

SOUTH WINDSOR PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Curriculum and Instruction

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A MESSAGE FROM THE ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT

It's hard to believe it is the end of another year. Another year filled with great accomplishments at every level in every area. Many of these accomplishments, instructional strategies, and new initiatives were observed during Instructional Rounds. This past year there was a change to the Instructional Rounds protocol. More teachers were included in the process, schools were paired up, and focuses and procedures were developed at each pairing to meet the needs of each school. The response to the changes in Instructional Rounds has been extremely positive. Teachers and administrators both had positive things to say about the visits and how beneficial it is to see other schools and practices. Next year we will follow the same protocol for Instructional Rounds. If this is something you are interested in learning more about or participating in, please let your building administrator know.

The end of a school year is always bittersweet. On one hand, it is so rewarding to look at all of the achievements and growth over the past year made by our students.

On the other hand, we are sad to say goodbye to the many teachers and administrators who are retiring or leaving South Windsor. It is the collective work of all staff that makes South Windsor such a unique and positive place to work. As we embrace the changes coming our way, I am confident that with our "We can do this together" attitude we will continue our journey along a path of providing a wonderful yet rigorous education for each and every child.

Thank you for all you do—and have a wonderful, restful summer.



Sheryl Mortensen
Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction

Changes to the Curriculum and Instruction Leadership Team :

Robyn Ongley, current Associate Principal at South Windsor High School, will be joining the Curriculum and Instruction team as the K-12 Math Curriculum Specialist.



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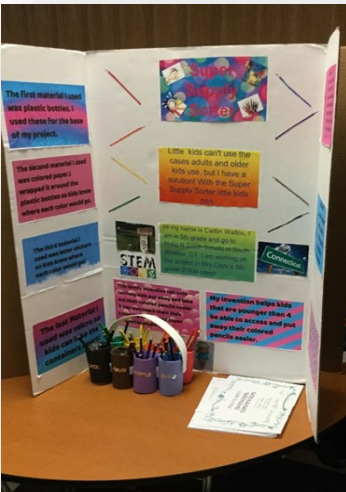
SCIENCE

Arnica Sullivan, Curriculum Specialist

During the first week of June, 6th grade students will be visiting Meigs Point Nature Center at Hammonasset State Park in Madison, CT. While visiting the park, students will engage in activities at 5 different stations that will focus the application of science curriculum topics. These topics include: students exploring a moraine trail which demonstrates glacial erosion and the impact glaciers played in the formation of Long Island Sound; comparing and contrasting rocky and sandy beach habitats; identifying animal adaptations which allow these organisms to survive in the different habitats; exploring how evasive species affect local ecosystems; and animal adaptations which allow birds to survive in an estuary.



On March 16, 5th graders participated in the Philip R. Smith Invention Convention. To prepare for the event, students worked during STEM to brainstorm problems and creative solutions. They made models of their inventions and posters to display their work. Students were judged by local scientists, engineers and science volunteers on their originality, practicality, effectiveness, inventing process, and consumer needs. Eight students were selected as honored inventors and presented their inventions at the Central Regional Invention Convention at Goodwin College on April 8. Congratulations to the three students who advanced to the Connecticut Invention Convention Finals at UCONN on Saturday April, 29th. We are proud of ALL of the 5th graders for their persistence and innovative thinking!



On April 24, Lisa DiCioccio's 1st grade class at Pleasant Valley dissected chicken eggs as their introduction activity for a unit on animals (aligned with the Next Generation Science Standards). Students made observations and asked questions about the phenomena they observed, then labeled a diagram of an egg to understand the function of each feature in the development of the chicken embryo. Students connected the functions of the classroom incubator and egg turner to the natural environment created by a hen. Fertilized eggs were placed in the unit where temperature and humidity levels were monitored. Students logged daily entries in chick journals that chronicle the embryo's development. After hatching students will examine how the chicks are very much, but not exactly like their parents.

Students taking Dana Powell's Advanced Placement Chemistry class will be visiting 5th grade classrooms at Eli Terry, Wapping, Orchard Hill and Pleasant Valley Elementary schools this spring to explore a few of the Next Generation Science Standards. The high school students will design their own lessons that focus on the structure and properties of matter. The fifth graders will be engaging in short experiments and watching exciting demonstrations led by these guest scientists.

