



Some Mid-Year News from the Superintendent

- We've completed January exams; ELA testing for grades 3-5 and 6-8 and Regents exams for our High School Students.
- We are awaiting approval from the State Education Department regarding Phase I of our building project and are completing the plans for Phase II, which will then also be sent to the State Education Department.
- We are developing a budget for the coming school year that will be fiscally sound, but still address the needs of our students. As staff retires or leaves us, we are looking closely at each position to determine the need to replace these staff members.
- The Alert Now telephone system seems to be working well. If you have not received calls from the school, please contact me. If you do receive calls and do not want them, please let us know.
- We have used five snow days. We have one left. If more are needed, we will extend the school year by one day — June 26; come to school the morning of April 10; and if we still need more, we will come to school during Spring recess to make up for the days utilized.
- The second half of the year brings us the musical, *Cinderella*; the completion of Winter Sports; and the beginning of Spring Sports, proms, programs and the Sixtieth Annual Pageant of Bands!

—Gayle H. Hellert, Superintendent

From the School Board

In Search of Our Hedgehog . . .

Since this past summer, the School Board, administrators and others have been dabbling with the thoughts presented in a book titled *Good to Great*, by Jim Collins. One of the primary concepts, among many, has to do with how *great* organizations create disciplined focus on their core purpose, without becoming distracted by less essential activities. In Chapter 5 of his book, Collins quotes an essay by Isaiah Berlin, *The Hedgehog and the Fox*, to illustrate his point.

The fox is a cunning creature, able to devise a myriad of complex strategies for sneak attacks upon the hedgehog. Day in and day out, the fox circles around the hedgehog's den, waiting for the perfect moment to pounce. Fast, sleek, beautiful, fleet of foot, and crafty — the fox looks like the sure winner. The hedgehog, on the other hand, is a dowdier creature, looking like a genetic mix-up between a porcupine and a small armadillo. He waddles along, going about his simple day, searching for lunch and taking care of his home.

The fox waits in cunning silence at the juncture in the trail. The hedgehog, minding his own business, wanders right into the path of the fox. "Aha, I've got you now!" thinks the fox. He leaps out, bounding across the ground, lightning fast. The little hedgehog, sensing danger, looks up and thinks, "Here we go again. Will he ever learn?" Rolling up into a perfect little ball, the hedgehog becomes a sphere of sharp spikes, pointing outward in all directions. The fox, bounding toward his prey, sees the hedgehog defense and calls off the attack. Retreating back to the forest, the fox begins to calculate a new line of attack. Each day, some version of this battle between the hedgehog and the fox takes place, and despite the greater cunning of the fox, the hedgehog always wins.

Berlin extrapolated from this little parable to divide people into two basic groups: foxes and hedgehogs. Foxes pursue many ends at the same time and see the world in all its complexity.

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They are “scattered or diffused, moving on many levels,” says Berlin, never integrating their thinking into one overall concept or unifying vision. Hedgehogs, on the other hand, simplify a complex world into a single organizing idea, a basic principle or concept that unifies and guides everything. It doesn’t matter how complex the world, a hedgehog reduces all challenges and dilemmas to simple — indeed almost simplistic — hedgehog ideas. For a hedgehog, anything that does not somehow relate to the hedgehog idea holds no relevance.

Sherburne-Earlville Central School

The Maroon and White is published by the Sherburne-Earlville Central School Board and Administration, 15 School Street, Sherburne, New York 13460.

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Please take notice that the viewpoint of articles that appear in this newsletter are the personal expressions of individual authors and do not necessarily represent the official policies or positions of the Sherburne-Earlville Central School District or the Board of Education.

In July and August, we began our discussions around an essential dissatisfaction. Too many of our kids are less than proficient in reading, writing and math.

... we made a commitment to focus our resources on becoming great at academic achievement ...

