers. We are here to work with you with the same goal: your child’s success.

We are very data driven this fall. Our overall scores in ELA and Math are in and we are working hard to make sure that we are making the best educational decisions for all of our students. Teams are working together to identify gaps and to make sure that students are seeing a global approach to learning. Reading comprehension strategies are a focus in all of our classrooms. If a child cannot comprehend the text or the question, then he or she will not be able to share what they know.

I am happy to announce that our Middle School student council is up and running. They have planned their first middle school dance—a Halloween dance. I am so proud of all of our students. Their leadership and hard work continues to make the school one that we can all be proud to be a part of.

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Head in the Game

Middle: Ed Scheppard, Logan White, Amanda Johnson, Matt Shirley, Jacob Halsey, Jarrett Luberto, Rachel Pretory, Lalitha Sergis, Linda Rudd, Dusty Harris.
Back: Dallas House, Slater Schack, Jessie Glenister
Four years ago the Special Education Department developed the START program (Students and Teachers Aiming for Realistic Transitions) for students to develop life skills and career skills. It has the advantage of being offered in a school base setting and be aligned to the specific needs and interests of the individual students. Students have opportunities to develop their skills in food preparation, technology, business, and maintenance by building relationships with the technology class, home and career class, cafeteria, school store, copy room, and bus garage.

The START students are in charge of the monthly character education bulletin board. October's word of the month was Attitude. We learned that it is very important to have a positive attitude and we also need to take pride in our school. During Spirit Week, the START class took pictures of students dressed up in the theme of the day, showing their school pride and positive attitude. Pictures were placed on the board for students and parents to see during Open House. So many students took part in the Spirit Week festivities the pictures overflowed onto posters.
PJ / Toga Day

Wyatt Bush, Ben Shephard & Mitchell Garvin

Brooke Thomas & Amanda Carusone

Salute to Military Day

Priscilla Alongest, Jamie Colvin & Michael Ann Yeldon

Mrs. Sheena Connell & Kevin Salman

Sports Day

Mary Kate Blanding, Luke Link & Mariah Buley

Kylie Talotta, Amanda Braley, Ms. Maureen Shiel, Morgan Miner

Chris Senke

Troy Shirley

Cont. on page 8
Cont. from page 7

Toni Gray & Karen Castor

Jen Howe & Alicia Bradberry

MacKenzie LaVeck & Olivia Ivison

Shelbe Phillips & Viktoria White

REMEMBER
SCCS BOOSTER CLUB MEETINGS
4TH MONDAY OF EACH MONTH
6:30 P.M. IN THE BOARD ROOM
NOTES FROM THE SCHOOL NURSES

NATIONAL HANDWASHING AWARENESS WEEK

December 3-9, 2006 marks a special week for our elementary students. The school Climate Committee and the school nurse have teamed up to celebrate National Hand Washing Awareness Week.

Henry, the “Champion Hand Washer” is our mascot for the event. He wants everyone to participate in the Hand Washing Competition. All students have to do is keep track of the number of times they wash their hands at home, and at school. We’d like to be the winning school with the most champion hand washers! There is also a national poster contest that students can participate in. Students will be given details shortly.

Hand washing is the single most important act you can do to prevent getting sick and spreading disease. The CDC estimates that 36,000 people die from the flu or flu-like illness each year. Poor hand washing is directly linked to deaths caused by infectious disease. Hand washing and Hand Awareness is important for school health, personal health, and disease prevention. There are many critical times to wash your hands. A few examples are before eating, after the bathroom, during food preparation, after handling animals, after changing diapers, and anytime you think your hands are dirty.

Henry, the Hand Champion Hand Washer is asking you to join all of us to help reduce illness in our school this winter. “Lend a hand to keep us all healthy one handwash at a time!” For more information, visit these excellent websites for children: www.henrythehand.com, www.scrubclub.org, and for older children and adults www.microbe.org.

MEMORY WREATH

REMEMBER YOUR LOVED ONES THIS HOLIDAY SEASON WITH A LIGHT ON THE VILLAGE OF LAONA’S MEMORY WREATH.

THE WREATH WILL BE LIT ON SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 26TH AT THE DEPOT IN LAONA AT 6:30 P.M. JOIN US FOR SONGS AND REFRESHMENTS.

DONATIONS OF ANY AMOUNT MAY BE SENT TO: NANCY RIDGEWAY, 390 BREMM ROAD, LAONA, NY 13083.
PLEASE MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO:
COTERIE CLUB/MEMORY WREATH.

