

A silhouette of a covered wagon pulled by two mules is positioned on top of a stone wall. The scene is set against a clear blue sky with some green foliage visible in the background. The overall image has a dark, semi-transparent overlay.

January Newsletter

Santa Fe Trail High School



by Kyle Ellis

SANTA FE TRAIL HIGH SCHOOL

A wooden sign with white text that reads "Santa Fe Trail High School" is positioned in the foreground. The background shows a blurred beach scene with waves and a bright sun in the sky.

Santa Fe Trail High School

Principal's Message

Dear Students, Staff, and Parents,

Happy New Year! As we welcome 2025, I want to take this opportunity to reflect on our achievements and share a glimpse of the exciting plans ahead. Your continued support and involvement have been instrumental in making Santa Fe Trail High School a thriving community of learning, growth, and innovation.

Reflecting on Success: This past semester was marked by numerous accomplishments. Our students excelled in academics, athletics, arts, and extracurricular activities, demonstrating dedication and passion. From winning tournaments to staging impressive performances and achieving academic milestones, they have made us proud. I extend my heartfelt thanks to our teachers, staff, and families who work tirelessly to support these achievements.

Looking Ahead: As we embark on the spring semester, we have many exciting initiatives planned to enhance the educational experience for our students:

- **Academic Excellence:** Our faculty will continue to focus on innovative teaching methods and providing personalized support to ensure every student reaches their full potential.
- **Community Engagement:** We're organizing events to bring together our school community, including parent-teacher conferences, student performances, and athletic competitions. Please join us for these events to show your support of our students and connect with community members.
- **Wellness and Mental Health:** As you may be aware, we expanded our resources to promote student well-being. Please do not hesitate to reach out to our Student and Family Support Coordinator, Counselor, or Nurse for support if you have needs that arise we may be able to help with.

Staying Connected: Communication is vital to our success. Please keep an eye on our monthly newsletters, school website, and social media channels for updates on events, important dates, and opportunities to get involved. If you ever have questions or suggestions, don't hesitate to reach out to me or our administrative team.

Thank you for being an integral part of the Santa Fe Trail High School family. Together, we will continue to inspire and empower every charger, every day. Let's make 2025 a year of growth, collaboration, and success!

Warm regards,

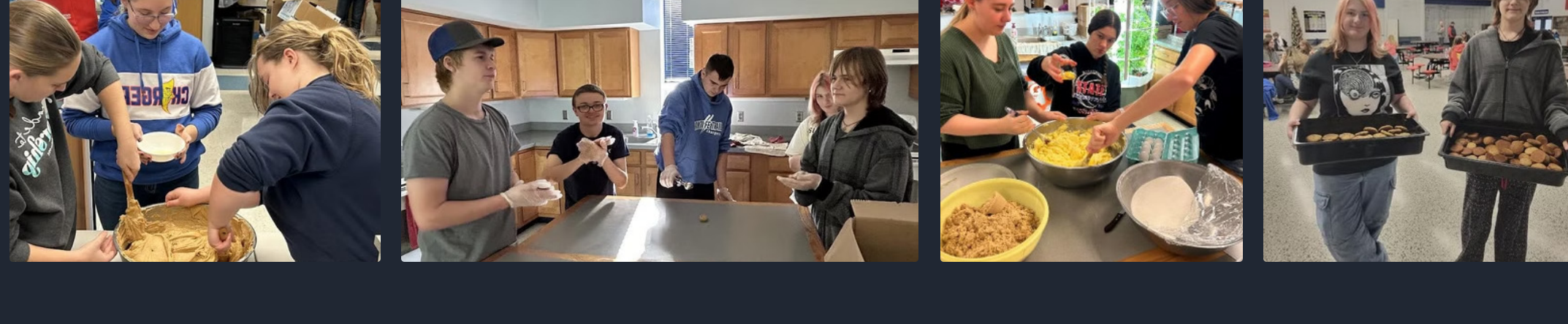
Kyle Ellis

Classroom Highlights

Culinary Arts

The SFT Food Service program asked the Culinary Arts students to make (2000) cookies to be given to all students and staff every day the last five days of the semester. This was quite an undertaking and experience for the students. First the students had to convert recipes to yield 400 servings. The SFT Culinary room is designed for home baking but the students transformed their basic equipment, borrowed a couple large bowls, and utilized other large general storage

containers for creative measuring and mixing of these industrial quantities. They also had to whip and mix with no mechanically powered equipment. This was a project by the Advanced Culinary classes, however as limited class time restricted completion, the Culinary I students also got in on the mixing action. The students shaped the cookies to a uniform size and were conscious of sanitation and quality control throughout the entire production process. They had the honor of passing out the cookies during lunch to everyone. They received many compliments on their work.



