

The S-DCS Column

A NEWSLETTER FOR THE STAKEHOLDERS OF SUNMAN-DEARBORN COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

WHAT DOES OUR FUTURE HOLD FOR OUR CHILDREN?

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The recent tragedy at Sandy Hook E.S. in Newtown, Connecticut has had a dramatic effect on the lives of many people and on my own life. It saddens me that our schools are no longer safe havens for children to explore new worlds and learn about new ideas. Instead, teachers and administrators are thinking about the safety of children, locked doors and whether we should have more police officers in our schools. Unfortunately, it is the sign of the times that we all are beginning to question what is really happening in our world today. We may all be thinking, "What does our future hold for our own children?"

In the light of this tragedy, there is hope. People from around the world are sending messages of comfort. Communities are coming together to discuss the tough issues facing children today. Businesses are even responding to the call for a change in the way they sell guns. Our legislators are now stepping up to begin contemplating the safety of all of us, but most importantly, the safety of our children in schools. There are people willing to step up and try to find ways to stop this senseless violence in our schools, malls, workplaces and homes.

As we try to move forward, there are many lessons that we can learn from this tragedy. We know that we have to find ways to reach out to individuals such as the one who walked into Sandy Hook Elementary School and took the lives of 26 innocent teachers and young children. We know that we must find better ways to keep assault rifles and handguns that can fire numerous bullets out

of the hands of severely disturbed individuals. We know that it will take the efforts of all of us to look out for each other, and to inform our police when we see a potential problem. We know that we must all work together to keep our schools safe and our children's futures secure.

Our first steps can begin with this new year of 2013. I ask that you take time to talk with your children. Spend some time each day finding out about their day at school or about the time they are spending with their friends. Don't be afraid to ask where they are going, who they are meeting and what they are doing. Get involved in your children's school as a volunteer. Contact your teacher through an email, phone call or visit to keep updated on your children's academic progress.

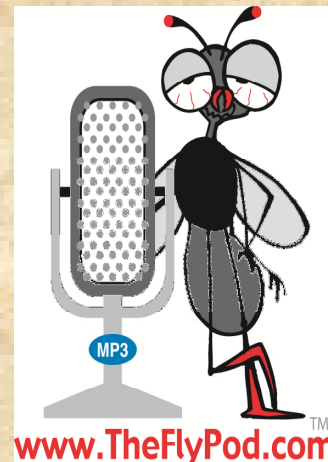
As parents, we are the one's responsible for how our students grow up, and succeed. Today, you have the opportunity to really be a parent, to hug your child and to love your child. The grieving parents of 20 children at Sandy Hook Elementary School will no longer have those opportunities. They have only their memories.

So I ask you, "What does the future hold for you and your children?" I pray that this New Year will be filled with blessings and love for you and your family.

Dr. Jeff Hendrix
Superintendent

DON'T MISS 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. Enter <http://tinyurl.com/SuperChat-SDSC-3> in your address line on a new web page to hear the latest SuperChat discussing Parent Advisory Committee and corporation assessments given to all S-DCSC students with guest Lisa Baudendistel, Principal of SDMS, and Jayme Herbert, Assistant Principal of SDMS.

SCHOOL BREAKFAST SHOWN TO
IMPROVE ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

How was your child's last report card? Do you want to help your kids succeed academically? Send them to the School Breakfast Program. Research shows that "children who attend school hungry often have diminished attention spans and are unable to perform tasks as well as their nourished peers. In these cases, the full value of the education provided is lost". On the other hand, school breakfast participation has been shown to improve standardized test scores, make kids more alert in class, and improve classroom behavior. Make sure your kids start the school day with a delicious, nutritious meal – maybe you'll see the results in their report cards!

School Breakfast Facts

The Food and Nutrition Services Department offers a great breakfast in your child's school every day. Here are five good reasons to send your child:

1. It's easy: instead of running around in the morning trying to make sure your children are eating a nutritious meal, why not just leave it to us? They'll get a great breakfast and have time to hang out with friends before classes begin. Also, no dishes for you to wash.
2. It's inexpensive.
3. It's tasty. Go ahead and see for yourself. New menus are available every month.

4. It makes them smarter: According to the Tufts University School of Nutrition Science and Policy, "Children who participated in the School Breakfast Program were shown to have significantly higher standardized achievement scores than eligible non-participants."
5. It makes them healthier! Harvard Medical School/Massachusetts General Hospital found that students who ate School Breakfast reduced hyperactivity, decreased absence and tardy rates, and improved behavior.

