

The S-DCS Column

A Newsletter for the Stakeholders of Sunman-Dearborn Community Schools

March Madness

Excitement is in the air during this time of year as high school and college basketball teams compete on the courts to see who will become the number one team in the state and in the nation. For Indiana school children, the excitement in the air involves the statewide testing in our school systems. Many of our students are taking the ISTEP+ test over these next few weeks. The Indiana Department of Education states on its website the purpose of the test:

“The purpose of the *Indiana Statewide Testing for Educational Progress Plus (ISTEP+)* program is to measure student achievement in the subject areas of English/Language Arts, Mathematics, Science (Grades 4 and 6), and Social Studies (Grades 5 and 7). In particular, *ISTEP+* reports student achievement levels according to the Indiana Academic Standards that were adopted in November 2000 by the Indiana State Board of Education. An Applied Skills Assessment and a Multiple-Choice Assessment, which are required components of the *ISTEP+* program, are used to measure these standards.”

This test is extremely important for our students and teachers as it is a measure of each student's progress on mastering the Indiana Academic Standards.

To ensure that students will perform at their very best on the ISTEP+ test, it is important that parents reinforce the importance of their students getting the proper amount of rest the night before each test. It is also important that students eat a good breakfast. Most importantly, parents should encourage their students to take the test seriously and to do the very best that they can do.

If parents have any questions about Indiana State Assessments, I encourage the use of the state's website at <http://www.doe.in.gov/achievement/assessment> to find out more information on the different assessments that are used to measure academic achievement of our students throughout the state of Indiana .

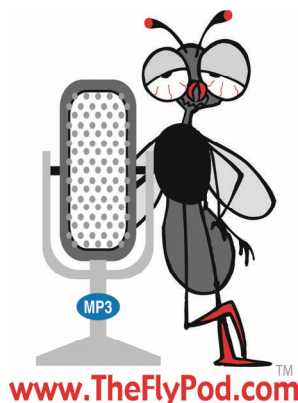


Dr. Jeff Hendrix
Superintendent

Volume 2, Issue 8
March 2012

Dr. Jeff Hendrix

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 featured 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. The next scheduled chat is Tues., Mar. 6 featuring ECHS music teacher Donna Tanner and some of the cast members from the upcoming school musical *Grease*.

New faces

Congratulations and Best Wishes to Kris Wilson and Rahe Ann Bergman who retired during the month of February. We welcome Tom Harris to the Central Office staff, Ann Bovard to East Central, and Lauren Boesken to Sunman Elementary!!!!

Middle School News

By: Lisa Baudendistel, Principal S-DMS

Sunman-Dearborn Middle school students are being encouraged to let their personal lights shine as we enter the ISTEP+ testing window next week. If you have the opportunity to visit our building, you will be greeted by a lighted pathway of encouragement. Reaching success is a team effort as students and teachers work together to achieve our personal bests and school-wide educational excellence.

In addition, our students and staff demonstrated great compassion during the month of February as we launched the "Cancer Bites" Pennies for Pasta campaign and gathered approximately \$3,500 for cancer research. Students competed as home rooms to win a catered lunch from the Olive Garden. Mrs. Worley's students will enjoy the tasty reward in the coming days. Mrs. Herbert, our new assistant principal, became a human sundae and Mrs. Baudendistel had the opportunity to be taped to the lunch room wall! These and many other efforts contributed to a successful outcome to benefit cancer research. A big thank you goes out to Mrs. Schiering, our staff and students for the great work completed at S-DMS. Thanks also to our parents and community, who so graciously support these initiatives.

S-DMS

Exciting things are happening at S-DIS Music!

By: Jeannie Herman, S-DIS Music Teacher

The S-DIS Music classes have been very busy this year. They have worked on Patriotic music, helping them learn the Preamble, the Gettysburg Address, the New Colossus and other famous “words we live by”. They have also sung some of their favorite songs including “Man in the Mirror”, “California Dreamin’”, “I Gotta Feeling”, and “Hey, Soul Sister”.

They also have been watching one of my favorite, and the students’ favorite, musicals, *Chitty, Chitty, Bang, Bang*. Some have gone home and rented it to watch it all the way through. We are doing this one a little earlier this year, because the sixth graders are going to have the opportunity to see a live musical, *Grease*, at the high school this year! This is an excellent learning activity!

And, of course we have to have the theory part of music!! We will be using the percussion instruments to help reinforce the rhythm section of theory. They have learned how to say, play and write rhythms, note names of treble and bass clefs, solfege syllables and hand signs, and counts. They have also rewritten a song into their own song. That was one of my favorite projects of the year.