This year’s donations will benefit the SCCS Sports Booster Club

FREE WINTER RECREATION SALE

On Saturday, December 2nd from 8-12 noon at Sandy Creek Central School, bring your used winter equipment to the FREE sale sponsored by the Winona Forest Recreation Association (formerly Tug Hill Ski Club). Sell or buy cross-country and alpine skis, poles, boots, snowmobiles, ATV’s, dogsleds, snowboards, winter clothing, hockey equipment, ice skates and more.

Bring your equipment to the School between 8 & 9 a.m. for best results. Ten percent of the selling price is to be donated to the Winona Forest Trail Fund — maximum $25.00 per item.

Free afternoon skiing is available for people who attend at Osceola Ski Center. For information, call 298-6993 or 493-3469 or email raceinfo@winonaforest.com.
SCCS Transportation—Deb Stevens, Supervisor

On Thursday, September 28th the Bus Safety Team took part in Elementary Open House. Sixty-three students, with help from parents, answered bus safety questions for a chance to win a Halloween prize. Anthony Guarasci was the lucky winner. A school bus was also outside for students and parents to visit and each received an informational bus safety coloring book.

On Thursday October 12th law enforcement was out patrolling our streets for motorists passing through our red student warning lights. We have a few problem areas in our District that officers concentrated on. Please remember to slow down for our big yellow buses and STOP when you see the red flashing lights. Your support and cooperation…… could mean the life of a child.

Some of the Bus Safety Team traveled to Redfield on Saturday, October 14th to perform a puppet show for Redfield’s Child Safety Day. The safety team watched some of our students perform at the show, which also included a demonstration on student crossing. They did a great job instructing the audience about school bus safety.

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Did You Know?

From suggestions offered at Parent Forum Meetings, we will now feature this “Did you Know?” column in each Comet’s Tale. This column is meant to offer information on one area or activity of the Elementary building. This edition’s topic is, “Did you know that there are two service organizations that students in grades 3-5 can participate in?”

Two service groups operate out of the Elementary School at Sandy Creek. The first is Climate Committee, headed by Justine Hammond. Climate Committee has elected and volunteer representatives from each classroom grades 3-5, and elect their own officers to head the team. These students work on projects that improve the climate of our building community. They have one fundraiser per year, which is going on right now. Proceeds from this go toward class fieldtrips, special rewards for grade levels, staff recognition activities, holiday activities and programs to benefit our students. The extent to which this group assists students and teachers is great!

The second service group is our Elementary Student Council, advised by Mrs. Sherry Glazier and Miss Carolyn Gaffney. This group focuses their efforts on projects that benefit the community. Students in grades 3-5 hold elections in their homerooms to choose representatives to the Council, and the Council then elects their own officers. Student Council conducts such things as canned food drives for the Food Pantry and Hurricane victims, fundraising for Unicef and other charitable organizations, Adopt a Platoon, and they host the annual Student Council Awards Assembly in June, which honors students demonstrating top effort. They are always looking for new and exciting ways to assist our community and make this a better place to live and learn!

These service groups provide vital assistance to our students and community, and we thank the students and advisors for their dedication. Please call the Elementary Office any time you have questions or concerns.
SCCS Students Attend 2006 Teen Health Conference

The 12th annual Teen Health Conference Oswego teaches youth how to reduce their risks while providing fun entertainment and good food at Camp Hollis. This year’s conference entitled “The Real World” had youth from the county take part in workshops that were designed to teach risk reduction in areas youth themselves told the planning committee they were concerned about. Students and staff from Sandy Creek that attended the conference are pictured from left Jessica Duncan, Kiley Talotta, Sarah Thomson & Elizabeth Lawrence. Row 2; Brittany Kelly, Jessica Blauvelt & Heather Schad with Mariah Buley on top. And last, but not least, Laurie Crast our School Nurse.

Once settling in at Camp Hollis on Thursday October 19th Special Agent Emily Vacher from the FBI presented an engaging workshop on Internet Safety. Many of the teens said that they planned on going home and making their “My Space” site more secure thanks to what they learned. “I didn’t know people could get as much information about me” said Amber from Pulaski.

Later that night Oswego State Peer Educators came in and presented a workshop on HIV. Youth said that not only was the workshop interesting but they were glad to have the chance to meet and talk with college students. Of course the night would not have been complete if fun and games were not a part of the learning environment. So the night was rounded out with a Karaoke sing-along donated by “It’s Your Entertainment”. Then it was back to the cabins where lots of laughter and chatter could be heard until lights out at 11pm.

