



The Comet's Tale



Pre-K and Kindergarten Registration

In order to assist in budgetary planning, the Sandy Creek Elementary School has moved Pre-K and Kindergarten registration to February 6th, 2013. While this was formerly held at the end of March, it is felt that by moving up the date the District can better plan for class sections for fall. If you have a child who will be eligible to enroll in either class, please mark your calendars for February 6th.

Registration will still be held from 1-6 PM in the Elementary Office. All Universal Pre-Kindergarten regulations still pertain for Pre-K student enrollment. The February 6th registration will determine eligibility for the allotted slots in the program. Please call the office if you have questions.

***NOTE: There was an error on the District calendar sent home this summer. On the calendar, registration dates are listed in both February and March. There will be NO registration in March. February 6th is the correct date for registration, and the mandatory date for Pre-K registration.**

Section III Champions!

The Sandy Creek Comets Varsity Football team defeated Westmoreland on Friday, November 2nd to take the Section III, Class D Football Championship at the Carrier Dome in Syracuse. The team, undefeated in the regular season, finished the year with a 11-1 record after falling to Tioga in a heartbreaker in the regional playoffs.

Athletic Coordinator and Football Coach Mike Stevens had this to say about his squad, "This group of young men truly are a 'team'. They have been a pleasure to work with this season and I am grateful to be a part of this special season with them." *More Sandy Creek Football is located on page 12 of this edition including the end of the year awards.*



Elementary School Thanksgiving Feast



Students in 1st and 2nd grades at Sandy Creek Elementary School performed several Thanksgiving-themed songs under the direction of music teacher



Maddox Sprague thought the meal was lip-smacking good.

in 2nd grade, also included a feast of similar food items consumed at the original Thanksgiving feast.

A packed audience was on hand and they were delighted by the creative costumes, entertaining songs and the holiday performance by the students.

The event was a collaborative effort between the music and art departments and the classroom teachers. Students created their costumes in art class, practiced songs in music and in their classrooms, and crafted special Thanksgiving placemats in class that were personalized with their own list of things for which they are thankful. The concert certainly started the Thanksgiving break with a true feeling of gratitude and an extra helping of holiday spirit.



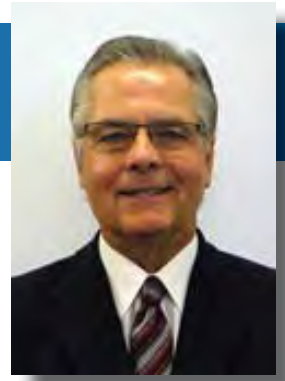
Cade Stoker, left, and Delaney Lococo look like the perfect Pilgrims.





A Message From the District Superintendent

Mr. Stewart R. Amell



How does the Superintendent decide snow days?

The decision to close, delay, or dismiss school early is a process that we take very seriously for the safety of our students and staff.

The Superintendent's office monitors the local weather on a daily basis throughout the winter months. On the morning of inclement weather, I listen and watch the weather forecasts on various media and internet outlets starting at 4:30 a.m., this includes Doppler and satellite radar projections to determine anticipated weather conditions. I keep in contact with the District Transportation Supervisor, Ms. Robin Cashel, who communicates with a majority of the Town Highway Superintendents to evaluate road conditions within our District boundaries. We also communicate by phone with other neighboring school district officials, i.e. local Superintendents and transportation supervisors for updates on their road conditions and status. Carol Yerdon, Channel 9 weather watcher from Redfield, also provides me with her knowledgeable input on the weather conditions.

At approximately 5:45 a.m. the decision is made to either close or delay school, and it is communicated to various District Office staff

who are assigned the responsibility of notifying specific media outlets (see insert below for full listing). I also initiate the Emergency Contact System to notify families of the closure or delay.

This same process is also used to decide early dismissal and cancellation of after school activities.

As you can see, many people are involved in the process but the Superintendent is responsible for the final decision of school closure, delay or early dismissal. As pictured below we meet annually with the town highway superintendents to review and change protocols for emergency school closing determinations.

If you have questions or concerns about the school closure process please contact my office at 387-3445.

Sincerely,

Stewart R. Amell
Superintendent of Schools

Students practice bus evacuations using safety bus



Students at Sandy Creek Elementary School recently practiced emergency evacuation procedures using the South Jefferson Transportation Department's Safety Bus. The students in Pre-K through fifth grades were assisted by staff members as they escaped the bus through the emergency roof hatch and emergency window exits. These practice drills are important preparations in the event of a bus accident which prevents escaping through the front or rear doors. The Sandy Creek Transportation Department drivers complete extensive testing and training every year to maintain their school bus driver certification. Practice bus drills ensure both students and drivers are familiar with alternative exits on the buses. For more information about the Sandy Creek Transportation Department, visit the website at www.sccs.cnyric.org or call Robin Cashel, Transportation Supervisor at (315) 387-5068.



