

Principal's Corner –March 2020

Dear Parents and Friends of SHHS:

We are at the midway point in the third marking period, and SHHS is hopping with activity! Western Massachusetts tournaments, field trips, AP mock exams, Special Olympics, MCAS retests and numerous community service projects have kept our students busy. Midterm progress reports will be distributed March 10. Parents are encouraged to monitor their students' progress on PowerSchool, which can be accessed through the high school's website.

MCAS is right around the corner! Language Arts testing will occur March 24-27 with half the 10th graders testing the first two days, and the other half the last two days. Please ensure that your student gets plenty of sleep the night before testing and is on time to school. Although high school students aren't the best breakfast eaters, it is a vital meal of the day and a great way to get the day in motion! We encourage students to be thoughtful and take as much time as they need because this is an untimed test. The state allows students to test until the end of the school day (2pm), therefore it is critical for students to be on time to school. MCAS is a graduation requirement and we'd love for every student to pass on the first try!

Safety at SHHS: The faculty and staff of SHHS values the safety of each student every day. To aid in student safety, we have placed hall monitors at the general restrooms, and have begun a sign in/sign out policy. Gender inclusive bathrooms are also available throughout the school for student use.

As you know, we have a double locked entryway into the building. Visitors must be buzzed into the building once identified by office staff. Once through the first set of doors, visitors must state their business to the administrative assistants. Parents who wish to drop off items for their students must do so through the glass window, which is very similar to a bank drive up window. Those that have scheduled appointments must remain in the foyer until a staff member comes and escorts them to their destination. If there is ever any doubt or someone looks suspicious, Officer Fleming or administration, determine entry. All classroom doors are always in locked position. We routinely practice lockdown drills with the assistance of local and state police. A blue light has been installed near the peak of the main office entryway to notify outsiders that we are in a lockdown. Students know to drive away immediately. Room numbers are identified in classroom windows in case police need to know which classroom is where. We have a school and district care team that meet regularly to practice scenarios, discuss issues and brainstorm strategies for improvement.

Over February break, our IT Department worked hard to install new cameras in the 100 hallways as well as the gymnasium and cafeterias.

The South Hadley Police Department along with Mt Holyoke Campus Police, will be offering a R.A.D class at SHHS on March 10 and 12 from 3:00-5:00. Learn self-defense in a short amount of time. This class is open to all upper-class female students. Please contact Officer Davey at 538-5409 ext. 402 to secure your spot!

A recent challenge has gone viral on Tik Tok. The "outlet challenge" involves partially plugging a phone charger into an outlet and dropping a penny between the prongs. This practice has been reported at several schools, causing a short/spark along with electrical and fire damage. This is extremely dangerous, and can cause harm to our students and facility. Please make sure to talk with your students about the dangers of such behavior.

Exciting Happenings: SHHS has a new meditation room for any student that requires time to observe personal beliefs, or quiet space to calm their bodies.

Members of our Student Council and Positivity Committee will be trained in Diversity and Ableism. This two-day training will begin our student ambassador program, where SHHS students will serve as facilitators of lessons at the other schools. Some of our educator ambassadors have already been present at PBIS assemblies, and are participating in upcoming reading days at Mosier and Plains. It is our goal to strengthen the bond between schools. SHPS Strong!

The students of SHHS have requested help in organizing a formal Students of Color Organization. A community member from Hampshire College has offered to help get this started. However, if you are interested in helping, please reach out to me at ewood@shschools.com

WIFI at South Hadley: We have streamlined our WIFI access here at SHHS. Students have access to open Guest WIFI. This system has been reconfigured so if your child is having difficulty signing on, they should "forget" the network, and re log in. As a reminder SHHS does have a cell phone use policy. Students are allowed to use phones at passing time, breaks, or at lunch. They are not allowed to use them during class time, including passing in the hall during class time. Electronic devices are allowed in the classroom at the discretion of the teacher

Environmental Updates: SHHS Environmental Club has been leading the charge in helping SHHS become “*more green*”! We will be experimenting with using silver wear during March, and discontinuing single use plastic during this time. We are also looking at composting for next school year!

Everyone is welcome at South Hadley High School. Together, we can build an inclusive school that encourages, supports, and celebrates the diverse voices of all.

Students of the Month are:

Grade 9: Matthew Sexton-Acosta

Grade 10: Aiden Chartier

Grade 11: JR Mitchell

Grade 12: Julia Pratt

Congratulations to Tania Chrzanowski, Faculty of the Month winner!

Respectfully,
Liz Wood
Principal