School Breakfast Information

Serving Time: Before school in all buildings

Price: \$1.25 paid, \$.30 reduced*, free*
(*if qualified)

No advance registration necessary!
All students are welcome every day!

Mrs. Copenhaver
Director of Food and
Nutrition Services

LET SUCCESS BE YOUR GOAL

"Arriving at one goal is the starting point to another."—John Dewey

The first semester is behind us. Long gone are the first day jitters, the uneasiness we feel as we go to classes about which we are unsure and the fear of with whom we will sit at lunch. However, we don't always enter the second semester of school with peace and tranquility. We often spend the winter break assessing our first semester performance and questioning if we did enough, did we perform well enough and if we met our goals. Many of us feel that we could have done more, could have performed better and did not meet our goals and we realize that we can work harder this second half of the year to make sure we can answer differently when we reassess our performance during the summer break. On the other hand, some of us will say that we did do enough, we did perform well enough

and that we did meet our goals. The quote from John Dewey speaks to these people. Our work is never done. There is always more to do. When one goal is met, another should replace it. In sports, we are always looking to break our personal records, to improve upon our past performances and to meet new goals. Let the second semester of school be not a time to take pleasure in what we have done, but a time to begin new goals and to work toward what we will do next.

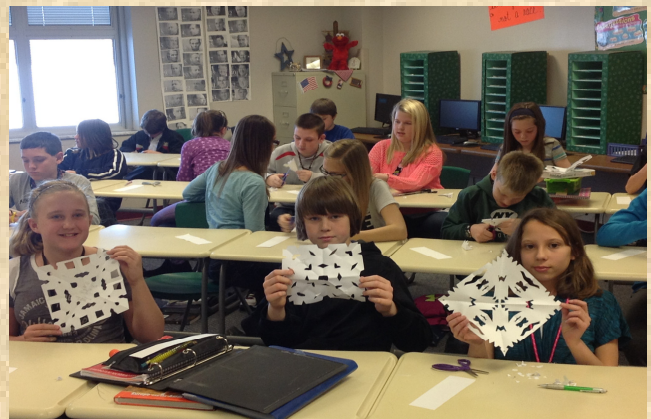
Mr. Bond
North Dearborn
Elementary Principal

SNOWFLAKES FOR SANDY HOOK



Students at S-DIS are helping to make the return to school a "Winter Wonderland" for the students of Sandy Hook Elementary School. Register Publications printed an invitation for everyone to participate on the communities' behalf. The snowflakes will be sent to the Connecticut Parent Teacher Student Association on January 9th.

Mrs. Vennemeier
Sunman-Dearborn
Intermediate
Principal



SUPPORT FOR STUDENT LEARNING: THE INSTRUCTIONAL ASSISTANT

In the environment of high accountability for schools, we see teachers assess students for background knowledge, instruct, assess the learning, reteach or extend, and then complete the cycle all over again. More than any other time in education, the needs of each individual student are considered when teachers plan and implement lessons. At the elementary level, this means in a classroom of 25 students, the teacher is potentially adjusting his or her instruction for each of these 25 students; which is overwhelming to consider.

Thus the important role of an Instructional Assistant is considered. Gone are the days of para-professionals who are Teacher's Assistants; now those para-pros are assisting the instruction of students. While instructional assistants still help with the common duties in elementary schools such as recess duties, bus duties, lunch duties, and clerical work, they also instruct in computer labs, instruct small groups, work one-on-one with students, and follow the directive of teachers to meet the needs of all students in a classroom. In an elementary school, instructional assistants can be seen working in classrooms, hallways, and any empty space where they can engage students in learning.

This year at Sunman Elementary, the use of instructional assistants was prioritized to help with reading instruction in each classroom. A firm foundation in reading is the most important component in later educational success. Thus, instructional assistants are traveling from room to room every school day!

As lifelong learners, instructional assistants at Sunman Elementary are also responsible to continue their education through online learning modules that cover everything from specific disabilities they may encounter to refreshers in content areas such as mathematics.

Instructional assistants are a critical asset in designing and implementing instruction that allows students to achieve at the highest level possible. They are one of the partners in education that make Sunman-Dearborn Community Schools successful.