Pictured above, left to right are: Robin Cashel, SCCSD Transportation Supervisor; Mike Goessl, Head Bus Driver; Sandy Creek Superintendent Stewart Amell; Mike Kastler, Town of Sandy Creek Highway Supervisor; Paul Pratt, Redfield Highway Supervisor; and Doug Henry, Orwell Highway Supervisor; as they meet to discuss the process for emergency school closure and delays due to inclement weather.



Emergency School Announcements

In the event that it is necessary to close or delay school due to severe weather conditions, mechanical breakdown, etc. announcements will be made to the following radio and television stations.

Television: WWNY (Channel 7); WSTM (Channel 3); WTVH (Channel 5); WSYR (Channel 9), YNN (Channel 10), WWTI/ABC 50

Radio: 570AM, 620AM, 790AM, 1050AM, 1240AM, 1260AM, 92.1FM, 93.1FM, 94.5FM, 95.7FM, 99.5FM, 100.7FM, 100.9FM, 102.1FM, 103.1FM, 104.7FM, 105.5FM, 105.9FM, 106.5FM, 106.7FM, and 107.9FM



Elementary School News - All About Math!

By Sue Ann Archibee, *Principal*

Nine years ago Sandy Creek Elementary embarked on a new initiative that changed reading instruction in our school. This initiative was a federal program called Reading First, and it revolutionized our entire instructional system. One of the big questions frequently asked by educators since then has been, "Math next?". Well, Math's time has come, this time through a New York State initiative that is aligned with national educational reform.

For anyone with a child in grades K-8, this is not news. We have heard from many parents this fall, that math homework is extremely challenging. Methods have changed and problem solving is not what it used to be. Rest assured, it has been a difficult adjustment for us all.

Our teachers have participated in hours of staff development

in preparation for these changes, focusing on several components that are driving the revolution. First, we learned about the six shifts in math instruction that need to occur at the base of our practice: (focus) learn more about less, (coherence) build skills across grades, (fluency) develop speed and accuracy, (deep understanding) really know it/really do it, (application) use it in the real world, and (dual intensity) think fast and solve problems. Next we learned about the 3 C's and how they impact all areas of instruction: (21st Century skills) skills, expertise and knowledge that students need to be successful in the 21st century, (cognitive engagement) deep involvement in learning that stretches the learner to higher levels, and (constructivism) constructing knowledge and understanding through experiences. Bringing it all together, we then studied the new New York State Common Core Math Standards, which outlines standards, clusters and domains for each grade level Pre-K through 12. This is where the true heavy lifting began, as we unpacked the expectations of increased rigor for our students, and understood the adjustments we had to make in our practice.

To assist in the process, we made the decision to move to new math materials for grades K-5. These materials are published by the same company that publishes our reading series which provides for the same verbage integration. The materials explicitly delineate the standards being taught in each lesson, and align to the shifts and rigor required by common core. They include a host of resources, both in print and online, to support math instruction for students of all ability levels. The math series provides ample explanation and practice of skills with hands-on experiences and real world connections. Our implementation began on the first day of school, and has progressed from there. We continue to collaborate and train as a staff, moving toward mastery of the new common core math standards and the transition we need to provide a strong foundation for all students.

As we do with our reading program, we are currently planning a Family Math Night, designed to disseminate information to parents about the program and to help you in helping your child(ren). Look for more information on that after the holiday season. In addition, your child's teacher is a great source of information regarding the topics specific to the grade level. He/She can suggest resources that might be helpful to use at home.

We appreciate your attention and support of your child's education. Please do not hesitate to call the office or set up an appointment if you have questions.

Alumni Basketball Game scheduled for Dec. 28th

The Fourth Annual Sandy Creek Alumni Basketball game will be held on Friday, Dec. 28th in the high school gymnasium. The evening will feature two games, a boys' and girls', with the first game beginning at 6:00 p.m. A shooting contest will be held between the two games. The concession stand will also be open for food and drink purchases. The alumni game is sponsored by the Sandy Creek Comets' Sports Booster Club. Contact Nate at 532-4942 for more info. Plan now to attend and renew old friendships and support the Booster Club.