Since early January of this year, Deb Field's Freshwater Environments students have been raising 600 Atlantic Salmon eggs in the classroom. Students recorded the tank temperatures multiple times a day to try to maintain stability at a balmy 40 degrees Celsius! The eggs hatched in mid-February and the fish were grown out to fry stage. On April 20, all surviving fish were caught and transported to the Granbrook Park in East Granby, where the students released them into Salmon Brook, a tributary of the Farmington River. While there, the students also performed a habitat assessment of the area and a Rapid Bio Assessment. The data collected will be used in class later in the quarter. Our project was a great success. The students released 519 salmon fry and with luck, a few will survive and come back to the Farmington River to spawn in three or four years.



LITERACY

Candice Irwin, Curriculum Specialist

It is a pleasure to share the celebrations from the South Windsor literacy department. Seven of our SWHS students received honorable mentions from Connecticut Student Writers Magazine. We are also excited to share that five students were invited to read their original poetry at South Windsor Poetry Day, an event organized by South Windsor Poet Laureate Charles Margolis. We would like to congratulate all of these students.

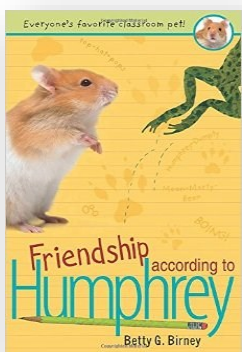
We are also looking forward to continuing the student-run writing center and are currently training a new group of tutors that will lead this work next year.

Once again, the *Out of the Blue* middle school literary magazine serves as a demonstration of the remarkable creative work of our staff and students. We set a goal for increased staff participation, which we reached, and we also had over 100 more student submissions than last year. The department is excited to begin an initiative to include

more choice reading and writing into our daily practice with students.

Our elementary schools have observed notable growth among students in grades K-5. Teachers at PV and PRS participated in ReadConn, a yearlong professional learning series. The goal of the program was to deepen understanding of foundational reading skills and to implement high quality lessons in the classroom.

Across the district teachers and students



have read and written across genres. The kindergarten classes at Philip R. Smith School had a Mother's Day Tea Writing Celebration where students presented their animal research reports.

Orchard Hill students are participating in One School,

One Book. The whole school community is reading Friendship According to Humphrey. First graders at Eli Terry participated in "Picturing Writing: Fostering Literacy Through Art and Image-Making Within The Writing Process" - a unit of study in that integrated visual arts, literature, and writing. It is clear that we have pride in our work evidenced by the beautiful displays of student work in our classrooms and hallways.

We will quickly move towards the summer season— embracing the longer days, enjoying time together, and reflecting on all the hard work that brought us to the close of another academic year. Fostering a love for reading is one of the greatest gifts we can give to our children. It is our goal that South Windsor students will read at least 20 minutes a day, or 17 hours or more this summer!

MATHEMATICS

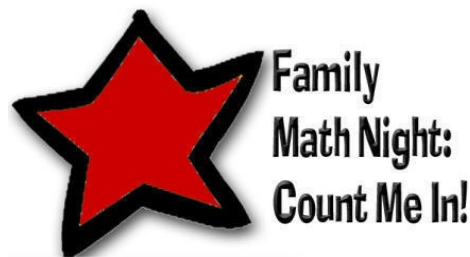
Sharon Keegan, Curriculum Specialist

The SBAC math test was successfully administered districtwide to grades 3-8 and the new SAT to all grade 11 students to fulfill our state testing requirements. A huge shout out to the math teachers for the daily warm-up practice and exposure to multiple performance tasks, technology for making it all work, and the administrators who worked magic with the scheduling and logistics.

Pam Roberts has been busy with the enrichment students in grades 3-5. Pam has also written enrichment activities that can be used by classroom teachers and writes a monthly newsletter which can be found on the district curriculum and instruction website. The elementary math coaches/interventionists have been providing PD and assistance to teachers that will be changing grade levels next year.

Joanna Pantages, JuliaBeth Leveille, and Stefan Klein hosted a fun family math night at TEMS for grade 6 students and their family members. Attendance was outstanding and the night was a huge success. Again, we wish to thank these dedicated teachers for going the extra

mile and providing this opportunity to our South Windsor Families. It was heartwarming to hear the joy and laughter as the participants completed the math activities.



CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION

Perseverance pays off for high school teachers Jim Abbott and Phil Rockey. As a result of their hard work, SWHS students in grades 10 – 12 will have new opportunities to earn college credits while completing business and technical education courses next year. Through much of the current school year, Mr. Abbott has been aligning our Personal Finance curriculum with that of Manchester Community College (MCC). Mr. Rockey also collaborated with MCC staff in order to offer our Web Design course for MCC credit. Both Mr. Abbott and Mr. Rockey attended a number of after-school meetings, prepared an application, and successfully completed a review process. Business teachers Naysha Cruz and Karen Penn have also been approved by MCC to teach Personal Finance.

South Windsor High School Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) members earned honors at the 2017 Spring Leadership Conference in Cromwell. Under the leadership of FBLA adviser and business teacher Lisa Barrett, SWHS

students placed in several categories: Journalism (1st), Business Communications (2nd), E-Business (2nd), Digital Video Production (3rd), Global Business (4th), and Entrepreneurship (5th).



Caitlin Cervantes and Parth Patel

Technical education teachers Norm Smith, Savva Savvides, and Ray McCarthy have also been busy making enhancements to our metals lab, which will strengthen our courses in engineering, manufacturing, and robotics. Most significant is the addition of a CNC lathe, which students will use to make such metal objects as robotics components, shafts, and chessmen. A 3D printer has also been added to the metals lab.

Steven Albrecht, Curriculum Specialist

Students will use it to create prototypes of their engineering designs. Additionally, our technical education teachers have been focused on curriculum revision, especially in the areas of graphic communications and manufacturing.

This spring, Mrs. Barrett also represented SWHS at the National Service Learning Conference, which was held in Anaheim, California. There, Mrs. Barrett presented the brochure her marketing students created to promote South Windsor's annual Christmas Walk Tour. To support the town's Historical Society, students designed brochures that featured historic homes along old Main Street and included a map and sponsors' page.



Mrs. Barrett

WORLD LANGUAGES AND ENGLISH LEARNERS

The results are in for this year's administration of our state mandated English Proficiency Assessment. The LAS Links Form D measures speaking, listening, reading, and writing, providing us with information regarding student's English proficiency. The data from this year's administration can be found in Performance Tracker. Students are eligible to exit our English Learner program if they receive an overall 4, with a 4 in the reading and writing categories as well. If you have any questions in regards to English proficiency, please do not hesitate to reach out to an EL teacher or tutor in your building. Students who have qualified to exit the program will receive a letter and move directly into a monitor status. Students remain on monitor status for 3 years and remain eligible for EL services during this time, as needed.

Nicole Papa, our English Learner District Teacher/Coordinator was awarded a

SWEPP grant this year to start the creation of a bilingual library of resources. It is Nicole's vision that teachers, students, and their families would be able to access these materials in their home languages as well as in English. The first step in this process was the purchase of the Mantra Lingua PenPal. The PenPal stores audio files and as the students read a book, touching the pen to the words, the recordings are played. The PenPal has a myriad of possibilities and Nicole is eager to implement this resource next school year.

This past spring, our 2 student teachers from the University of Connecticut completed their professional internships at Timothy Edwards Middle School and South Windsor High School. Adam Dion, French student and Megan Kebernick, Latin and Spanish student, each worked closely with both world language departments as they focused on cutting edge assessments and student engagement. Our French, Latin and Spanish

Karen Stoj, Curriculum Specialist

teachers all benefited from the rich discussions and reflection activities that both Adam and Megan facilitated throughout the spring. We wish them the best of luck in all of their future endeavors.

Jill Griswold and Keith Orsini, Spanish teachers at South Windsor High School, were each awarded a Professional Learning Scholarship from the Colegio Delibes in Salamanca Spain. Jill and Keith will be studying in Salamanca at the Colegio for two weeks along with other Spanish teachers from around the world. The course focuses on language pedagogy while participants get to be immersed in the language and rich academic history of Salamanca. We look forward to implementing what Jill and Keith learn into our Spanish curriculum. We also wish a Bon Voyage to Elizabeth Wolfson-Ruiz, Spanish teacher at South Windsor High School who is taking our Bobcats to tour Spain this summer as well!