Currently we are learning guitars! This is one of their favorite units in music. We learn five chords that help them play a couple of fun songs like, “Smoke on the Water” and “Iron Man”! They have learned how to play accompaniments to several songs. Additionally, 20 students are getting group lessons after school. The sixth graders will be turning in a guitar they have built! They were given instructions and have had all quarter to work on this. They had to look up information on how to make a guitar, what goes into it, and then make it using those instructions and/or their own ideas. I told them to “make it their own”.



Reduced Social Security Extended

By: Charles Blake, Director of Financial Operations

On Wednesday, February 22, 2012, President Obama signed into law the “Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act of 2012”. This bill allowed for the extension of the reduced social security deduction from employees paychecks that everyone has been enjoying since January 2011. This means that the social security deduction from your paycheck will remain at 4.2% for the rest of 2012.

S-DESE

Reading: Skills to last a lifetime

By: Cindy Morton, Sunman Elementary Principal

It has long been known among primary teachers that reading is the critical focus for the bulk of instruction. In fact, you may have heard educators say, "In kindergarten through third grade we learn to read, and from fourth grade through life we read to learn." Learning to read is a complex group of skills that are combined to eventually decode words and create meaning from those words.

Parents may believe that teaching these skills require specific training and is best left to teachers, but educators would beg to differ! Parents are a child's first and longest teacher, and their influence in the development of reading skills is of paramount importance. In fact, numerous research studies have shown that the most important factor in a child's journey of learning to read is to be read to by others. Reading aloud to your children can be an invaluable gift as well.

There are many groups outside of schools that promote reading and are able to guide parents in choosing reading material for parent/child read alouds. These include Hoosier Hills Literacy League, Dearborn County Library System, and many web-based groups.

For the youngest children, Hoosier Hills Literacy League provides age appropriate books for children birth through five living in Dearborn County. They are able to do this through the Dolly Parton Imagination Library. More information regarding this program can be found at:

<http://www.lpld.lib.in.us/kids/imagination.html>

Other, older students can benefit from the Dearborn County Public Library's collection. The library provides story times, guidance for parents and young students in choosing age appropriate reading material as well as appropriate read alouds for parents. Further information on the Dearborn County Public Library Children's Department can be found here:

<http://www.lpld.lib.in.us/kids/index.html>

The internet is full of options and recommendations for parents when it comes to reading aloud to children. If you were to do a Google search, it's important to know that sites ending in ".com" are commercial sites, and those ending in ".org" are not for profit organizations. These are some great places to start:

<http://www.rif.org/>

<http://www.healthguidance.org/entry/12511/1/The-Benefits-of-Reading-to-Your-Child.html>

<http://www.literacyconnections.com/ReadingAloud.php>

It's never too late to start! Grab a book, an e-book, or a book on tape or CD, and enjoy some time connecting with your children through print. I'm certain all involved will benefit.



S-DeSe





Bright Elementary 4th Grade Computer Class



The Cincinnati Museum Center's Science Program on Wheels visited the BES 4th graders. The topic was "Experimenting with Physical Science". Hands on learning about the scientific method, drawing conclusions and sharing your discoveries were some of the activities that were covered.



In January the BES staff worked with the students on the qualities of alertness and action. This means a lot of things to various people but we put it into practice as we participated in the national Earthquake drill. All other drills come to mind as we mention these qualities, at home, school and even as simple as getting on and off the bus.

In February we worked with determination. In this picture, Mr. Hutchinson is working with our students on being determined to complete a task. He is challenging the students with an obstacle. This obstacle can only be overcome if the students work together as a team. The BES staff is working hard to incorporate teamwork, communication, honesty and respect into their work with character qualities.

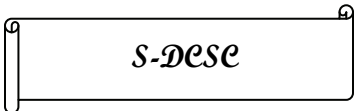


2012-13 School Calendar

August 9-10, 2012	Teacher Workdays
August 13	First Student Day
September 3	Labor Day - No School
October 12	End of 1st grading period (44 student days)
October 17	Students Not Present - Parent-Teacher Conferences/Professional Development
October 18-19	Fall Vacation - No School
November 22-23	Thanksgiving Vacation - No School
December 21	Last Student Day Prior to Christmas Vacation End of 2nd grading period (45 student days) End of 1st Semester (89 student days)
January 2, 2013	Teacher Record Day/In-Service Day
January 3	Classes Resume After Christmas Vacation
March 8	End of 3rd grading period (47 student days)
March 18-22	Snow Make-up Days
March 25-29	Spring Break – No School
May 23	Last Student Day End of 4th grading period (44 student days) End of 2nd Semester (91 student days)
May 24	Teacher Record Day/In-Service Day
May 27	Memorial Day - No School
June 2	ECHS Graduation
Total Students Days - 180	Total Teacher Days - 185

The calendar may be shortened or lengthened to reflect a total of 180 student days as required by I.C. 20-30-2-3 and the teacher record day will follow the last student day.