Sandy Creek Elementary School honors Veterans

Sandy Creek Elementary School held a Veterans recognition ceremony during Morning Program at the school on November 9th to mark Veterans' Day. Students at the school invited relatives and loved ones who had served or are currently serving in the Armed Forces to join them in celebrating the special day. Organizers Jackie Hobbs and Judy Allen, along with several student helpers bestowed

a heartfelt thank you to the veterans for their service to our country. Each guest was given a special certificate and a reception for the veterans was held following the patriotic Morning Program.



Right: Alayna Blount, third grader at Sandy Creek Elementary School proudly recognizes her father, Matt, a Marine Corps veteran during the special recognition ceremony held at the school to mark Veterans' Day.

Active U.S. Army Corporal Jeremy Pearsall, center, is joined by sons Dyllan, left, and Seth during the Veterans' Day ceremony at Sandy Creek Elementary School. Students at the school invited relatives and loved ones who had served or are serving in the Armed Forces to join them in celebrating the special day on November 9.





Patti King 2012 recipient of Wall of Excellence Award

The Sandy Creek Central School District recently recognized Patricia King as the 2012 Wall of Excellence honoree.

The Wall of Excellence recognition program was established to honor past and present faculty and staff members who have exhibited unforgettable commitment and service to the children of the Sandy Creek Central School District. Nominations, who met the awards criteria, were submitted and reviewed by a selection committee. Nominees must have achieved a high level of professionalism and dedication, displayed a true commitment to the Sandy Creek School District Mission, and demonstrated an extra-ordinary level of performance for the benefit of students, staff and the community.

King, a third grade teacher at Sandy Creek Elementary School has taught for 22 years, all of which with the Sandy Creek School District. She was nominated for the prestigious award by Shari Thurston and her daughter Hailee who has been motivated by King over the last two years.

King was presented with a plaque that reads: "Patricia King, Elementary Teacher, Coach, Advisor. An exceptional teacher, coach and advisor who puts in effort well beyond what is expected of a teacher to be effective. Gives it her all to make sure every student reaches their potential. Students that walk into her classroom are treated more like family than a student. Modified Cross Country Coach and has led many different student clubs, including Climate Committee

which is a student group that makes the elementary a happy place to learn, Mighty Milers which is a recess fitness club, and Science Fair Coordinator where she is lovingly known as the "Chickie Lady."



Patricia King was recently named to the 2012 Sandy Creek Central School District Wall of Excellence. Pictured are SCCS Superintendent Stewart Amell with King, following the presentation of the award at a recent Board of Education meeting.

Search dog serves as a deterrent to student contraband



The Sandy Creek Central School District has a zero tolerance policy for student possession of drugs, alcohol, tobacco, weapons or other banned substances while on school property. The District has utilized a contraband-sniffing dog which has helped administrators police the building. The dog, Hudson, along with his handler drops in periodically, unannounced, to search for prohibited items in lockers, backpacks, classrooms, parking lots, and other areas on the school grounds. According to Superintendent Stewart Amell, "We utilize the contraband dog to ensure a safe and secure environment for our kids."



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- Dec. 6 5-12 Grade Holiday Band Concert, 7 pm
- Dec. 12 Staff Development Day 11:30 am Dismissal
- Dec. 12 5-12 Grade Holiday Choral Concert, 7 pm
- Dec. 13 Board of Education Meeting, 7 pm
- Dec. 14 Pre-K Concerts at 10 am and 1 pm
- Dec. 19 NHS Holiday Christmas Wrap
- Dec. 19 National Honor Society Induction, 7 pm
- Dec. 20 Elementary Holiday Concert, 2 pm
- Dec. 24-31 Christmas Vacation - No School
- Jan. 1 New Year's Day - No School
- Jan. 10 Board of Education Meeting, 7 pm
- Jan. 21 Martin Luther King, Jr. Day - No School
- Jan 25 No School for 6th-12th Grade and 1/2 Day for Elementary - No Afternoon Pre-K
- Feb. 6 Pre-K and Kindergarten Registration 1-6 pm



Sandy Creek students participate in All-County Music Festival

Sandy Creek Central School District sixth graders recently participated in the Oswego County Music Educators' Association (OCMEA) Elementary All-County Music Festival, held recently at Pulaski Middle/Senior High School. The students, all sixth graders at Sandy Creek Middle School, performed as band and chorus members and included: Margery Yousey, trumpet; Joseph Mettot, trombone; Carly Lyndaker, clarinet; Alison Lantry, tuba; Dakota Loomis, euphonium; Kennedy Sullivan, trumpet; Alexis Wolfe, clarinet; and chorus members Sydney Jenkins, Alexis Guyette, Ethan Phillips and Angelina Salzman. The students were selected from the participating schools' music programs and represent the finest student musicians in the county.