Art

Happy New Year, Chargers! We are gearing up for a BIG semester. Numerous activities and competitions are taking place. Seniors are preparing for graduation, scholarship applications, and what comes next. Want to support the SFTHS Art Department but don't know how? You can check us online on Facebook (which will have a Senior showcase posted), Artsonia and in-person exhibitions.

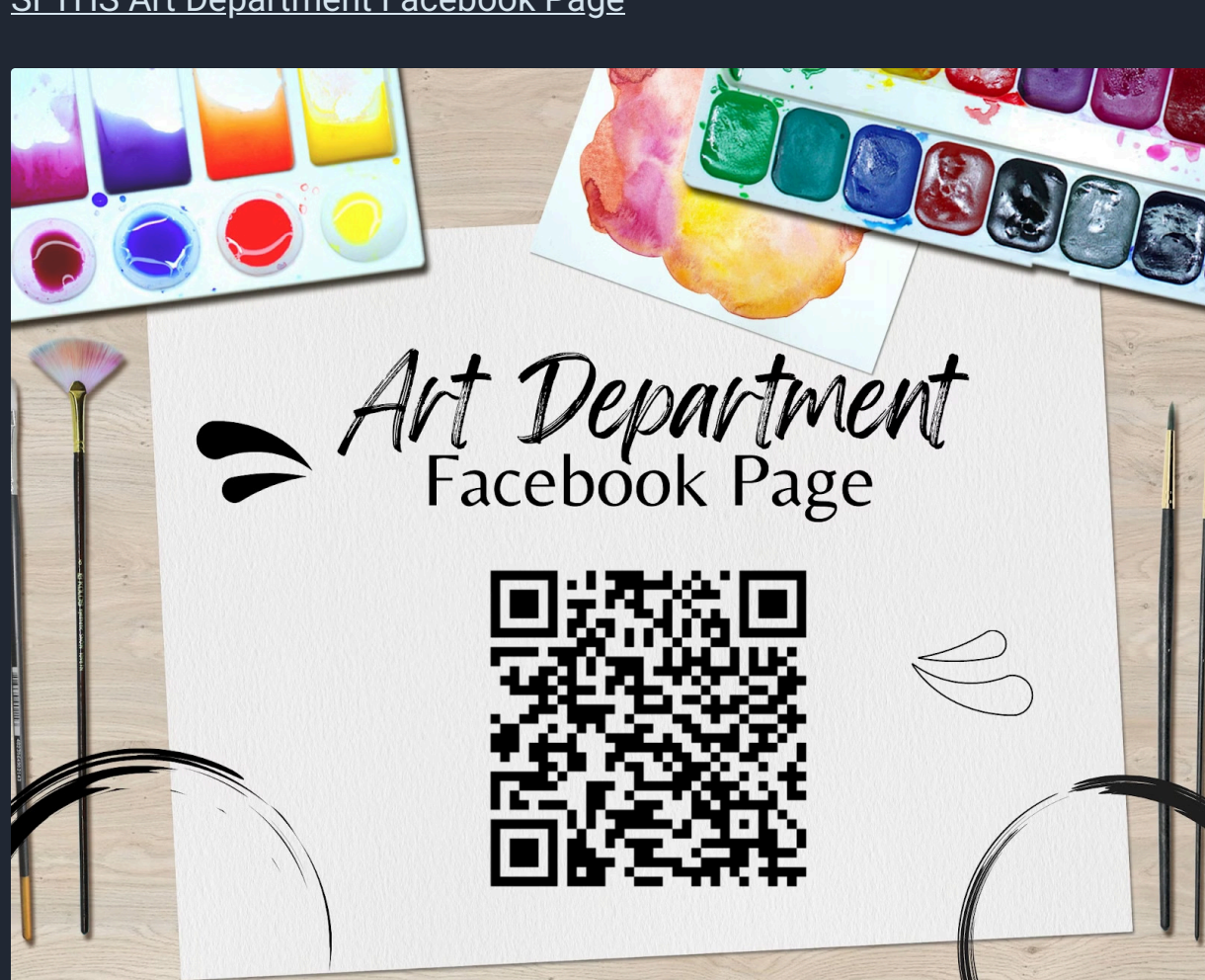
Senior Lauren Kraft's artwork



Art Calendar of Events for 2024-25

- April 30th, 9:00 AM: Pioneer League Art Show @ Prairie View
- May 7th 6:00-7:00 PM: end-of-semester Fine Arts & Practical Arts Show in the SFTHS Commons and Art Studio 120
- May 17th, 10:00 AM: Graduation @ SFTHS Gym

[SFTHS Art Department Facebook Page](#)



Artsonia

Check it out at <https://www.artsonia.com/> Support your student and the Art Dept. in one-stop shopping for over 30 unique gifts with student artwork. Everything from mugs, magnets, snap jewelry, T-shirts, quilting blocks, kitchen towels, garden flags, golf towels, and so on.) Artsonia donates 20% of purchases to our school arts program for new art supplies!

Let's go, Chargers! Have a fantastic semester. We got this!

Vietnam Era Class

SFT students enrolled in Vietnam Era Class visited Brookside today to meet with residents and have the opportunity to ask a variety of questions in small groups about the Vietnam Era of history as well as life lessons learned. Thank you so much to Bob Hug and Brookside retirement community helping to bring community generations together.



Yearbook

Yearbook staff members continue to improve their photo skills, making for a better yearbook. Here are a few samples from recent events.