Proficient means a level of competency expected at their particular grade level based on some form of common assessment. At the time, we made a commitment to focus our resources on becoming *great* at academic achievement in reading, writing and math—all students at the expected proficiency level within three years. This is a challenging goal, requiring collaborative and innovative approaches. We’re shooting for the stars because we think we have what it takes to get there and we think it essential that we do. It is part of our core purpose. In the December newsletter, you saw some of the good work being done through our on-going LINKS teams in each building toward that goal. You’ll see much work being done toward accountability, common assessments, innovative teaching, early intervention and A.I.S.

This brings us back to the subject of the Hedgehog. Given our reality, what do we truly want to be *great* at as a school district? What are those critical few outcomes that get our primary focus and our limited resources? What is at the core of what we’re trying to achieve? We have a start with our LINKS efforts on these fundamental academic goals. What else defines our Hedgehog, our vision? How do we complete the picture? We’d like for it to be clear and actionable, something that guides our decision-making and resource allocation and something that defines what we most care about as a district and community. We’d also like it to be the product of many voices—parents, students, others.

We’ll be continuing our conversations at the School Board meetings. Anyone who would like to be part of this process through focus groups or by providing opinion and feedback is welcome. Please contact Superintendent Gayle Hellert or any School Board member if you’re interested in becoming involved. Thank you.

—Tom Caton, Board of Education

Health BASE Reminds You to Prevent Frostbite

You can help prevent frostbite in cold weather by dressing your child in layers, making sure he/she comes indoors at regular intervals and watching for frost nip, frostbite's early warning signal.

Frost nip

Frost nip usually affects the child's cheeks, ears and tip of the nose. A small patch of skin will turn white or yellowish-gray. What to do:

- Bring your child indoors immediately.
- Remove all wet clothing. Wet clothes draw heat from the body.
- Immerse chilled body parts in warm (not hot) water until all sensation returns.

Don't let your child control the water temperature during rewarming. Numb hands won't feel the heat and can be severely burned by water that is too hot.

Frostbite

Frostbite is, literally, frozen body tissue. What to do:

- Get your child into dry clothing, and then take him/her to a hospital emergency room. If feet are affected, carry him/her.
- If you cannot get your child to a hospital right away or must wait for an ambulance, give them a warm drink and gently wrap in warm blankets.

Did your child(ren) get a flu shot?

The single best way to protect against the flu is to get vaccinated each fall before the holidays. The American Academy of Pediatrics now recommends the annual flu vaccination for all children aged 6 months to 18 years. This year the School-Based Health Centers will be offering the flu vaccine for **all of our enrolled students**.

For more health and wellness information, talk to the staff at Health BASE. Call 674-8417 (Elementary) or 674-8416 (MS/HS), 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., any day school is in session.

—Barbara Marsala,
School Based Health Center

Thank You!

Many thanks to all of you who have sent in Box Tops™. We just received a check for \$969! The money will be used to add playground equipment for grades 3-5.

Sherburne Holiday Parade

Miss Flisnik's fourth grade class participated in the 17th Annual Sherburne Holiday Parade. The class worked together to create a gingerbread house known as Sherburne Gingerbread Friends. The class worked as a team to paint and decorate the house. Everyone had a great time at the parade and their hard work paid off as the team marched to victory winning the *Best All Around Theme* trophy.

—Miss Flisnik



CSO Elementary Holiday Bazaar

Not even a snowstorm and/or a snow day could stop the CSO from spreading holiday cheer! The annual Elementary Holiday Bazaar was held on Thursday, December 11 and Monday, December 15.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the following for their assistance.

- The S-E Middle School Life Skills Class and Tobie Hess for assisting with collecting all the donations and working the event.
- Maggie Fitzpatrick for all of her assistance with the informational flyers to the families.
- The Elementary Cafeteria Staff and Custodial Staff for all of their assistance. Their hospitality is always immeasurable.
- The entire S-E community and staff for again donating such beautiful items.