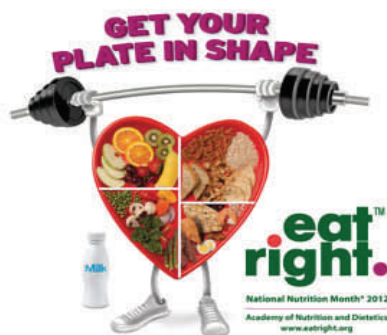
Adopted: January 12, 2012



National Nutrition Month

March is National Nutrition Month and that means it's time to celebrate! The theme for National Nutrition Month this year is "Get your Plate in Shape"! With the chilly weather this time of year, it is easy to forget our healthy eating and exercise habits in favor of curling up on the couch with junk food and a movie. However, before you eat, be sure to think about what you are putting on your plate and in your body. Try the following tips to "Get Your Plate in Shape":

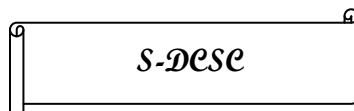
- **Make half your plate fruits and vegetables:** Focus especially on dark green, red and orange veggies plus beans and peas.
- **Make at least half your grains whole:** Choose 100% whole grain breads, cereals, crackers, pasta and brown rice.
- **Switch to fat-free or low-fat milk:** Fat-free and low-fat milk have the same amount of calcium and essential nutrients as whole milk, but less fat and calories.
- **Vary your protein choices:** Try protein foods such as seafood, nuts and beans, lean meat, poultry and eggs. Twice a week make seafood your protein of choice.
- **Cut back on empty calories from added sugars:** Drink water instead of sugary drinks. Choose 100% fruit juice instead of fruit-flavored drinks.
- **Enjoy your food, but eat less:** Get your personal daily calorie limit at www.ChooseMyPlate.gov. Avoid oversized portions by using smaller plates, bowls and glasses.
- **Be physically active your way:** Choose activities that you like and start by doing what you can, at least 10 minutes at a time. Children and teens need 60 minutes or more a day. Adults need 2.5 hours or more a week.



Valentines for Soldiers



S-DIS 5th graders most recently made over 1,400 Valentines to be sent to soldiers. The St. Leon Post #464 Ladies Auxiliary will pay the postage to have them mailed to the Red Cross. We will know where they were sent at a later date.



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Sunman-Dearborn Community Schools

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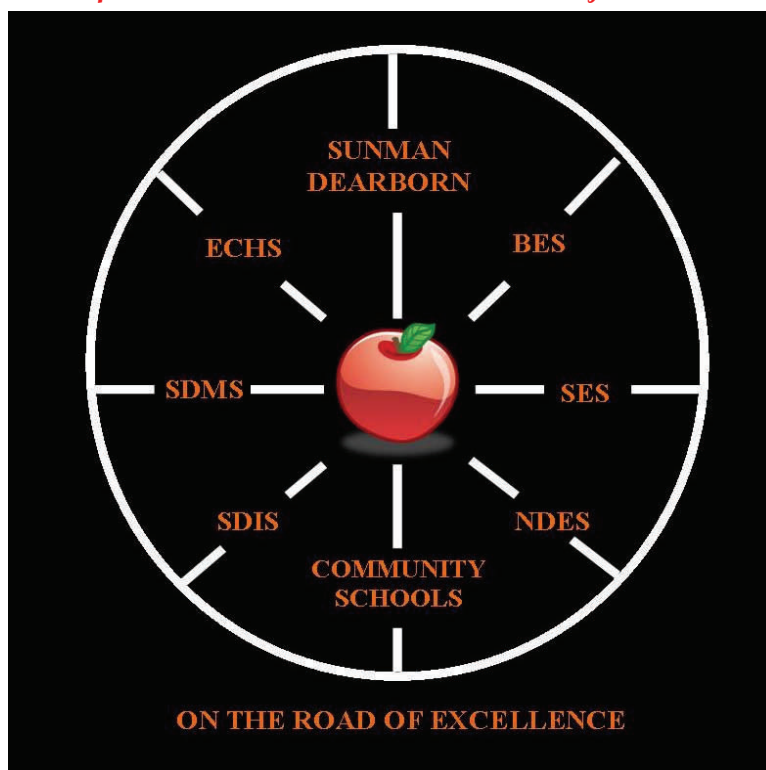
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**To Create a Culture of Educational
Excellence for Each Student!**



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