3 Important Yearbook Things:

1. Books are still up for sale. Get a form from Mrs. Smith, or order online at jostens.com.
2. Senior tributes still available for purchase. Emails went out to all senior parents. If you need more information, or have questions, email jsmith@usd434.us.
3. Senior portraits are due January 31. Portraits need to be in portrait format.

Entrepreneurship

First Semester Entrepreneurship students finished the course by operating a Cocoa Cart the last seven days of the class. Only operating before school and during Trail Time except for the last day of school (2nd and 3rd hour pick up orders), after reimbursing Mrs. Michaelis for the initial inventory investment, the five students turned a profit of \$86. Not a bad way to test the consumer market and work on customer service skills.

Personal Finance

In Mr. Gonzales's Personal Finance class, for Allen County College credit, students were tasked with a trend called the "Paperclip Challenge." Students started with a paperclip and were challenged to trade up, using the bartering system with anyone to see how high and far their trades could take them.

Student Ashton Frye was able to make trades worth value, then cashed in on those trades to purchase a truck, a 1975 Dodge W200. His plan is to work on the truck to get it running and use it as a farm work truck.



Anatomy & Physiology

The A&P class finished the first semester studying the Muscular System.

During this unit, students studied the functions of the muscular system, the 3 types of muscle tissues, the structure of a muscle fiber, the steps of the Sliding Filament Theory, how muscles become fatigued, and identified the major muscles of the body.