I would also like to thank the following individuals for working and/or providing assistance:

Tracy Boyer, Rachael Bradley, Valerie Bradley, Gloria Britton, Annie Campbell, Donna Carhart, Carolyn Clark, Ruth Davis, Sheila Davis, Brittney Gale, Buffy Gale, Gabby Gale, Christie Hanyon, Molly Khoury, Jenni Larchar, Betty Law, Lindsay Manwarren, Marni Manwarren, Carmela Minckler, Lynn Morris, Martha Murray, Mary Noll, Emily Palmer, Lee Perrin, Amy Pinney, Bruce Rounds, Katie Rounds, Lexi Rounds, Sandee Rounds, Alyson Seymour, Sandi Sheldon, Dawn Wenzel, Jordan Wenzel and Suzanne Winton.

In closing, if you have never participated in this extremely rewarding event, please consider joining us next year! To find out more about our Holiday Bazaar, or to assist us throughout the school year with any of our other programs, you can visit our website at <http://community.secsd.org/cso/> or email me at doingt@secsd.org. We always welcome new faces and ideas.

—Terri Doing



Caught In the Middle

Congratulations to the 6th, 7th and 8th grade *Caught In the Middle* award winners for the 10 week marking period at the Middle School. These students were selected by their respective grade level teachers for academic achievement and citizenship recognition. These awards are given out quarterly. *Caught In the Middle* awards are sponsored by the Sherburne-Earlville Community Schools Organization. Each student receives an award certificate and an ice cream treat of his or her choice from the Cafeteria.

—Valerie Bradley

Grade 6



Katelyn Stewart, Madeline DuBois, Zachary Wyss, Keith Rose; missing: Ruth Davis, Allison Johnson, Abigail Ryan, Mandi LaClair, Katelin Angle

Grade 7



Back row: Anthony Albertina, Tyler Maykish, JP Osborne, Jake Irwin, Nathan Piazza; front row: Jamie Shuman, Kevin Dunshee, Kyler Spencer, Octavia Bishop, Ashley Aikins; missing: Taylor Bartlett, Kaitlin Schwarting

Grade 8



Back row: Cody Boise, Jimi Viera, Jacob Pinney, Shelby Scheffler, Michael Harlost, Paige Chapman, Olivia Miller, Richard Dando, Brian Campbell; front row: Sarah Vantine, Gabrielle Huff, Rikki Martin; missing: Kayliegh Gibson

Mrs. Hess's Class Won Most Musical Group

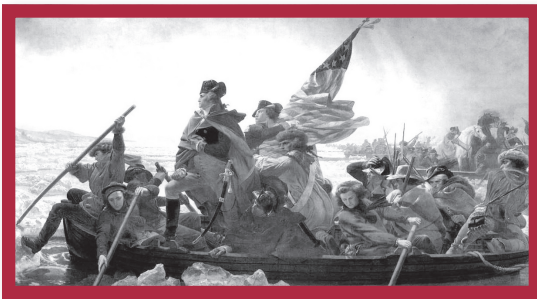


Mrs. Hess's Middle School Life Skills class won the *Most Musical Group* Trophy out of 17 participants in the Sherburne-Earlville Christmas Parade on Saturday, December 6. Students **Ruth Davis, Macie Lowe, Tanya Lowe** and **Alfie Weymouth** practiced the hand bells together with Mrs. Hess every day! The students also came up with their own costume ideas and made their costumes. We played *Up on the House Top* as **Kim** and **Kathy VanCourt** twirled their color guard flags to the music. We had a fun time and look forward to next year.

