

The S-DCS Column

A Newsletter for the Stakeholders of Sunman-Dearborn Community Schools

Season's Greetings!

As our students and staff begin to wind down from the first semester of school, I wanted to take a moment and reflect on the school year. This has been a very exciting year for our students academically. This past school year, 86% of our students graduated from East Central High School with a Core 40 or higher diploma. Of those 86%, over 91% are currently pursuing education at four year colleges, two year colleges or vocational/technical schools. In our fast paced, changing world, it is very important that our students are prepared to leave high school with the necessary skills and knowledge that will take them to the next level of their education. For this to happen, a school corporation must have highly qualified and highly skilled teachers who can provide our students a rigorous and relevant education. But most importantly, the biggest factor that impacts our students is their relationship with their teachers. Our teachers want to have a strong relationship with their students because they care about their students' lives. I believe that this is what makes a difference in whether our students graduate and seek out higher education opportunities.



Dr. Jeff Hendrix
Superintendent

Another area that truly impacts our students' lives and successes in the classroom is their involvement in extracurricular activities. Recently, our athletic director, Mr. Stonefield, collected academic data on our student athletes. Here is what he found:

Participants in fall/winter athletics: 446
Upper classmen: 324
Lower classmen: 122
3.0 Academic Club: 218
Athletic Department GPA: 3.18

Quick Facts:

- 5 of the top 5 students at ECHS participate in fall/winter athletics
- 6 of the top 10 students at ECHS participate in fall/winter athletics
- 20 of the top 50 participate in fall/winter athletics
- 42 of the top 100 participate in fall/winter athletics
- 199 of the 479 students that have a 3.0 or higher GPA have participated in fall/winter sports seasons.

This data shows that there is a direct correlation between students who participate in extracurricular activities and having higher GPAs in the classroom. This data also emphasizes that we are a school system that focuses on having student athletes and not just athletes. This is a result of our dedicated coaches and an athletic department that continues to focus on students performing well in the classroom as priority number one over just performing well in athletic competitions.

In conclusion, Sunman-Dearborn Community Schools is a corporation that truly works hard to find ways to help all of our students become academically strong and successful. We pride ourselves in preparing our students to not only be successful in the classroom, but also in life.

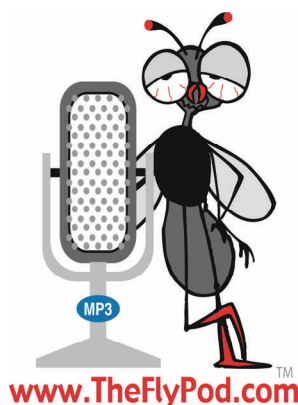
It is my wish that each of you have a happy holiday season!

Dr. Jeff Hendrix

Volume 2, Issue 5

December 2011

The FlyPod...are you catching the buzz?



Each month Sunman-Dearborn Schools is featured on The FlyPod, a local entertaining yet informative media source. Superintendent Dr. Hendrix joins host Gary Puckett monthly for his "SuperChat" podcast. Past chats have included faculty and even students from our schools and have covered topics including budget, athletics, student council, and much more. Gary also has featured our elementary schools in his segment titled "Your School".

Enter www.TinyURL.com/SDSC-Schools in your address line on a new web page to hear the latest SuperChat featuring Dr. Hendrix.

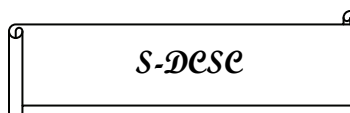
North Dearborn Music Programs will Put a Smile on Your Face

An exciting transformation is underway in the North Dearborn gym. The basketball goals are raised and the lights are lowered for use of the North Dearborn stage. Two times per year the gym goes through this reconfiguration and it is for a good reason. Mrs. Julie Wilson, music teacher at NDES and SDMS, has prepared a musical program that is sure to make you smile and get your toe tapping. December 1st will showcase the first and second grade students in their winter concert as well as the North Dearborn Chimes group. The students have been practicing and making stage decorations in order to bring you one of the very best winter concerts we have ever offered. Songs that are sure to delight will be performed by our very own students! The third and fourth grade will get their chance to shine later in the school year during the spring concert on April 19th. Mark your calendars and make a point to come support our students as they perform for your enjoyment!