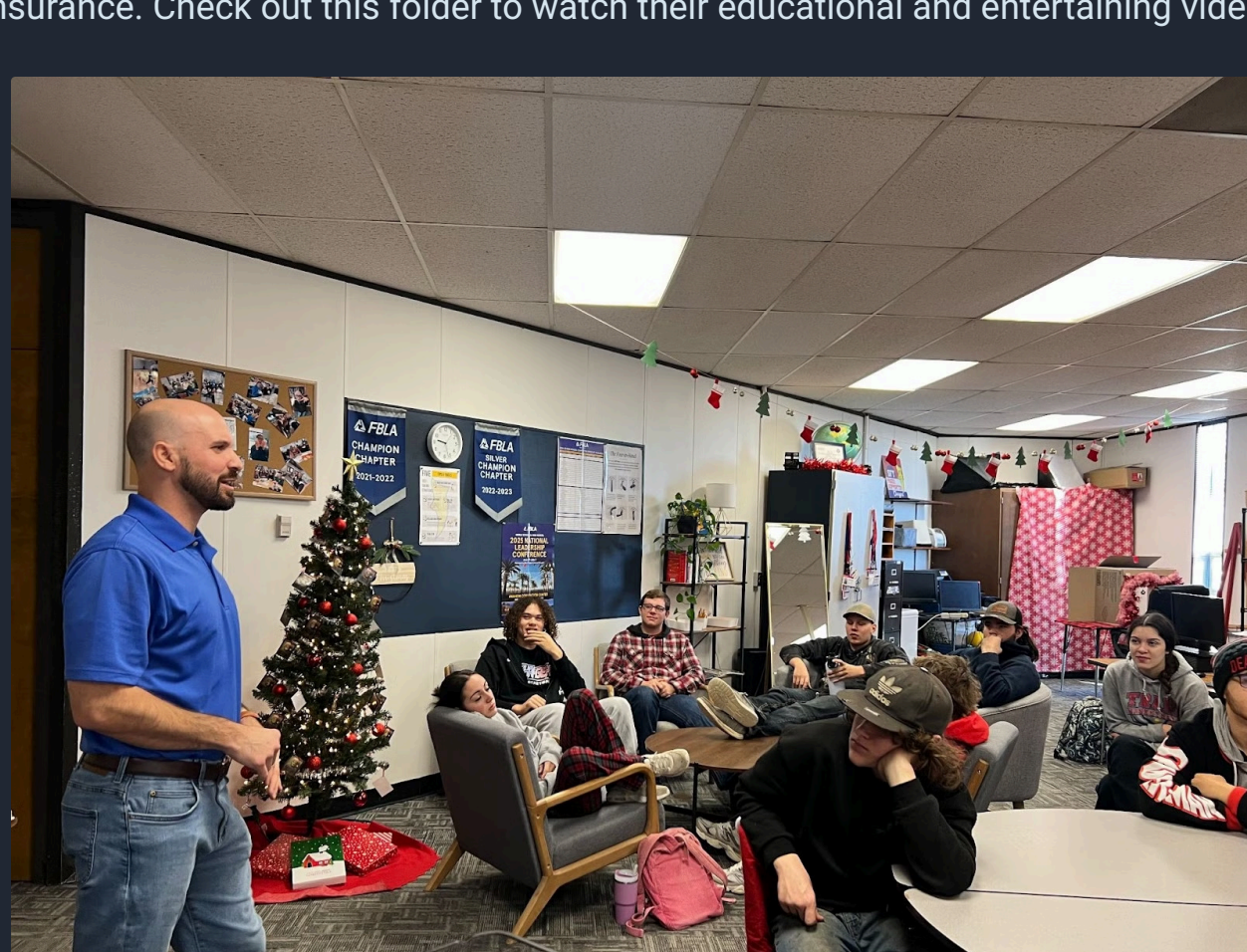


In these pictures, students are using skeletal models to build muscles on the models using clay.

They will start the second semester studying the Nervous System.

Personal Finance

Local insurance agent, Josh Cauthon, visited the classroom in December to talk about all things money with Personal Finance students. At the completion of our last unit students made informative reels on one or more of the following topics: savings, investment, retirement, or insurance. Check out this folder to watch their educational and entertaining videos: [Informative Reels](#).



Biology

The Biology students in Mrs. Herren's class just finished Unit 4 on Ecosystems Stability and Change. They studied biodiversity and factors that affect biodiversity and populations in ecosystems. Students evaluated the complex interactions of ecosystems and changing conditions that may result in a new ecosystem. Students played a game to evaluate the effects of factors such as shelter, food availability, diseases, and weather on the population of frogs. In addition, students evaluated the stomach contents and tissues of alligators to see whether they are at the top of the food chain. They discovered that alligators weren't the king of the everglades after all.

Biology students will start the second semester studying Human Impacts on the Environment.

Photo Imaging

Students in the CTE course Photo Imaging finished the semester on a fun project...light painting. In this project students must have an understanding of the exposure triangle and a term known as long exposure. They open their shutters for 10-20 seconds and then record light creating a beautiful work of art. Once they returned to the lab they edited their photos in Photoshop, adding contrast, hue/saturation, and levels adjustments.