ART

The Art Department has had a very productive year implementing both traditional as well as new programs throughout the curriculum. At the high school, art teacher Jessica Ziff has been busy with the new fashion design illustration course. This new course has gained student interest with the formation of a Fashion Club. We look for more interesting things to come.

The Excel in Art program which was always offered to grades 5 and 6, has now been expanded to include grades 3, 4, 7, and 8. Approximately 60 students enrolled in the program which exposes students to art skills and techniques not usually covered through the traditional curricular offerings. Projects ranged from silk painting and clay self-portraits to foil embossed architectural building fa-

ades and creative book art. Students, parents and teachers alike were all enthusiastic about the expansion and look forward to next year!

This year's Art at the Capitol program was a smashing success as 29 students representing grades K-12 had their artwork highlighted. Students and families met with State Senator Timothy Larson, and their artwork was on display at the State Capitol during the first 2 weeks of May. The framed artwork is now on display in the Ellsworth building's main floor gallery through September and is well worth a visit!

This year's K-12 Art Show was also an event not to be missed as it highlighted the outstanding work of our students and their teachers throughout the year.

Nicholas Canova, Curriculum Program Coordinator

The show was on display during the month of April at the South Windsor Public Library. The opening night saw an unbelievable attendance of over 1800 people.

The High School Senior Juried Art Show opening was also well received as 22 high school seniors showcased their best. Several seniors were awarded \$300 scholarships generously provided by the South Windsor Arts Education Committee.

The Art Department's final show of the year will be the South Windsor Alumni Art Show. This yearly art show provides South Windsor alumni the forum to show their artwork in a professional manner. This show will be in the South Windsor Public Library during the month of June.

HEALTH/PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Timothy Edwards Middle School students recently completed their unit on Mental and Emotional Health in grade 6. This unit focused on issues dealing with bullying and violence prevention. Students learned about passive, aggressive and assertive behaviors and how to respond appropriately in stressful situations. The dangers of cyberbullying was co-taught with the School Resource Officer. The goal upon completion of the unit is to empower students to be more vigilant of bullying and where they can get help.

Grade 7 students recently finished a unit of study about Substance Abuse. Students learned about the risks of using drugs like alcohol and marijuana, and

met with the School Resource Office who shared the message of making choices now that will affect their lives in the future. 7th graders also examined the dangers of stimulant drinks, and why too much caffeine, especially for teenagers, can be hazardous to one's health. In addition, students learned about marketing strategies that lure them into buying particular products that may be unhealthy for them. Students then created "Truth in Advertising" projects, to show what effects these "stimulant drinks" have on the body.

Physical Education students at Eli Terry recently experienced the district whittle equipment in class. This "indoor play-

Travis Edwards, Curriculum Program Coordinator

scope" allows students of all grades to learn spatial relationships, relationships to body parts and transfer of weight. Students are asked to explore and perform various ways of traveling and moving through the equipment. Instruction is differentiated for each student and from grade to grade based on ability level.



MUSIC

The High School and Timothy Edwards Middle School performing groups recently competed at Fantastic Festivals. This event is run by a company of professional musicians who create opportunities for school districts to compete. The adjudicators are usually college professors and highly regarded professionals in their field. The ensembles perform two pieces and are judged on their live performance. The high school groups received Superior ratings. The Timothy Edwards groups received the top rating of Platinum.

The High School Digital Audio classes are completing their original compositions and will post their final work on the class website. Next year at Timothy Edwards Middle School students taking Music Matrix will be receiving piano instruction in addition to guitar, drumming and technology.



Jo-Ann Thomas, Curriculum Program Coordinator

SOCIAL STUDIES

Gregory Frank, Curriculum Specialist

South Windsor Public Schools has received this year's "Outstanding Red, White and Blue Schools" award from the state of Connecticut for the K-12 division. The Red, White and Blue Schools designation program is available to all of Connecticut's K-12 schools. This year's theme was "Teaching the 2016 Election." Schools were encouraged to teach the theme through interdisciplinary activities, whole school events, extracurricular clubs/activities, student-centered learning and community outreach.