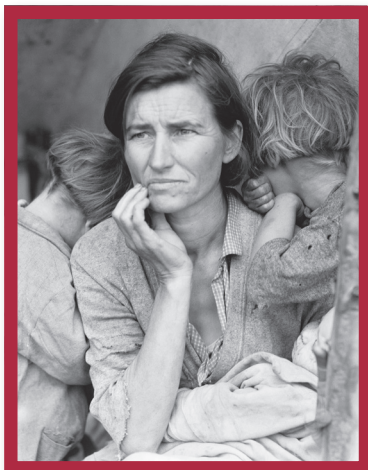
S-E Awarded Grant

Mrs. Todd, Middle/High School Librarian, has received good news about a cross-curricular grant she applied for—S-E has been awarded *Picturing America*, an exciting initiative of the National Endowment for the Humanities and the American Library Association, which brings masterpieces of American art into schools and public libraries nationwide.

Picturing America award materials include forty well-known art images mounted on twenty double-sided, laminated posters for display and classroom use, and a teachers' resource book, as well as lesson plans and background information with links to all subjects, not just Art and History. These materials will be shipping to awardees in March and April of 2009. Congratulations S-E!



Washington Crossing the Delaware (1851), Emanuel Leutze (1816-1868)

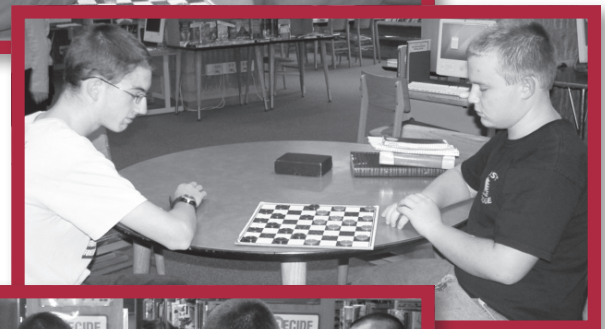


Migrant Mother (1936), Dorothea Lange (1895-1965)

Chess and Checkers Showdown 2008

Let the best player win! The library offered a first this year—an open chess and checkers tournament for all Middle and High School students. We simply asked that students sign up in their own ability level (*i.e.* beginner/intermediate/advanced). Play occurred strictly during a mutually-available study hall, free mod or after school. Checkers were played in the *single move format* and the player with the most captured pieces is the winner. Chess was played in the *check mate format* and the player with the most points for captured pieces is the winner. All games were allotted one mod or period to complete. We thank Mr. Westervelt and the Middle School Chess Club for use of their *equipment*. First Edition Bookstore in Norwich donated gift certificates as prizes. The competition was fierce and matches were intense! The following players emerged as champions: **Miranda Williams**, Gr. 8 (beginner checkers); **Brad Ward**, Gr. 10 (intermediate/advanced checkers); and **Brett Nelson**, Gr. 12 (intermediate/advanced chess). We thank our local business sponsor, as well as all our contestants, and look forward to offering Showdown 2009!

—Anne Geary



FIRST Robotics Team #145 Kicks Off Season

Students from Norwich, Unadilla Valley and Sherburne-Earlville Central Schools make up T-Rx, Team 145. For more info, contact S-E Team Mentor, Jonathan Ryan at 607-674-8412 or email ryanj@secsd.org.

Lunacy Unveiled to 42,000 High-School Students at 2009 FIRST Robotics Competition Game Kickoff.

Life-changing program inspires young people to become individual economic stimulus packages and pursue opportunities in science and technology.

FIRST (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology) launched its eighteenth FIRST Robotics Competition season with a Kickoff of a new robotics game called *Lunacy* at Southern New Hampshire University in Manchester, NH, hometown and headquarters of FIRST.

"Forty years ago, NASA fueled a generation's imagination with the success of Apollo 11. As we celebrate that remarkable feat of technology and engineering with our 2009 game, *Lunacy*, we are sparking more of that kind of inspiration through the FIRST Robotics Competition," said FIRST founder, Dean Kamen. "Just as NASA scientists landed a man on the moon and returned him safely to earth in 1969, so too will these young people go on to explore new frontiers and develop breakthrough technologies that will change the world."