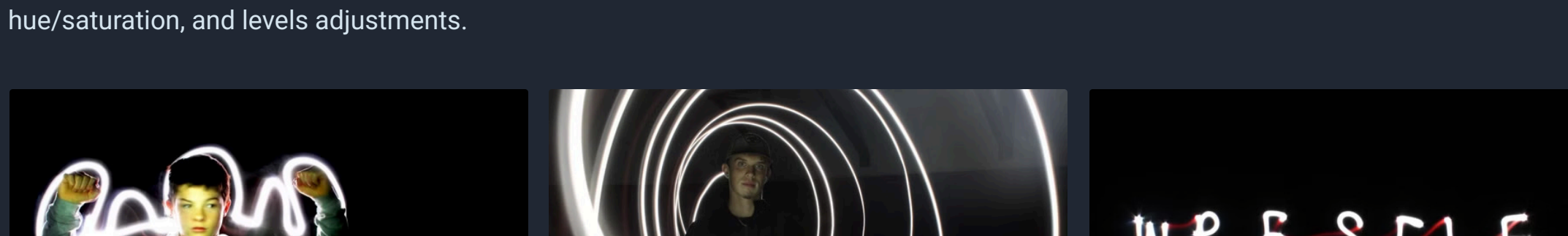


Photo by Joshua Wessel.

Photo by Tanner Bolt.

Photo by Sky Kelly.



Athletics/Activities Director Message

As we wrap up 2024, we want to take a moment to express our gratitude to everyone who helps make our home events successful. From custodial staff and gate workers to scoreboard operators and scorebook keepers, and many others, your willingness to contribute is invaluable. Our coaches and student-athletes truly appreciate the opportunity to compete at home, and none of it would be possible without you. Thank you for your support!

Winter Sports Update

- **Basketball:** The boys and girls basketball teams are off to an impressive start. The girls finished 3rd in the Central Heights Ike Cearfoss Memorial Tournament, while the boys were crowned tournament champions. Great work, Chargers!
 - Upcoming Home Basketball
 - Friday, January 17th vs. Anderson County
 - Tuesday, January 28th vs. Council Grove
 - Tuesday, February 4th vs. Iola
 - Friday, February 7th vs. Prairie View (Winter Royalty & Little Charger Night)
 - Tuesday, February 18th vs. Burlington
 - Friday, February 21st vs. Wellsville (Senior Night)
- **Wrestling:** Both the boys and girls wrestling teams are showing strength and determination early in the season. Mark your calendars for the home dual vs. Holton on Friday, December 20, starting at 5 PM. On Saturday, December 21, the girls will compete in the Bobcat Classic at Basehor-Linwood, and the boys will participate in the Abilene Cowboy Invitational. These events will close out the competitions for 2024 before resuming in the second semester.
 - Upcoming Home Wrestling
 - Thursday January 30th vs. Eudora (Senior Night)
 - Thursday, February 6th (Girls League)

Fine Arts Highlights

- **Band:** The Band Christmas Program on Wednesday, December 18, was a fantastic performance. Additionally, band members participated in the Tuba Christmas event at the Kauffman Performing Arts Center on Monday, December 16. Both experiences were thoroughly enjoyed by participants and attendees alike.
- **Choir:** The Choir delivered an incredible Christmas Concert on Thursday, December 19. Their talent and dedication truly shone through.

Academic Achievements

1. **Debate and Scholars' Bowl:** The Debate team continues to excel, showcasing their skills throughout the season. Similarly, the Scholars' Bowl team is improving steadily and competing well at their events.
 - Scholars Bowl League
 - The final meet of the year is the Varsity League Tournament at Anderson County on Wednesday, January 15th starting at 4:00 PM.
2. **College Commitments:** Congratulations to two of our senior student-athletes on signing their letters of intent:
 - **Bailey Anshutz** will play golf at Baker University.
 - **Jalen Smith** will play basketball at Friends University.
Best of luck to both as they take their talents to the next level!
3. **Scholarship Recognition:** Senior Samantha Spoonmore has been awarded the prestigious Jones Premier Scholarship to Emporia State University, which provides a fully paid, debt-free education. Congratulations, Samantha!

Looking Ahead

Santa Fe Trail High School has had an outstanding first semester, with successes across athletics, academics, and the arts. We look forward to continuing this momentum into the second semester.

