

Santa Fe Trail Junior High School

February, 2022 Family Newsletter
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Better
Together!



SCHOOL HAPPENINGS

I'm sitting at home this morning on our second snow day in February next to the cozy fireplace listening to my Bee Gees' Stayin' Alive! While I'm certainly aging myself with that disclosure I am so incredibly inspired by the song title that I simply cannot keep it quiet. I certainly don't want to get all philosophical or political in this forum, or any other for that matter, the lyrics of the song bring happiness to my soul. As the Bee Gees tell it, everyone struggles and we all have things that can drag us down. Some days are absolute victories and others are maybe not all that victorious. Yet when we persevere and keep our chin up our victories can be bigger than ever before. As a SFTJH family we all have been through so very much together in the last several years yet we remain strong and focused on our young Chargers, knowing children truly are what matters most in life. We will surely have more struggles, as that is life. I have seen this year that we can always stay focused on the students, staff, and families while working together and Stayin' Alive!

With the mask mandate lifted by our Board of Education please do keep practicing COVID19 and health protocols so we can all stay healthy during this cold and flu season. Water bottles and coats should be a part of your child's morning routine before school. We will not plug in our water fountains for use until we are through the cold and flu season.

On our January 24 professional development day our SFTJH staff drafted our school-wide plan for consistently responding to student misbehaviors which will best support our students in creating the learning environment we want for all students. The SFTJH School-Wide Behavior Matrix will be taught to students and shared with families in the coming weeks. Please watch your email as this information will be shared with SFTJH families in the coming weeks.

Students are the driving force behind our 2/22/22 celebration. So far we are wearing tutu's, ties, and tennis shoes, eating two tacos for lunch, and searching for a fun school-wide celebration at 2:22 pm on 2/22/22. Ideas are being shared and we'll select the fun soon. We hope you'll remind your Charger to join the fun!

Jodi Testa

Positive Office Referrals

Staff members have been busy noticing and celebrating positive student choices by writing positive office referrals. We are celebrating whole-class and individual endeavors in the following areas:

- ♦ Cooperation
- ♦ Highly Active Learners
- ♦ Eagerness to Give Effort
- ♦ Academic Success
- ♦ Ready and Willing to Learn
- ♦ Respect
- ♦ Self-Motivation
- ♦ Goal Focused

Whole-class acknowledgements are celebrated with a special treat from Ms. Testa and a 'shout-out' during our morning assembly. Individual acknowledgements are mailed home to families for your personal celebrations.

To celebrate a staff member send an email to JTesta@usd434.us. Celebrations of staff will be shared at our all-school morning assembly!



ATHLETICS AND ACTIVITIES

January started fast out the gate. Our boy's basketball team is around 50 persons strong, and were ready to go with a season opening away game on the 3rd at Burlington. They have since played several games, home and away, and hold a strong winning record. The B-teams played an early tournament at Central Heights, receiving medals for winning all their games. The A-teams split their tournament: 7th grade traveled to Alma, and the 8th grade stayed home. They got to play tough competition against Washburn Rural and Seaman's B-teams. When asked if he liked playing versus a tougher match up, Kain Tantaros said, "It was fun to play with guys that you can match with."

Our Scholar's Bowl teams are just now starting, under the direction of Ashley Michaelis and Tiffany Burget. This is Ms. Burget's first year coaching Scholar's Bowl, and Ashley's first year as head coach. They are building a fun group of kids to take to meets and test their trivia skills. We have added five meets to the calendar for them, a combination of virtual and in-person meets. They kick off their season on February 3rd with a virtual meet hosted by Prairie View.

In club news, we have a Book Club that is sponsored by our own Keturah McKitterick. They meet from 3:20 to 4:00ish on the first Tuesday of each month. Students need to turn in a parent form to join, but it is open to all of SFTJH. They have had one official meeting this year, and look ahead to gathering together for the rest of the year.