The FIRST Robotics Competition is an annual competition that helps students discover the rewards and excitement of science, engineering and technology. More than 42,000 high school students on 1,686 teams from the U.S., Brazil, Canada, Chile, Germany, Israel, Mexico, the Netherlands, the Philippines, Turkey and the U.K. are participating in this year's competition. "In today's social environment, FIRST has a chance to re-define the larger economic and moral playing field," noted Dr. Woodie Flowers, FIRST national advisor. In the *Lunacy* game, robots are designed to pick up 9" game balls and score them in trailers hitched to their opponents' robots for points during a two minute and fifteen second match. Additional points are awarded for scoring a special game ball, the Super Cell, in the opponents' trailers during the last 20 seconds of the match. *Lunacy* is played on a low-friction floor, which means teams must contend with the laws of physics.

At today's Kickoff, teams were shown the game field and received a Kit of Parts made up of motors, batteries, a control system and a mix of automation components, but no instructions. Working with mentors, students have six weeks to design, build, program and test their robots to meet the season's engineering challenge. Once these young inventors create a robot, their teams participate in competitions that measure the effectiveness of each robot, the power of collaboration and the determination of students.

In 1992, the FIRST Robotics Competition began with 28 teams and a single 14 x 14 foot playing field in a New Hampshire high school gym. This season, 1,686 teams—including 322 rookie teams will participate. Forty regional competitions in the U.S., Canada and Israel, plus seven district competitions and one state championship in Michigan, will lead up to the 2009 FIRST Championship at the Georgia Dome in Atlanta, April 16-18. FIRST programs are operated by over 85,000 dedicated volunteers worldwide, many of them professional engineers and scientists who mentor the next generation of innovators. Check out the team website at www.trx145.net.



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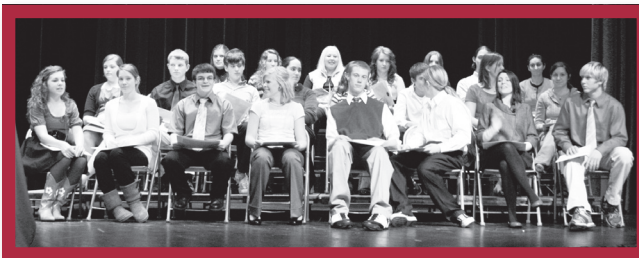
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Sherburne-Earlville is committed to students. By providing an environment of educational excellence which emphasizes the learning of academics and life skills, nurtures self-respect, and fosters life-long learning, we enable our students to pursue challenging individual goals and to become positive, contributing members of society.

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National Honor Society Induction



On January 13, the Sherburne-Earlville High School chapter of the National Honor Society inducted 23 new members. Inductees are selected by a five member faculty council on the basis of scholarship (students must maintain a 90 average), character, leadership and service. Congratulations to our new members!

Inductees in alphabetical order: **Catherine Behret, Gretchen Bradley, Nikki Button, Margret Caton,**

Ryan Downney, Elizabeth Farrow, Paul Gavett, Amanda Leet, Robert Marvin, Megan Matott, Karlee Merritt, Taylor Morris, Eric Muth, Molly Ogden, Rachel Palmer, Andrew Parks, Alexandra Rounds, Leah Schmitt, Brett Sheddon, Elizabeth Taylor, Kerry VanAlthuis, Christopher Weinell and Hannah Weinell.

—Heather Dunshee, Advisor

Local Businesses help out Technology Education Program

The S-E technology program would like to thank Baillie Lumber Company and Heartwood Forest Products for their support of our project based activities. Both companies have recently donated hard and softwood material for multiple projects. Students in the Drawing and Design for Production course are currently manufacturing Adirondack chairs. Each student will be able to take a chair home

at the end of the project thanks to Heartwood Forest Products. They have supplied quality material to help us finish up production. Junior **Marcus Cossette**, is completing an independent study in advanced wood-working and recently finished a computer desk made out of Maple. All the material for his project came directly from Baillie Lumber.

—Scott Bugbee



Desk designed and built by Marcus Cossette



Chairs completed by High School Technology Students