Friday morning was a day without school which was a hit, but don’t worry parents and teachers, it was not a day without learning. After breakfast, teens headed out to three rounds of one hour works workshops. Youth chose from “Got Pills” the dangers of trading prescription drugs; “Sexual Health 101” STD and pregnancy prevention from abstinence to birth control; “Nutrition 101” ways to eat healthy when you’re not doing the cooking; “Not Everybody is Doing It” how abstinence can jump start your future and improve your relationship; “Underage DWI” personalizing DWI/DWAI and the impact it can have and “Body Art” where teens discovered the facts around tattooing, branding and piercing. After lunch teens choose one of the following: Reality Check Joust the Tobacco Executive, Song Writing and Team Building all were big hits with the students and staff.

This FREE conference is possible because of generous donations of food, time and services from many schools, businesses and agencies. 72 youth and 18 staff participated from APW, Fulton, Central Square, Pulaski, Oswego, Phoenix and Sandy Creek. Donations and discounts of food came from Off Street Bagelry, Canale’s Restaurant, Ontario Orchards, Dunkin Donuts, Oswego Price Chopper, Oswego Sub Way and Domino’s Pizza. T-shirts were donated by Reality Check. This year the planning chair was Sean Pepe from Oswego County Opportunities Inc. (OCO) Health Education. Other committee members came from Oswego BOCES Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention (APPS), Oswego County Health Department, Youth Advocate Program (YAP), OCO Youth Division, Reality Check, County of Oswego Council on Alcohol and Addictions (COCOAA), Family Ties and several members of the community. A mini-grant from Entergy Nuclear helped to pay for non-donated items and busing to and from the Camp.
Sandy Creek Central School Reclaims Home Schooling Record Keeping

For the past year, Sandy Creek Central School, along with several other county schools, participated in a regional Home Schooling Records system managed by Oswego County BOCES. Due to some difficulties with the system, Sandy Creek has decided to once again manage the records for all of our home schooling families. We are currently in the process of reviewing records from last year, organizing records that have recently been submitted, and updating our roster for this school year.

To help us out with this and verify our records, we ask that anyone who is currently home schooling a child contact our office directly to confirm your participation. This contact may be in writing, by telephone or email, directed to either Sue Ann Archibee, Elementary Principal responsible for home schooling [sarchibe@sccs.cnys.org], or to Elizabeth McKenzie, secretary of records [emckenzi@sccs.cnys.org].

We thank you in advance for this contact and look forward to working with you again as you home school your child(ren). Please call if you have any questions.

Sandy Creek Central School Elementary Office
124 Salisbury Street, P O Box 248
Sandy Creek, New York 13145
315-987-5626 Extension 1110

Ketch up with the Kitchen

Our cafeteria is working to develop new menu ideas. For October we added a chicken fajita pizza. We offered a bite size piece to anyone that wanted to try it before buying it. The response was good.

In November we had Philly cheese steak subs with onions and peppers. What a hit it was! We also offer “Choose Sensibly” snacks both in Little Debbie and Perry ’s ice cream. These items do not exceed 7 grams of fat, 2 grams of sat fat, 360mg in sodium and 15 grams in sugar. And that is a little food for thought!

Accessing the Sandy Creek Computer System

The use of technology is on the rise in almost all aspects of our lives. We see this at the workplace, in our daily lives and at school. Many of our students and teachers use a variety of hardware and software packages to complete their assignments. Our students are being called upon to use technology in school and sometimes at home. Sometimes we encounter a conflict with the version of the software being used or an incompatible hardware issue. We try to help students who bring computer discs, cd’s, and flash drives to school while at the same time being safety conscious and protecting our system from viruses and hacking threats.

Did you know that it is possible for students to access their stored files from any internet capable computer? Students can not only access their files but they can also use some of the programs that are licensed to SCCS. The computers at the Ainsworth Public Library in Sandy Creek have been configured to allow student access. If you would like to have access from your home computer then you can stop by the technology office (room 1925) for more information.

The public library systems in Sandy Creek and Orwell also have access to the Library Databases purchased by the SCCS District. In some cases these databases are password protected or IP specific. These databases are made available to the SCCS students so that they can perform safe and informative searches to support their classroom work.
SCCS Athletics

Congratulations to our Varsity Football Cheerleading Team for taking First Place at the Frontier League Cheer Competition. Also to Morgan McKenzie, Morgan Miner and Amanda Braley for being selected as Senior All-Stars, and to Tanya VanOrnum for being selected as Coach Of The Year. Great Job Ladies!

Congratulations also to our Girls Varsity Soccer Team for taking second place in the League and qualifying for the Section III Tournament and for beating Little Falls in their first Sectional game. Great season Ladies (and Mr. Torch!)