*Mrs. Morton
Sunman Elementary
Principal*



“WORKING FOR A CAUSE”

Each year the students at S-DIS work very hard to raise money and collect items to give to needy people not only in our community, but also other places in the country and world. The S-DIS students will soon be participating in the annual Math-A-Thon. This will be our 9th year participating. Last year, the students raised \$2508.05, which made a grand total of \$24,841.68. All proceeds benefit the St. Jude's Children's Hospital. Thanks to all students who do participate and to Mrs. Beth McClamroch for organizing this event.



A NEW YEAR ...

2013 is upon us and with it comes the resolutions and individual promises to “do better” on various topics. Many of us will vow to lose weight, spend less money, or exercise more, all worthwhile endeavors. East Central High School faces the new-year with a list of resolutions of our own. East Central personnel have been working hard to improve instruction, understand how students learn, keeping students safe, and raising expectations of learning for all students.

We have addressed student learning and how to increase the overall literacy for our school. All staff have been involved in helping increase student learning in their own classrooms through new techniques and re-visiting old “tried and true” practices as well. Our goal is to raise reading and writing levels at East Central high School by 3% this school year alone. This may not seem like a very high mark; but when, as a

school, we are already performing at a high level, it is harder to attain.

I have every confidence that we will reach this goal and push on to higher goals next year. “As good as we are, how can we be better?” is our mantra. Help us push our school higher and help all students reach more than they ever have before through your support and commitment to excellence. We do have “An Excellent Tradition and an Exciting Future!” Watch as we grow and attain more in the coming months.

Mr. Shipley
East Central High School
Principal

POETRY BREAKS AT BRIGHT ELEMENTARY

Mrs. Lail’s first grade class occasionally shares a poem with someone else at BES. This day they visited the principal’s office.

Mrs. Lail states this is a highlight of their week during the “daily-five” part of the 90 minute reading block, when students are to read to others.

Mr. Goessling
Bright Elementary
Principal



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Sunman-Dearborn Community Schools

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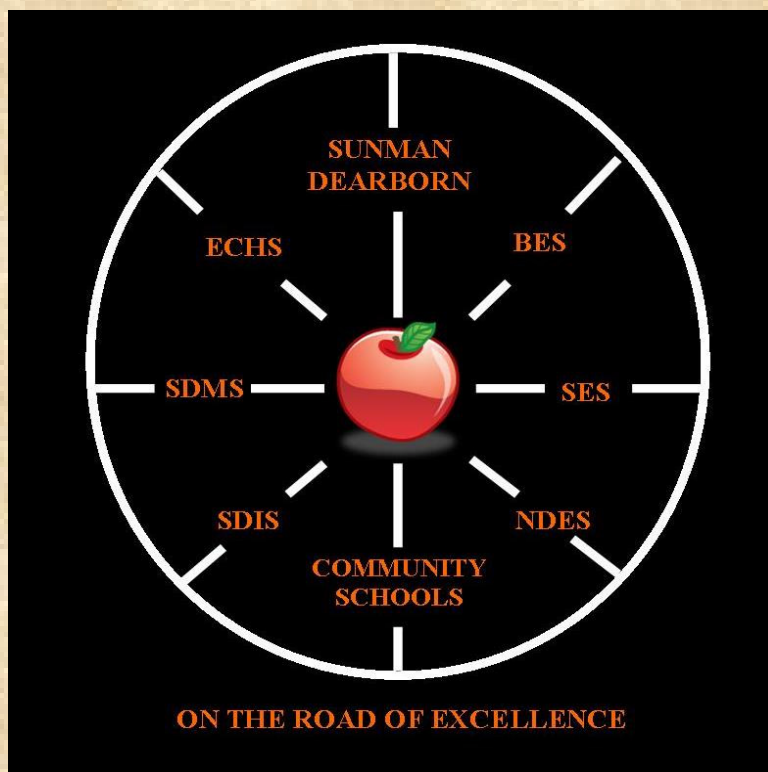
Phone: 812-623-2291

Fax: 812-623-3341

The mission of S-DCS is to develop, for all students:

- Literacy skills (reading, writing, communicating confidently)
- Mastery of state and national standards
- Character, responsibility, teamwork, the importance of regular attendance, goal-directedness, and service to community
- High graduation rates and post-secondary success

We are on the web at
www.sunmandearborn.k12.in.us



SCHOOL CONTACT INFORMATION

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