1st and 2nd grade Winter Concert, December 1st. Doors open at 6:30 and the concert will begin at 7:00 p.m.

Need Christmas ideas?

Check out East Central's web page at www.sunmandearborn.k12.in.us/echs, click on the EC Memories link and visit Rocketlife. Give the gift of EC Memories to your special Trojan student.



"Boomer" to appear at Basketball Game

The Indianapolis Pacers mascot "Boomer" will be making an appearance at the East Central basketball game on January 28th. Join the fun, entertainment and autograph session with Boomer.



Retired S-D Teacher Shares School History



Phyllis Callaway, retired Sunman-Dearborn elementary educator, recently visited the second grade classes at Bright Elementary on November 9th. Mrs. Callaway shared various artifacts and timelines, which traced the history of changes within the Bright area and our district's schools. The students compared the former Bright school to our school. Did you know the first Bright School was built near the center of town in 1920?

ECHS Christmas Concert

The chorus department will present their Christmas Concert on Sunday, Dec. 11th at 3:00 p.m. in the Performing Arts Center. Admission is free. Come out and enjoy an afternoon of your favorite Christmas Carols performed by the Women's, Chamber, Show and Concert Choirs. There will be candy for the kids and special guests from the North Pole!

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S-DIS Nature Trail



A Schoolyard Wildlife Habitat is an outdoor classroom that offers a beneficial environment for birds, butterflies, and other small wildlife. These friendly surroundings also give students special opportunities for learning. The program is an education outreach of the Indiana Wildlife Federation, an affiliate of the National Wildlife Federation, through which schools can qualify for certification as part of a national registry of Schoolyard Habitats.

Sunman-Dearborn Intermediate School was awarded the Schoolyard Habitat certification on Tuesday, October 19, 2011 by Travis Stoelting, the Habitat Development Director of the Indiana Wildlife Federation, and Susan Knowles, biologist with U.S. Fish and Wildlife. They presented a sign to place on the school property designating the area as a Schoolyard Habitat.

In order to reach the certification, specific goals needed to be accomplished. Both Travis and Susan had visited the site and a description of the lab was written, along with plans as to what would be needed to accomplish the requirements for certification. This included how to use the lab with students, maintenance and upkeep, and improvements.

A team of teachers from fifth and sixth grade was established and consisted of Chairperson Nancy Lillie, Christie Andres, Carla Daughtery, Beth McClamroch, and Jean Schmeltzer. A training day was set up by the Tanner Creek Watershed through Heather Wirth. She invited Warren Gartner of the Indiana Division of Fish and Wildlife and Sam Carman, with IDNR to come to S-DIS for an in-service. Vicky Smith of the Dearborn County Soil and Water Conservation District was also a supportive partner in this project. Oxbow, Inc. provided a grant that paid for substitute teachers, which allowed planning time for the team to create lesson plans for use of the Outdoor Lab facility.

A Butterfly garden was created in memory of Jack Carpenter, and this was supported by Ms. Sopcisak's class, Mrs. Lillie's class, student teacher Mrs. Lori Wilson, Girl Scout Troop 40059 members, leaders, and families. The creation of the garden helped us to meet part of our requirements.

The Bright Christian Church Volunteer Outreach group cleared the trail and helped with maintenance and repair of the cross-over bridge. They also did landscape work and weeded in the garden sections close to the building. This also helped toward our requirements.

Many school employees have been supportive as well. A special thank you goes to Mrs. Vennemeier, Mr. Goessling, Mike Ireland, Tom Beck, Tammy Vonderheide, Deb Schuman, and Roy Johnson, EC Ag teacher and FFA sponsor. A special thank you goes to Nancy Lillie, SDIS 5th grade teacher. She has been the backbone and leader of this entire project.

