

SCSD News



November 2017

News from the Superintendent...

The school district will begin the Comprehensive Planning process in January 2018. School districts in Pennsylvania are required to undertake comprehensive planning every three years for the purpose of continual improvement in all areas. The planning process will take approximately eight months and includes the following activities: forming a diverse committee of district stakeholders, evaluating current internal systems through data analysis, and crafting strategic goals and strategies.

The district's current strategic plan does not expire until June of 2019 and I'm happy to report that most of the plan's goals have been met. The current strategic plan established set forth the goal of providing professional development related to differentiated instruction and the goal of creating remediation-based courses in both schools of the school district. At this time, all educators have professional development in differentiated instruction and remedial courses in both reading and mathematics have been established in both schools.

Looking at the next strategic plan, the district will have to continue moving forward in ensuring best educational practices are consistently implemented in all district classrooms to ensure students are reaching proficiency with the rigorous Common Core Standards for reading and mathematics. Assessment results have dropped across the Commonwealth with the change to the Common Core Standards and every school district and educator needs a laser focus on using only the most effective instructional practices. The new comprehensive plan will not change assessment results overnight, but with a commitment by all stakeholders, there will be a slow but steady rise in assessment results over the three years encompassed by the plan.

News from the High School Principal...

STUDENTS MENTOR PROGRAM BEGINS A NEW YEAR

The Student Mentor Program Kick Off was held on October 10th during the newly developed iTime. Members engaged in student-developed activities (commercials) meant to build leadership skills and to build relationships among Mentors and Mentees. The next iTime will allow Mentors and Mentees to set goals, assess progress, and to share career interest/ shadowing opportunities. In the works so far is an incentive trip to Kopernick Observatory in Vestal, NY where students will be able to take part in Space Day and a robotics seminar pending the attainment of specified academic targets. Also on the docket is a shadow day to Janet Weis Children's Hospital in Danville, PA where students interested in the medical field can choose to shadow a Physician for a day in the areas of Pediatric Surgery, ENT, Ophthalmology, General Pediatrics, General Surgery, Vascular Medicine, Urology, and a Trauma Clinic. There are some very exciting opportunities planned for our students this year and we are open to suggestions for broadening the exposure to college and career readiness.

SUSKIE TEAMS WITH PENNSYLVANIA STATE POLICE

Sergeant Michael Joyce of the PSP presented to the student body on the dangers of drugs and alcohol. Students were presented with local cases involving impaired driving and the repercussions for individuals and families in regards to the law and to the loss of loved ones. There was a Q/A session offered at the end of each presentation where students were able to inquire about specific laws and also ask more personal experience questions of Sergeant Joyce. An informational session for staff was also presented on October 10th and a community session will be held on November 9th at 5 PM prior to Parent Teacher Conference in the High School Auditorium.

News from the Supervisor of Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment...

The most important update to the Keystone Exams is that there are no updates. This means that the two-year suspension of the Keystone exams as a graduation requirement is over. Students in class of 2019 and beyond will need to pass all three Keystone exams in order to graduate. The Keystone exams are given locally after completing the following courses: Algebra 1, English 10 and Biology. Students not scoring in the proficient range on any of the exams will be required to receive remediation in the coursework associated with the exam in order to retake the exam. Should a student still not reach proficiency after the second attempt, the student will then be placed in a Project-Based Assessment for each subject in which they have not reached proficiency. Currently, there is no indication that the state legislature will take action to change this, although PDE does admit to having hundreds of Project-Based Assessments waiting to be graded and a thousand more in the submission process.

This past June, Governor Tom Wolf signed House Bill 202, known as Act 6, into law. The main provision of the bill is to allow the NOCTI Exam, National Occupational Competency Testing Institute Exam, to replace the Biology Keystone Exam for Career and Technology Education students. This will have minimal impact for Susquehanna Community students since most of our students do not attend the Susquehanna County Career and Technical Center until after their junior year. Further details on Act 6 can be found by clicking on this [Act 6](#) link.