Thank you to our students, staff, and community for making this semester so memorable. Let's keep Charging On!

Let's Go Chargers!

Kris Henry

Santa Fe Trail High School

Activities Highlights

Scholars Bowl

SFTHS regular season Scholars Bowl ended on December 19th. Our varsity squad will compete in the League Tournament at Anderson County on January 15th.

Our team had over 37 students in grades 9-12 attending practices, with a final number of 24 "official" squad members competing. One thing our Charger community really prides itself in is encouraging our students to participate in a variety of extracurricular activities, so sponsor Mrs. Michaelis tries to schedule the participant rosters around sports competitions, clubs and fine arts events. That may mean some students are only able to attend our team practices, or only compete in one or two meets, but we welcome all students to participate at their ability and availability.

Scholars Bowl truly is a great unifier for students from all walks of life and interests. It's not just for students that get straight As, or college bound kids; but has questions over Career and Technical Education; movies and music; current events and pop culture, in addition to core school subjects.

Scholars Bowl competition at the high school level was sanctioned by KSHSAA in 1986, and now has approximately 333 member schools participating. This activity features head to head academic team competition with quick response answers and a time limit on questions. It's not enough to simply KNOW the answer, you have to beat the other team and be the first to buzz in with the correct answer.

Some major accomplishments of our team this year include:

Varsity Season Point Leaderboard:

- 130 points - Addalyn Michaelis, 11th grade
- 140 points - Vanessa Roberts, 11th grade
- 180 points - Brian Llamas, 12th grade
- 340 points - Ethan Sigwing, 11th grade (Team Highest Earner)

JV Season Point Leaderboard:

- 140 points - Alexa Heder, 9th grade
- 150 points - Skylar Boggs, 9th grade
- 210 points - Raleigh Brady, 11th grade
- 230 points - Jackson McFarland, 9th grade
- 230 points - Daniel McKee, 9th grade

Participants who scored 100 points or more in a single meet:

- Varsity - Ethan Sigwing, 11th grade
- JV - Raleigh Brady, 11th grade
- JV - Jackson McFarland, 9th grade
- JV - Alexa Heder, 9th grade
- JV - Daniel McKee, 9th grade
- JV - Skylar Boggs, 9th grade

Our varsity and upper class team ran our home JV tournament, operating buzzer systems, score keeping and greeting visitors. THANK YOU to the following team members:

Vanessa Roberts, Addy Michaelis, Ethan Sigwing, Owen Lattimer, Raleigh Brady, Bailey Anderson, Trevor Moreno, Daniel McKee

AND HUGE SHOUT OUT TO SOME FORMER SFT SCHOLARS BOWL ALUMNI that came back to help with our home meet:

- Owen Michaelis, 2024 SFT Graduate
- Rickey Adams, 2021 SFT Graduate
- Sarah (Zachary) Robertson, 2013 SFT Graduate

Band

The high school band ended their semester with a wonderful winter performance! The jazz band had the opportunity to have Dr. Craig Treinen from Washburn University work and perform at the concert with them. We are very proud of all of their accomplishments, and are looking forward to diving into the pep band music for the basketball games and our concert music for spring competitions!

Choir

Congratulations to Cassandra Goodrich, Lillian Barnes, Annabella Torneden, and Katrina Drury for participating in the ECKMEA District Honor Choirs. We are so proud of your hard work and dedication. Way to represent SFT with honor!



Spring Play

It's time to get the Spring Play started! This year, the SFTHS Theatre Department presents "Late Bus" for its Spring Play! Auditions will be held on Thursday, January 16th at 6pm in the SFTHS Auditorium.

Shows dates:

- Friday, March 7th @ 7pm
- Saturday, March 8th @ 7pm
- Sunday, March 9th @ 2pm

A short introduction: At Saw Mill Public High School, the late bus picks students up at 6:30PM It just never comes on time. Over the course of a school week, we meet Saw Mill High's collection of mavericks and misfits with no other way to get home: the chaotic valedictorian, the big-brained transfer, the detention heads, the band geeks, the athlete, the anxious ones, and the one quietly observing it all. With some magical music, vicious rumors, breakups, and more than one breakdown, Late Bus is a close look at what it means to be in high school in our messy world. Together, this group of teens in a hurry to grow up might just learn a little bit more about what it means to be here, now.