Please Note.....

The School Board Regular Meeting for December 2011 will be held the third Thursday, December 15, 2011, at 7:00 p.m. in the cafeteria at East Central High School. Following the meeting, the Board will receive public comment on the 2012-13 school calendar.

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Keeping your C-Notify numbers current

As the winter season approaches, please take time to notify your child's school of any emergency contact numbers that may have changed or are no longer in service. This will ensure that you receive any relevant notifications from your child's school, and also helps prevent calls from being sent to incorrect recipients.

C-Notify, the notification service used by Sunman-Dearborn, updates its call lists nightly from our student information system, so any changes requested will be in effect for the next school day. To update any of the four numbers used for C-Notify calls – Home, Disaster, Weather, & Early Dismissal – just call the main office of your child's school and they will be happy to help you. Please note that these numbers need to be updated for each child in the district, as the numbers are tied to individual students rather than families.

Also, please be aware that when sending notifications we always use the home number for calls, plus the appropriate category. For instance, on a school delay the C-Notify will be sent to both Home & Weather numbers.

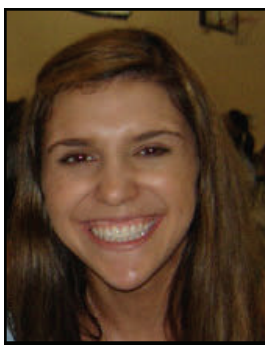
Thank you for your help with keeping these records current!



Nathan Loudon
Technology
Director



Fruit of the Month



Mandy Copenhaver
Food Service
Director

Fruit of the Month is a new program started by the Food Service Department this school year. On the third Tuesday of every month students at all elementary schools as well as at the Intermediate School have the opportunity to try a sample of a fruit that they may have never had before. Along with trying the fruit, students in Brenda Osman and Ashley McConnell's Culinary Arts II classes at East Central created nutrition education signs that are hung to educate the students about the history and health benefits of the fruit they are trying that day. In November, East Central students Sarah Herth and Abby Bertram joined me at Bright Elementary to help hand out persimmon samples and talk about why persimmons are good for your body. Everyone had a great time and some students liked the persimmons so much that they went back for seconds! So far the program has been a great success and the students have tried kiwi fruit, dried cranberries and most recently, persimmons. In December, the students will try Star Fruit. The goal of this program is to encourage students to try new foods and learn about some exotic fruits that they may have never encountered before. Keep an eye out on your child's lunch menu to see what fruit they are trying that month.

Have a safe and healthy holiday season!



S-DESE

S-D Middle School News

The students and staff at Sunman-Dearborn Middle School have been busy during the month of November. Our new structured study hall is now underway. Students are receiving daily follow up and support in that setting to ensure they stay on track with classes. In addition, remedial classes are underway with students during 2nd period with Mrs. Beck and Mrs. Bower. We completed our first round of Acuity. Language Arts and Math teachers met for professional development to analyze Acuity and ISTEP information for daily instructional purposes.

Our student counsel sponsored the SDMS Turkey Contest again this year. Students and staff raised \$169.40 for the local food banks through this endeavor. Mrs. Herbert was our winning turkey contestant, so she got to wear her turkey attire all day long on Wednesday, November 23. We will begin our canned food drive on November 28 through December 7. If students collect 6500 items, Mrs. Baudendistel will get pies in her face. Additional goals will be established for other staff to also get this opportunity.

Students and staff created a beautiful display in our cafeteria for November. People stopped to view our Thanksgiving leaves and reflected on all the things for which they are thankful. During the month of December, we invite parents to come visit our Winter Wonderland display. This will be the home of our upcoming creative snowman contest as home rooms compete for the title of most creative snowman.

The SMILE group is busy planning a pizza party for December and getting the word out that SDMS is a NO BULLYING ZONE. Our student counsel encouraged students to take the anti-bullying pledge by displaying their thumbs up on our Facebook page which is posted in the cafeteria. Hundreds of SDMS have made the pledge to support anti-bullying.