The Cross County season finished at Longbranch Park in Liverpool. Josh Ward had a great finish to his season finishing in 24:30. Kevin Nemier caped off his first year by finishing very strong as well. The girls team was led by Alissa Kersey who placed second at sectionals and competed at the State Championships in Warwick Valley. At states, Alissa finished 15th out of a field of 120 of the best Class D runners across the state. We had six girls compete at sectionals at Longbranch Park.

Nice job to all our Teams this fall. Although winning is our ultimate goal, it’s the experience we gain along the way that really counts. Congratulations to our Boys Soccer Team for a much improved season.

Congratulations to the Varsity Football Team and to Brad Shippee for breaking the school single season rushing record. Brad rushed for 1,772 yards. (The old record was 1,661 held by our Athletic Director Mike Stevens.)

UPDATE ON SCHOOL TAX COLLECTION

Dear Community Members:

As you recall, last year we went live on the web with our tax collection process at www.taxlookup.net. To continue our focus on enhanced public relations, this fall the Sandy Creek Central School District contracted with Pathfinder Bank, Lacona to collect our school taxes. We have had a remarkable amount of positive feedback regarding this change, but all operations can use fine tuning. If you encountered any difficulties with the new payment process we’d like to hear from you. Please feel free to contact either Mike Cambraeri or myself, Shelley Fitzpatrick via Email: mcambare@sccs.cnvric.org or sfitz@sccs.cnvric.org or via US mail: Sandy Creek Central School, PO Box 248, Sandy Creek, NY 13145.

Thank you for your continuing support!
Safety in our School and Community

The Sandy Creek Central School District recognizes that the safety of our children is a responsibility of the entire community. We offer this link [http://criminaljustice.state.ny.us/nsor/](http://criminaljustice.state.ny.us/nsor/) to promote this safety. The New York State Sex Offender Registration Act (“SORA”) permits local law enforcement agencies to disseminate information to the community concerning Level 3 and Level 2 registered sex offenders.

According to SORA, there are 2 reportable classifications of sex offenders.

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<th>Risk of Repeat Offense</th>
<th>Level 3</th>
<th>Level 2</th>
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<td>High</td>
<td>1. Exact address</td>
<td>3. An appropriate address based on zip code</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2. Picture</td>
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The District provides this website for:
- Our faculty and staff. Staff members are instructed to report any observation of a suspicious nature on or near our grounds or in any proximity to our children.
- Parents/Guardians and Community Members, so that they may take appropriate actions to protect the safety of their children.

Please teach your children to avoid situations of danger using these guidelines from sources such as the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children: [http://www.missingkids.com](http://www.missingkids.com).

What children need to know:

- **Be careful** around strangers.
- **Keep a safe distance** from cars.
- **Not to move toward a car** with a stranger asking directions.
- **Always check first** with you or a trusted adult before they go anywhere, accept anything, or get in a car with anyone. This applies to older children as well.
- **Always take a friend** and not go out alone when they go places or play outside.
- **It’s okay to say NO** if someone tries to touch them or treats the in a way that makes them feel scared, uncomfortable, or confused and to get out of the situation as quickly as possible.
- **Tell you or a trusted adult** if they feel scared, uncomfortable, or confused
- **They have the right to be safe** and there will always be someone to help them.

More information about the NYS Sex Offender Registry can be obtained by calling **1-800-262-3257** or via the SORA website: [http://criminaljustice.state.ny.us/nsor/](http://criminaljustice.state.ny.us/nsor/)
NEW FITNESS COURSE TO BE ADDED TO CROSS COUNTY / NATURE TRAIL

On November 13, 2006 Sandy Creek Central School was awarded the Community Health Award Grant from Excellus BlueCross BlueShield to help fund the purchase of a fitness course package that will be added to the present cross country / Nature trail that is located behind the school. The course starts from the right outfield of the softball field and loops into the woods. The course ends behind the right outfield fence of the baseball field.

The addition of the equipment will take place in the spring of 2007. The fitness course will add eleven work out stations to the present trail. Like the indoor track and the weight room, the course will be available not only to the students but the community. The fitness course package is built to make running an activity that is fun for the participants, making them more likely to continue using the course.

This is the second Community Health Award grant that the School has been award from Excellus BlueCross BlueShield. These grants were applied for by Michael Cambareri of the District Business Office. We would like to thank Mike for his outstanding grant writing abilities. The School would also like to thank Excellus BlueCross Blue-Shield for their commitment to the communities that they service.
The Sandy Creek Central School District Weight Room and Track are now open for the community’s use every evening from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. If you have any questions, please call the District Office at 387-3445.