OCMEA sponsors the annual All-County Music Festivals to provide students with the opportunity to play and sing under the direction of outstanding guest conductors. The festival also provides the students the valuable enrichment opportunity to meet and perform with other talented musicians who share similar interests and talents. Students perform with All-County Band, All-County Chorus, and All-County Orchestra.

The festival provides an opportunity to recognize and support musical excellence, raises the students' level of awareness of higher performance standards, and provides an opportunity to work under the tutelage of guest conductors on advance literature alongside their equally talented fellow musicians.



Four Sandy Creek Middle School chorus students were selected to participate in the Oswego County Music Educators' Association Elementary All-County Music Festival held in Pulaski. The students, left to right are: Sydney Jenkins, Alexis Guyette, Ethan Phillips and Angelina Salzman.



Sandy Creek Central School District sixth graders recently participated in the Oswego County Music Educators' Association (OCMEA) Elementary All-County Music Festival, held recently at Pulaski Middle/Senior High School. Seven band students were selected to participate and are pictured, left to right: Margery Yousey, trumpet; Joseph Mettot, trombone; Carly Lyndaker, clarinet; Alison Lantry, tuba; Dakota Loomis, euphonium; Kennedy Sullivan, trumpet; and Alexis Wolfe, clarinet.

Mike Goessl named Oswego County Traffic Safety Champion



Mike Goessl, Head Bus Driver for the Sandy Creek Central School District was recently named an Oswego County Traffic Safety Champion. Goessl was nominated for the award by Robin Cashel, Transportation Supervisor at Sandy Creek. Cashel described Goessl as a beloved instructor and a patient and thorough trainer. Goessl is in charge of training all of the new and seasoned drivers in the District and Cashel noted that all of Goessl's students passed their CDL license test. The Traffic Safety Champions were honored by the Oswego County Traffic and Safety Board for making the roads and streets across the county safer. Pictured, left to right are: Sandy Creek Superintendent of Schools Stewart Amell, Goessl and Cashel.



For updated announcements and events visit the Sandy Creek Central School District website at: www.sccs.cnyric.org.



High School National Honor Society Inductions set for Dec. 19



Representatives of the current class of National Honor Society (NHS) are pictured above in front, left to right: NHS advisor Casey Vallance, Cori Pandolfi, and Olivia Ivison. Second row: Ashley McNitt and Jesse Ladd; Third row: Isabel Bray and Toni Gray. Back row: Tyler VanRy and Justin Haskins.

The Sandy Creek Chapter of the National Honor Society (NHS) New Member Induction Ceremony will be held on December 19 at 7:00 p.m. in the high school auditorium.

Eligible students were invited to apply the week of November 12. In order to be eligible students must have an overall GPA of 87.0 or above. The application process asks students to provide written information to the selection committee regarding their efforts with community service, leadership, and character. Students are also asked to write an essay as to why they are deserving of this honor and why they should be selected.

Once the paperwork is provided, the selection committee meets and reviews all applicants. If any part of the paperwork is incomplete the students are automatically removed from the eligible list. Other areas that the committee looks at are student attendance and student discipline going back to the ninth grade. Using a point system for all of these factors determines who is selected and who is not. Once selected, students are required to maintain their GPA, participate in thirty hours of community service per year, and maintain good character and leadership.

A review committee meets every quarter to review each student's status. If a student is lacking in one of the required areas, they are placed on probation for the next five weeks and are evaluated after that to determine whether they will remain in NHS.

On November 6, 2012, the current NHS members hosted a blood drive that was sponsored by the American Red Cross. Other upcoming

events sponsored by the National Honor Society are the induction ceremony on December 19th and the annual Christmas Wrap at the Sandy Creek Methodist Church in the afternoon on the 19th. There are many other events and community service projects coordinated by the National Honor Society members throughout the remainder of the school year. Future activities and events will be posted.

For more information about National Honor Society or upcoming community service activities, contact NHS advisor Casey Vallance at the high school at 387-3445.

Students say "thank you" at the Make Sense Shop



James Palmer shares a moment with Sandy Creek Central School District Superintendent Stewart Amell during the Make Sense Shop Thanksgiving dinner.

Thanksgiving is a time for reflection and earnest thankfulness. For students at the Make Sense Shop in Pulaski, their annual Thanksgiving Dinner provides the perfect occasion in which to say 'thank you' to their school district administrators and teachers who support their educational opportunities at the shop.

District Superintendents, principals, counselors, special education teachers and other District representatives were on hand for the special Thanksgiving feast.