Our Christmas Chorus concert will be held on December 12 at 6:30. The annual winter band concert is scheduled for December 13 at 7:00 in the Performing Arts Center at ECHS. We hope to see many parents, board members, staff, and community supporters at our upcoming events.

School Calendar Survey

The online calendar survey can be accessed on all school websites under the "Contact" tab. A C-Notify was sent on 11/17/11 informing the public that this is available online, as well as in paper format at the Central Office or any school's Front Office for those without internet access. The survey will close on December 5th. Results will be announced at the December 15th Board Meeting. Following the December 15th Board Meeting, the board will receive public comment on the 2012-2013 School Calendar.



S-DESE

SES Students Learn History from Primary Sources

As elementary students learn about history, they come to understand the difference between a primary source and a secondary source. A primary source is an artifact, a document, a recording, or other source of information that was created at the time of the event. A person's first hand account of their experience is a primary source. An individual's personal story is not only interesting, but is memorable for students.

Our students recently experienced primary source information regarding military service to our country. On Veteran's Day, some 4th grade students from Mrs. Klei's and Mrs. Williamson's classes were privileged to eat lunch with their pen pal, Corporal Ronnie Isaacs. He greeted the students with a handshake and a smile. He shared his story and experiences with the children who listened intently. Two students did not want to wash their hands after the handshake from their hero and even asked if they had to.

After lunch, Corporal Isaacs, Veteran Louie Werner, and Samantha Isaacs visited several classrooms to talk to students about their current and past service for our country. Mrs. Isaacs had prepared a Power Point slide show so students could see the equipment Corporal Isaacs discussed. Veteran's Day made an impact on student understanding with this question and answer format. They were able to relate historical information to the personal experiences of their pen pal. These types of experiences make relating school to the world beyond our playgrounds more realistic and creates understanding at a much higher level for students.

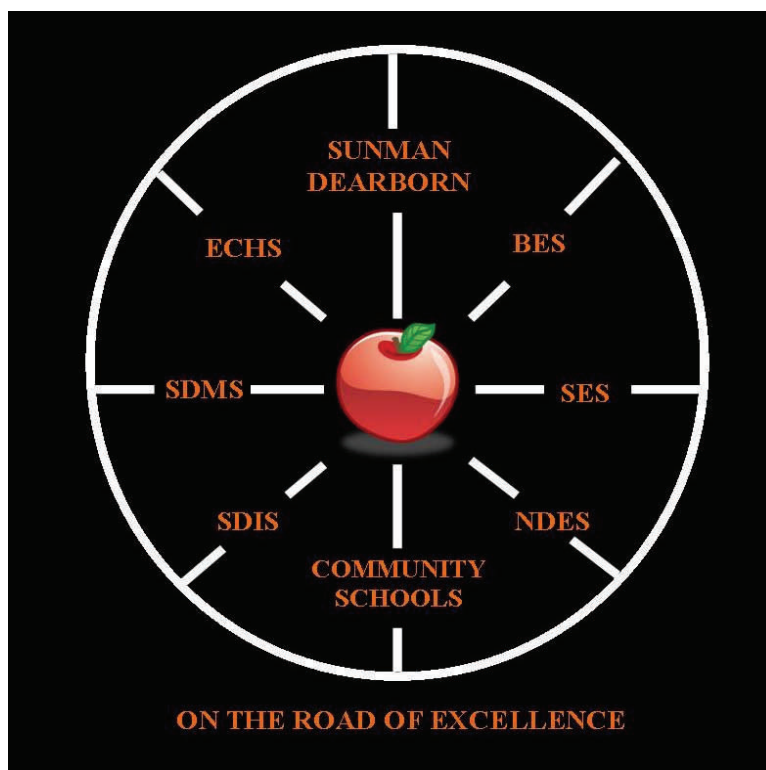


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Sunman-Dearborn Community Schools*

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**To Create a Culture of Educational
Excellence for Each Student!**



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