NHS

The Charger Chapter of the National Honor Society had a busy month of December! The group sponsored Winter Formal on December 7th and helped with "Rock Your School" day at OAC!



KAY Club

The SFT HS KAY (Kansas Association for Youth) Club sponsored by the KSHSAA has been busy with service projects and bringing awareness to the importance of being involved and personal well-being.

KAY kicked off November by hosting a Blood Drive in the Gym during buffer week. There were many first-time and repeat donors willing to give the gift of life by their blood donation.



KAY promoted the importance of good citizenship at home and in the world by encouraging all students and staff to dress in themed days recognizing different aspects of citizenship. SFT High School KAY club worked on developing the Citizenship Week awareness themes with the SFT Jr High KAY club. This proved to be an enjoyable interaction between the two clubs. All building levels in USD 434 participated.



In December, SFT HS KAY club put up a Christmas tree for anyone to decorate with mittens, hats, or other warm clothing to be given to USD 434 school closets that a child is in need and to the local clothing banks for anyone with a need for personal protection from the cold weather. Thanks to several donors and one local woman who loves to help, the tree was overflowing with new hats and mittens! A comment overheard from an appreciative student alluded to the fact that they do not like to wear winter coats, but having one of these hats will keep kids warm.



SFT ATHLETICS

Athletics Highlights

Wrestling

The wrestling team is getting ready to enter their 3rd week of competition before heading into Winter Break.

The boys varsity took 8th at the Spring Hill Duals out of 12 teams; and then went on a road trip west. They dualed Holcomb and Oakley High School - beating both schools; and then competed in the Colby Eagle Dual Invitational taking 5th place out of 18 teams, going 7-2 on the weekend in total. The boys have a home dual vs. Holton on Friday, December 20th and will then compete at Abilene to finish out the 2024 year.

The Girls Varsity won the Highland Park tournament in the first weekend of competition and then hosted a six team dual tournament. The girls finished in 4th place at the dual tournament. The girls have a home dual vs Holton on Friday, December 20th and will then compete at Basehor Linwood to finish out the 2024 year.

Over the weekend Coach Gonzales hit his 100th dual win as a head coach, over the last six years. Between the boys and girls varsity duals with both Junction City High School and Santa Fe Trail High School, he now sits at 103 dual wins over the last six seasons.



Football

Please note that the Football Awards Ceremony scheduled for December has been rescheduled as follows:


SFT FOOTBALL

MONDAY, JANUARY 13TH
6:30 PM HS AUDITORIUM

RESCHEDULED

MEET IN THE AUDITORIUM
AT 6:30 PM
FOR RECOGNITION AND AWARDS.

WE WILL HAVE SOCIAL TIME AFTER
THE CEREMONY IN THE COMMONS.
PLEASE BRING AN APPETIZER OR
DESSERT TO SHARE.
(THIS IS NOT A DINNER.)



FOOTBALL BANQUET



Student Services

Testing Opportunities for Students

ASVAB Test

Students will have the opportunity to take the ASVAB test on Thursday, January 23rd at 10 AM. This test is open to all students grades 9-12 who are interested in learning more about their skills and strengths in future occupations.

The Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) is a multiple-aptitude battery that measures developed abilities and helps predict future academic and occupational success in the military. Students can sign up for this free test by emailing Mrs. Chiddix no later than January 14th. For students considering a career in the military, their scores are good for 2 years prior to enlistment.

Kansas ACT

The Kansas ACT assessment for juniors will be administered on Tuesday, February 25th. This is the free test available to juniors who are planning to attend a post-secondary institution upon graduation.