The Make Sense Shop is a learning center operated by the Pulaski Academy and Central Schools, in cooperation with the Sandy Creek Central and APW Central School Districts. The shop, which features a café, gift shop and used book store, is located in the Pulaski business district and provides a life-skills, job-training program for students ages 14-21. Students are involved in every aspect of operating the business including cooking and serving meals, creating items for the gift shop, stocking shelves and inventory, cash register and bank transactions, and cleaning up at the end of the day. The shop also has a classroom area for traditional instruction.

The Make Sense Shop is located at 4852 N. Jefferson St., Pulaski and is open to the public 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. For more information call (315) 298-8694.



Middle School students collect items for local food pantries



Pictured are organizers and student council representatives who helped load and deliver the items to the Friendship Shop in Sandy Creek. Left to right kneeling in front are: Timothy Snell; Brianna Snyder; and MaKenzie Lococo. Second row, left to right: Sue Gafner, NJHS Advisor; Alex Paschall (kneeling); Taila Hatch; Alexis Cornell and Kim Curley, Student Council Advisor.

Sandy Creek Middle School Student Council and National Junior Honor Society students collected items to benefit two local food pantries during two weeks in November. The students set a goal of 500 items to donate and worked cooperatively toward their common goal. The Middle School Student Council, who sponsors a fall and spring dance for middle school students, used the fall dance to help collect food items for the drive. To gain entry into the recent Friday night dance, the students charged one can or non-perishable food item.

While the group had a slow start early in the collection, they ended the drive with 520 items, nearly 300 more than last year's collection and surpassing their goal.



Above: Student council representatives loaded boxes for delivery to the Friendship Shop in Sandy Creek for distribution to needy families in the area.

The students packed the food items into 10 large boxes to be transported to the local pantries in need during the particularly busy holiday distribution time.

The students decided to set as a reward for reaching their goal, a special mis-matched day on Wednesday before the Thanksgiving break. Students put together their craziest combinations but the best reward for meeting their goal was knowing how many families would benefit from their generosity.

Student Council Advisors are Kim Curley and Karin Johnson and the National Junior Honor Society Advisor is Sue Gafner.

Fire Safety Education at Sandy Creek Elementary

Members of the Lacona Fire Department recently spent a morning at Sandy Creek Elementary School teaching students about fire safety and prevention. Assistant Chief Frank Manchester and firefighters Mike Cooper, Shawn Fuller, Pete Jones and Jason Vickery greeted elementary students during the school's morning program and then stayed to spend some additional time speaking to first grade classes.

During morning program the special guests spoke to students about the importance of smoke detectors and encouraged the students to remind their parents to test and change the batteries in their home smoke detectors regularly. Manchester then asked students to think about the actions that they would take if their home was on fire and/or if their clothes were on fire. He urged students to discuss with their family members, if they have not already done so, a planned escape route as well as a designated meeting space outside of the home where the family can safely gather and then called on a student volunteer to demonstrate the "stop, drop, and roll" technique to distinguish a fire.

The special guests expanded on many of these points when they spoke specifically to the first grade classes and the young students watched as three of the firefighters dressed in full turnout gear right before their eyes. The three firefighters crawled on the floor, around and between the rows of students while Manchester described how each piece of equipment helps protect them from intense heat and smoke. He encouraged the students to see and touch the firefighters as they crawled past as well as listen to how their voice sounds through the mask to help lessen any fears that they might have of firefighters.

The demonstration concluded with a trip outside to see the fire and rescue truck that the guests brought with them. The firefighters showed the students some of the equipment that they use for fire calls, rescue calls, car accidents and other emergency situations that they respond to and gave students an opportunity to see and sit where a firefighter sits when he/she is riding in the fire truck.



A member of the Lacona Fire Department crawls on the floor during a fire safety and prevention assembly at Sandy Creek Elementary School. The demonstration showed students that they do not need to be afraid of a firefighter, even though they might look and sound scary when they wear their full turnout gear.



Hannah Walker selected to All State Symphonic Band

A Sandy Creek High School student has been selected for one of the highest honors a band student can hope to achieve; to be named to the All State Symphonic Band.

Hannah Walker, a junior at Sandy Creek High School, was selected through audition to the New York State School Music Association (NYSSMA) All State Conference Symphonic Band.

The All State Symphonic Band is comprised of the highest-achieving students from across New York State and will culminate with a performance in Rochester, NY on December 2nd.

Hannah was also selected principal French Horn at the NYSSMA Zone 5 Area All State Festival at the Crane School of Music in Potsdam, NY in mid-November.

She also received a nearly perfect score of 99 for her solo audition



Hannah Walker, a junior at Sandy Creek High School, was selected through audition to the New York State School Music Association (NYSSMA) All State Conference Symphonic Band.

during the NYSSMA Solo Festival held earlier this year. According to music teacher Tom Artini, Hannah's selection for All State Symphonic Band marks the first student from Sandy Creek High School to achieve this honor in more than 16 years.