KAY and FBLA are still working on their own things as the school year moves through the winter. KAY is handling our building recycling. Volunteers are gathering paper recycling from all rooms in the building on Fridays, to be taken to recycling centers on the weekend. Thank you Ms. Alicia Amborski for making this happen!

Ms. Amborski also led the charge in organizing our school spelling bee this past month. There were two rounds, the first by grade level, and the second to determine our building-wide winners. We are proud to announce that Kynlee Ard and Ethan Sigwing will be representing SFTJH at the Osage County spelling bee, Brenna Heder is the alternate if either one is unable to attend.

February will have Valentine's parties, a student-designed 2/22/22 Tuesday, and maybe some snow days. Please keep an eye out for information coming to you about our activities and events.

SOCIAL EMOTIONAL

LEARNING AT ITS FINEST

Focus Area: Personal Responsibility and Respect to Others

We met as a staff during the professional development day in November with a focus on continual growth and improvement. We drafted, revised, and adopted the following as our school rules. We hope you will join us in helping all students achieve these expectations.

Chargers will be ready, respectful, and responsible.

We then moved forward and described what it looks like and sounds like to be ready, respectful, and responsible in all locations within our school. We have taught the behavior expectations for classrooms, hallways, and the lunchroom. We will continue to teach the expectations for behaviors in the bathrooms, playground, and buses over the next three weeks of school.

On our next professional development day in January, 2022 we will design a list of staff options for responding to misbehaviors when they are shown by our students. When we have that drafted our Student Council and Site Council will be asked to review it and provide feedback to us before we implement it. We also plan to share that with all families via email for feedback, too. I envision that will be out to families in mid to late January. Please do watch for it as we do want your feedback.

Parents are invited to observe in classrooms to learn how to further support your child at home. To book time in your child's classroom email the classroom teacher or Jodi with 24-hr notice at JTesta@usd434.us. We look forward to partnering with you for our Chargers!

NEWS FROM SCHOOL NURSE

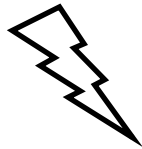
Please remember to enroll your child for our FREE school-based dental program, including Dental Exams, X-rays, Dental cleanings, Dental sealants, Fluoride and Fillings! This program is optional for anyone without a primary dentist or anyone who has not been seen by a dentist in the last six months for regular routine dental care. We accept enrollment forms all year, but to ensure they receive services at the upcoming clinic, please submit consents by **January 7, 2022**. Forms are available in the school office or through the online secure forms at the following link <https://heartlandhealth.org/services/>. You may also print the attached form and return to the school nurse or directly to the Healthy Futures Coordinator, Amanda, at the following email: healthyfutures@heartlandhealth.org.

Healthy Futures accepts Medicaid, Commercial Insurance, and the uninsured. There is **NO COST** to you even if your child is uninsured or not fully covered through commercial insurance. This program is open to all students, no restrictions.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Amanda at 785-841-7297, ext. 5601.

Nurse Sam Carothers
SCarothers@usd434.us

Our student section is always a fun place to be during home athletic events. Thank you to our families who provide spirit items for our students to use. Another thank you to our students who stay behind to clean up the student section!



NEWS FROM THE SCHOOL COUNSELOR

This month I have spent a lot of time with students both in and out of the classroom. Due to staff shortages from COVID/flu and cold season/routine surgeries, I have had to get very creative as both a counselor and a substitute teacher. I am always telling my students to look at the silver lining in difficult situations. My silver lining is that I have gotten to know some of the students that I haven't had a chance to visit with and develop those relationships. Besides that, I have had the chance to start some small groups, which has been very exciting.

I have also spent time talking to the students about career choices and what life looks like beyond the K-12 setting. It is important to know what your options are and that a traditional college setting isn't for everyone. For the younger students, we are placing a lot of emphasis on including others and forming healthy friendships.

Meghan Fuller

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