The Elementary Social Studies Committee has been working hard to write units that incorporate the Connecticut Social Studies Frameworks. Moving forward this group will expand to include Literacy Committee members so that integrated Humanities units will be created. This time consuming work is informed by the inquiry lens of the C3 Social Studies document.

At Timothy Edwards Middle School, students are investigating new units in Social Studies; namely "Flash Forward" units on the modern Middle East and Europe in Grade 6, on the impact of

global warming in Oceania and economic globalization in Asia and Africa in Grade 7, and a new unit on the U.S. western frontier in Grade 8. For each unit, students are using the inquiry arc to frame questions, examine sources to practice the skills of research and investigation, communicate conclusions and take informed action. All of the changes have led to exciting opportunities for South Windsor students.

At South Windsor High School, a team of 5 students won the 26th annual Connecticut High School Geography Challenge held on Tuesday, May 16th at UCONN in Storrs. The Connecticut High School Geography Challenge is an annual statewide interscholastic academic team competition hosted by the Connecticut Geographic Alliance. The theme of this year's highly competitive event was "Fresh Water". South Windsor won a tie breaker in the final elimination round against Fairfield Warde High School.



Pictured: Jacob Bogoslofski, Parth Patel, Noah Frank, Vishal Patel, Aaron Yao, and their coach, Erin Simcik

2017-2018 BACK TO SCHOOL AND OTHER DATES TO REMEMBER

<u>New Teacher Orientation:</u>	August 21 and 22
<u>Convocation:</u>	August 28
<u>First Day of School:</u>	August 30
<u>District PD Days:</u>	August 28-29 November 7 March 20
<u>Elementary PD (Wednesdays):</u>	September 13—November 15 April 18—June 6
<u>High School Late Arrival:</u>	Mondays, beginning Sept. 11

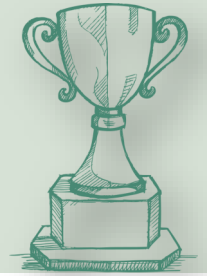


RECOGNITION OF PROFESSIONAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS

South Windsor Public Schools is pleased to recognize the accomplishments of its faculty and staff in the field of education, lifelong learning and the commitment to children. Twice each school year, we will highlight these professional accomplishments in the Office of Curriculum and Instruction's "Curriculum Update" newsletter. Categories include the following:

- National or State Recognition
- Professional Articles Selected for Publication
- Outstanding Community Involvement with Youth
- Presentation at a National Conference

All staff are invited to share information regarding professional accomplishments by emailing Jamie Langevin. The next publication is expected in December 2017.



National or State Recognition

Alaska Photography Award and Publication by Alaska Tour and Travel, Inc. For the publication of a photograph. (Jan 2017)

- Lynsey DesmondPRS

Professional Articles Selected for Publication

Professional review of the book Parents Matter: Supporting Your Child with Math in Grades K-8. Journal title: Teaching Children Mathematics. (April 2017)

- Dawn Campbell..... OH

Participation in a book revision panel for Rachael Gabriel and Sarah Woulfin's, Making Teacher Evaluation Work.

- Katy Parkin..... ET

Presentation at a National Conference

Dare to Dream, 28th Annual National Service-Learning Conference, March 22-24, 2017. Sponsored by the National Youth Leadership Council. Showcase proposal, "Christmas House Tour".

- Lisa Barrett SWHS

Technology Labs for the Future, sponsored by The International Technology and Engineering Educators Association (ITEEA). Roundtable discussion on the design process to brainstorm, share ideas, and develop options to suggest how Technology Engineering Labs could be designed to provide authentic, creative learning challenges for all students for many years to come.

- Dr. Ray McCarthy SWHS

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Frank Rizzuto, Associate Principal

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Jarrid Clifton, Associate Principal
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Vincent Federici, Principal

Orchard Hill Elementary School
Michael Tortora, Principal

Philip R. Smith Elementary School
Michelle Dixon, Principal

Pleasant Valley Elementary School
Tiffany Caouette, Principal

Wapping Elementary School
Laura Hickson, Principal

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Travis Edwards, K-8 Physical Education/Health
Gregory Frank, Social Studies
Candice Irwin, Literacy
Sharon Keegan, Mathematics
Karen Stoj, World Languages/EL
Arnica Sullivan, Science
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