For updated announcements and events visit the Sandy Creek Central School District website at: www.sccs.cnyric.org.

Tips to Fight the Flu

Minimizing and containing the spread of any germ such as seasonal influenza successfully depends on how well staff, students and parents prepare and react. Keeping as healthy as possible will depend on everyone following these simple and basic practices:

• **Stay Home When Sick** - The major symptoms of an influenza-like illness are a fever of 100°F, and cough or sore throat. Additional symptoms might be runny nose, congestion, vomiting, diarrhea, headache, fatigue, and muscle aches. Students and staff with influenza-like illness should stay home for at least 24 hours after they are free of fever (100.4°F), or signs of fever without the use of fever-reducing medicines (e.g., ibuprofen, acetaminophen, etc.). They should stay home even if they are using antiviral drugs (such as Tamiflu).

→ Sick students should stay home (sorry, no trips to friends, sport events, the mall or even the day care center)

→ Students with symptoms or suspected of having the flu should not be sent on the school bus in order to visit the School-Based Health Center. Please bring students to appointments at the Health Center.

• **Separate or Isolate People Who Are Sick** - Sick students cannot come to school and all school related activities. Students and staff who appear to have an influenza-like illness or become sick during the school day will be seated separately from others at a 6 foot distance between ill persons; a simple face shield or surgical mask may be provided. Students will wait in that location until picked-up by a parent/guardian.

• **Hand Hygiene and Respiratory Etiquette** - To reduce the spread of flu, students and staff should practice good hand hygiene by hand washing (with soap and water, lathering for at least 20 seconds) or by using a hand sanitizing liquid. The flu virus spreads from person to person in droplets produced by coughs and sneezes. So, it is important that everyone cover their mouths and/or noses with a tissue and dispose of the tissue appropriately.

• **Routine Cleaning** - The Sandy Creek custodial crew are trained cleaners who are diligent in their duties on a daily basis. They specifically target high congregation areas and high touch locations. They are provided with and use the best US EPA and NYS DEC approved cleaning products and they know how to use them effectively. Door knobs, telephones, computer keyboards, and the like are scrubbed daily. Hard to reach or clean high touch items are sprayed with a disinfectant and allowed to dry.



Reminders from the School Nurses

Medication at School - Just a reminder that NO medications of ANY kind may be in a student's possession while at school EXCEPT those students that have a specific written order from a doctor and parent requiring student to carry such. (e.g., inhalers). Medications can be dispensed to students at the Nurses' Office if accompanied by a written Dr.'s note and written parent note. The medication must be in the original bottle if over-the-counter, and/or in a prescription bottle.

Vision & Hearing Screening - All students in grades K-5, and grades 7 and 10 are screened throughout the year. Please check the SCCS School Calendar mailed in August to check dates of screening.

Health Appraisals (Physicals) - A Physical is required for all students in grades Pre-Kindergarten, Kindergarten (if student was not in school's Pre-K Program), 2nd, 4th, 7th, and 10th Grades and all new students to the District. School Nurses will be contacting parents in January if grade-level physicals are yet needed.



After School Program provides opportunities for students

Two years ago Sandy Creek High School was an at-risk school and administrators in the District began to look at ways to improve academic standings, keep students engaged and focused on learning, and help struggling students meet the stringent graduation requirements at the school. Sandy Creek graduates must complete 24 credits instead of the 22 most schools in the area require, including two art credits or two music credits (or one of each). The District was also looking for ways to better prepare their graduates for college and careers following high school. What they created was a voluntary after school program to assist students with their school work, provide a proper study environment, give them access to technology for research, and provide homework and/or tutoring help.

On Mondays and Wednesday for three hours, students in grades 9-12 can receive one-on-one assistance, work independently, or in small study groups, in three classrooms at the school. Three staff members provide academic assistance for the students, if necessary, helping them with their lessons.

"This program is all about providing learning options for all students," said High School Principal Maureen Shiel, who explained that the program is not focused on struggling students, but is an instrument for all students to develop good study habits and better prepare for college and careers. While the program is completely voluntary, some students are encouraged to attend. If a student is at jeopardy academically, work can be made up through the after school program. Students are even given the opportunity to re-take a test if they attend the after school program and show they are committed to improving their grades.

And if all of this learning wasn't enough, students are fed a light



Samantha McNitt, front, and Courtney Plumley, back, used a recent after school program to do research for a classroom project.

dinner or snack during the program at 5:30 before heading home on the bus at 6:00.