To assist students in preparing for the ACT test, we have arranged for Carolyn DeVane from PowerPrep Inc. to come and work with all Juniors planning to take the ACT on February 6th. The prep includes not only strategies, but also practice testing. The cost of this course is being covered by our district. Juniors can register by following this link: <https://powerprepinc.com/act-test-prep/p/santa-fe-trail-high-school-act-prep-class>

If you have questions, please feel free to reach out to Kayla Chiddix at, kchiddix@usd434.us

Things To Do

SENIOR CLASS OF 2025

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

- College Visits
- Senior Photo Sessions
- Letters of recommendation - for college apps and scholarships
- Grad Party Plans

Mrs. Julie Smith is accepting senior pictures for the yearbook and senior tribute ads (more info to come) jsmith@usd434.us

DO IT SOON

- ~Order Cap & Gown package- shipping gets more expensive the longer you wait.
- ~Send Tosha Smith 3-4 childhood/baby pictures and one senior picture for the slideshow email - tsmith@usd434.us

NOTES

- Copy and paste the link below to find the required graduation items.
- https://www.jostens.com/apps/store/productDetail/1071076/SANTA-FE-TRAIL-HIGH-SCHOOL/Cap-and-Gown/2415312637/CATALOG_REPOSITORY/Cap-Gown-Tassel-and-Custom-Stole/2415312643ink

A Special Thank You!

SFTHS Maintenance Department

The maintenance team at Santa Fe Trail is extremely thankful for the clean up help we receive at home events. Various clubs and teams have been staying after to pick up trash that is left behind. This has saved the custodial crew countless hours of time that allows us to focus on other important building needs. Thank you to our amazing SFTHS teams and clubs!

January

Upcoming Events

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>6</p> <p>SFT Teacher Prep - No School</p>	<p>7</p> <p>NO SCHOOL. Professional Development Day</p>	<p>8</p> <p>SFT Students Return To School</p>	<p>9</p>	<p>10</p> <p>4:30pm:HS BB at Burlington</p>	<p>11</p> <p>9:00am:JH Boys Basketball B Team Tournament @ Central Heights</p> <p>9:00am:V B and G Wr at Rossville Tournament</p>
<p>13</p> <p>4:30pm:JH Boys Basketball @ Abilene</p>	<p>14</p> <p>4:00pm:JH Boys Basketball - 7th vs Baldwin, 8th @ Baldwin</p> <p>4:30pm:HS BB at Wellsville</p>	<p>15</p> <p>4:00pm:HS League Scholars Bowl at AC</p> <p>5:00pm:JV B and G Wr at Shawnee Heights Mixer</p> <p>6:00pm:Board of Education Meeting</p>	<p>16</p> <p>4:00pm:JH Boys Basketball @ Osawatomie</p>	<p>17</p> <p>SAC PK Prof Dev Day - No School</p> <p>11:30am:V B Wr at Basehor-Linwood Tournament</p> <p>1:00pm:JV B and G Wr at Wellsville Tournament</p> <p>4:30pm:HS BB vs Anderson Co</p>	<p>18</p> <p>9:00am:V B Wr at Basehor-Linwood Tournament</p>
<p>20</p> <p>SFT No School</p>	<p>21</p> <p>4:00pm:JH Boys Basketball @ Wellsville</p>	<p>22</p>	<p>23</p> <p>4:00pm:JH Boys Basketball vs Prairie View</p> <p>5:00pm:Wr at Labette Co Duals</p> <p>6:30pm:V GBB and BBB at Royal Valley Tournament</p>	<p>24</p> <p>K-State Honor Band TBD</p> <p>2:30pm:V B Wr at Hays 2 Day Tournament</p> <p>6:30pm:V GBB and BBB at Royal Valley Tournament</p>	<p>25</p> <p>K-State Honor Band TBD</p> <p>8:00am:V B Wr at Hays 2 Day Tournament</p> <p>9:00am:V G Wr at Council Grove Tournament</p> <p>12:00pm:V GBB and BBB at Royal Valley Tournament</p>
<p>27</p> <p>4:00pm:JH Boys Basketball vs Anderson County</p>	<p>28</p> <p>4:00pm:JH Boys Basketball @ Prairie View</p> <p>4:30pm:HS BB vs Council Grove</p> <p>4:30pm:JV B and G at Louisburg Mixer</p>	<p>29</p> <p>FBLA District VII Conference at Washburn University</p>	<p>30</p> <p>4:00pm:JH Boys Basketball vs Wellsville</p> <p>4:30pm:HS BB at Iola</p> <p>5:00pm:Wr at SFT vs Eudora Sr Night and Hall of Fame Induction</p>	<p>31</p> <p>4:00pm:V G Wr at Baldwin Tournament</p> <p>4:30pm:HS BB at Mission Valley HS</p> <p>6:00pm:B WR at Holton</p>	