Whether the after school program is utilized by students who need to have an uninterrupted and well-equipped spot for study, or by students who are involved in sports and need to maintain their academic standing, the statistics show the program works at improving academics and keeping students engaged and focused.

"We have a wonderful success rate for kids who were failing and began to go to the program and are now doing really well," said Principal Shiel. "We have the statistical data to prove that the program works."

For more information about the after school academic program, contact the high school at 387-3445.

Varsity Cheerleaders bring home honors from area competitions

The Sandy Creek Varsity Football cheerleaders did very well in area cheerleading competitions, bringing home a 2nd place honor in the Frontier League Competition in Watertown, a 2nd place in Section III at South Jefferson, a 3rd place at Northern New York also at South Jeff; and a 3rd place in Baldwinsville for Bling It On. The team, coached by Brittnea Bryden includes: Kendra Valley, Emily Calabria, McKayla Fox, Christian Saber, Cori Pandolfi, Caitlyn Williams, Deanna Rusz, Clarice Thibault, Val Kampff, Lexi Goodnough, Sammi Pandolfi, Tara Huggins, Alina Quintana, Alicia Paige, Samantha McMurray, Jasmyn Williams, Abigail Widrig, and Lindsey Goodnough.





iPads in the classroom: There's an "app" for that

Technology has drastically evolved over the years to become one of the most powerful tools in education. An example of this at the Sandy Creek Central School District is the availability of handheld touchscreen tablets known as iPads.

Three mobile iPad carts, each containing 30 rechargeable tablets, were obtained through grant funds and became available for classroom use at the start of the 2012-13 school year in September. The tablets are providing educators in the District with an engaging alternative for delivering instruction while also catering to a variety of age levels and abilities and increasing student-to-student and classroom-to-classroom collaboration.

Students in Tammie Halsey's second grade classroom utilized the iPads to work on an ELA project that they featured at the Elementary School Open House this fall. The students worked with a partner to write and produce a video skit using a sock puppet application or "app" on the tablets. The skit was based around a vocabulary word of their choice from a classroom reading lesson. The students also utilized the iPads during centers, practicing vocabulary with a rhyming "app" and using a fun math fact "app" to practice addition and subtraction.

At the fifth grade level the iPads were utilized by students for a picture book project. The students selected a non-fiction subject of their choice and utilized the tablets to gather much of the information on their selected topic. Students in Shelly Hathway and Brandie Norton's class worked collaboratively on the research component of the project, learning not just about their topic, but also how to research a topic. The students learned how to search for reliable information on World Wide Web and how

to research items efficiently including how to bookmark websites to access the information again at a later date -- skills that all students will need to become college- and career-ready.

There's even a plan to incorporate iPads into the universal pre-kindergarten classroom at the school. Educational "apps" are available to reinforce basic skills such as shapes, colors, numbers, counting, letters, and picture vocabulary. "It's a great alternative to worksheets and flashcards," UPK teacher Julie McNitt said, adding, "The [iPad] activities are interactive and hold a student's focus much longer than traditional activities. It's new and exciting and has a lot to offer as an educational tool."



Left: Fifth grade teacher Brandie Norton and student Gavin Babcock talk about searching for content on the World Wide Web and finding sources that are reliable and trustworthy. Gavin is researching indoor soccer for a non-fiction picture book project in the class and utilized an iPad to do much of his research on the sport, its history, rules, and regulations.

Right: Deakin Carrow, from Brandie Norton's fifth grade classroom utilizes one of the District's new iPads to research sharks for a non-fiction picture book project. He is pictured transcribing some important facts about the subject in his writer's journal. Also pictured is fellow fifth grader Tyler Allen.



Second grade student Hayden Haines practices vocabulary with a rhyming "app" on the iPad.



Working collaboratively with an iPad are students Mayson Mullin, left, Alexis McNitt, center, and Faith White.



Robbie Tibbles uses an iPad to research recycling for a picture book project. He is pictured with teacher's aide Carol Yerdon.



Family Reading Night at the elementary school



Enjoying their pizza, left to right are: Elsa Graf, Emily Yousey and Violet Graf, during the Sandy Creek Elementary School Family Reading Night. The evening, which involved far more than reading, began with pizza to feed the belly before moving on to the "feast for the mind!"

Sandy Creek Elementary School held a "Family Reading Night" recently where more than 150 friends and family members gather to celebrate all things reading. The evening began with pizza from Two Brothers Pizza to "fill your tummy" according to reading teacher Jennifer Gestwick, one of the coordinators of the evening's festivities. "Now you can fill your brains," she said as the groups divided out to travel to the three work stations around the school.

A special reading area was held in the library where reading teacher Rebecca Fairchild delighted her listeners with the stories she read. Quiet activities were also available at the library tables.

What does math have to do with reading? Everything! According to Gestwick who co-manned the math and measuring area in the cafeteria. How can you solve a math word problem without being able to read and comprehend the question? Families were challenged to get imaginative as they measured objects around the room. Each team was given a poster board, some markers and a special bag of unusual measuring tools such as a jump rope, a slinky, a paper plate, and much more. "You could use your dad's ear to measure the table, or your mom's foot," said Gestwick, encouraging them to have fun. Using the poster board, the students and their family members created a chart to log their measurements. The White family discovered that dad Matthew was just over 10 paper plates tall, while other teams used a slinky, a jump rope, or other items to measure the length of a table, a section of wall, a window, and so much more.

Creativity and ingenuity were at work in all stations of the Family Reading Night, and the Holiday Greetings table where students created their own "new" holiday and then designed and wrote a greeting card celebrating it, was no exception. In the card, students could include special customs, food, or traditions surrounding their special "new" holiday and they had a good time imagining their own special day. Other equally imaginative and creative tables were set up for other reading-centered activities.

For more information about Family Reading Nights contact the Elementary School at 387-3445.



How many paper plates tall is dad? Students Hannah and Mary White along with mom Christie and dad Matthew first estimated and then measured to find that Dad is just over 10 paper plates tall.



Samantha Ranieri and her brother Michael chart their measurement findings during the Family Reading Night.

**Sandy Creek Central
School District**
P.O. Box 248
124 Salisbury St.
Sandy Creek, NY 13145

Non-Profit
US Postage Paid
Permit No. 7
Zip Code 13145

Phone: 315-387-3445
Fax: 315-387-2196
District Office: Ext. 1510
Business Office: Ext. 1510
Elementary: Ext. 1110
Middle School/High School: Ext. 1910
Nurses' Offices:
Elementary - Ext. 1503; HS - Ext. 1505
Transportation: Ext. 3330

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Football Banquet honors team with awards

Capping off a stellar year, the annual football awards banquet was held at the Sandy Creek High School recently where individual and team awards were handed out to players. Head Coach and Athletic Coordinator for the Comets, Michael Stevens, along with assistant coach Kevin Halsey and defensive coordinator Matt Soluri, opened the awards portion of the banquet by humbly stating, "This season was the most successful and most memorable for us and I'm very proud to be a part of it." Following the introduction of each member of the team, Coach Stevens turned to the audience and presented, "This is the 2012 Section III Championship Sandy Creek Football Team!" to which the audience responded with applause and a standing ovation.

The football team also had 12 team members with a 90 or above average and qualified for Scholar Athlete Team status, which "is not always a guarantee" joked Coach Stevens. The scholar athlete team included: Mitchell Garvin, Wyatt Bush, Zach Brown, Jake Benedict, Brett Wolfe, Ben Shephard, Tyler Doe, Josh Lococo, Matt Ennist, Eric Thomas, Andy Carter, and Zach Halsey. The team had a combined average of 91.48.

It was also announced that Mitchell Garvin was selected as National Football Foundation and College Hall of Famer Scholar Athlete. He will be presented with a \$500 scholarship at a special banquet to be held early next year.

Class D All Star Awards included: Honorable Mentions Andy Carter and Brett Wolfe; 2nd Team Defense: Mitchell Garvin, Zach Brown, Zac Akey, and Kyle Finch; 2nd Team Offense: Tyler Swarthout, Cameron Hall, Connor Rowell and Dakota Densmore; 1st Team Defense: Mason McNitt, Jake Benedict, John Shirley, and Matt Ennist; 1st Team Offense: Mason McNitt, John Shirley, Matt Ennist, and Wyatt Bush. Individual awards were as follows: Coaches' Awards: John Shirley, Justin Mintonye, Eric Thomas and A.J. Wills. Most Improved Defense: Brett Wolfe; Most Improved Offense: Tyler Swarthout; Defensive Lineman of the Year: Kyle Finch; Offensive Lineman of the Year: Matt Ennist; Rookie of the Year: Cameron Hall; Defensive Player of the Year: Jake Benedict; Offensive Player of the Year: Wyatt Bush; and Most Valuable Player: Mason McNitt.

In closing, Coach Stevens summed up for many the joy and satisfaction of the season with, "It was a wonderful journey that we experienced, and it's a great feeling to just say, aahhhh..."



Pictured above, the 2012 Section III Championship Sandy Creek Football Team following the Football Banquet where individual and team awards were handed out.



The football team also had 12 members qualify as a Scholar Athlete Team, with a combined average of 91.48.



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