



# Tusker Nation

SOMERS CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NEWS  
FOR SCSD FAMILIES

## Important Updates

- The 2018-2019 Somers school budget passed. As a result, a School Resource Officer will be assigned to each school starting this fall.
- Elected Board of Education members: Heidi Cambareri and Michael D'Anna.

## Leos Serve with Lions



*Leo Club members repairing a local home and gathering for a meeting*

When the social workers in the Somers Central School District need assistance for a local family in need, they know exactly who to call.

"We barely put the call out there for help," says Theresa Reda, SCSD social worker, "And the Lions Club has already sprung into action. Whether it's a car that needs to be fixed or a leaky roof the family can't afford to repair, the Lions make it happen."

The close relationship between the school district and the service-oriented Lions Club goes back decades, due in large part to the local Leo Club, the youth subsidiary of the Lions. The Somers chapter of the Leo Club was started 25 years ago and while it is not a school-sponsored club, twenty-five percent of all current Somers High School students are members. Seniors Natalie Walsh and Tyler Ross are the Leo Club Co-Presidents this year. They both joined the club because they believe in helping their community whenever possible.

"I learned so much as a Leo, from leadership skills, to accountability, to responsibility and public speaking," says Walsh.

The Leos assist many local organizations with fundraisers, and partner with the Lions Club on many of its events. This year Leos helped with the Lions pancake breakfast, annual carnival, and provided holiday gifts for a local family. Recently the Leos raised \$27,000 for Special Olympics of New York.

"One week I'm at the United Nations talking about Special Olympics," says Tyler Ross, "And the next week I'm painting faces at the pancake breakfast. There is always something fun and different going on."

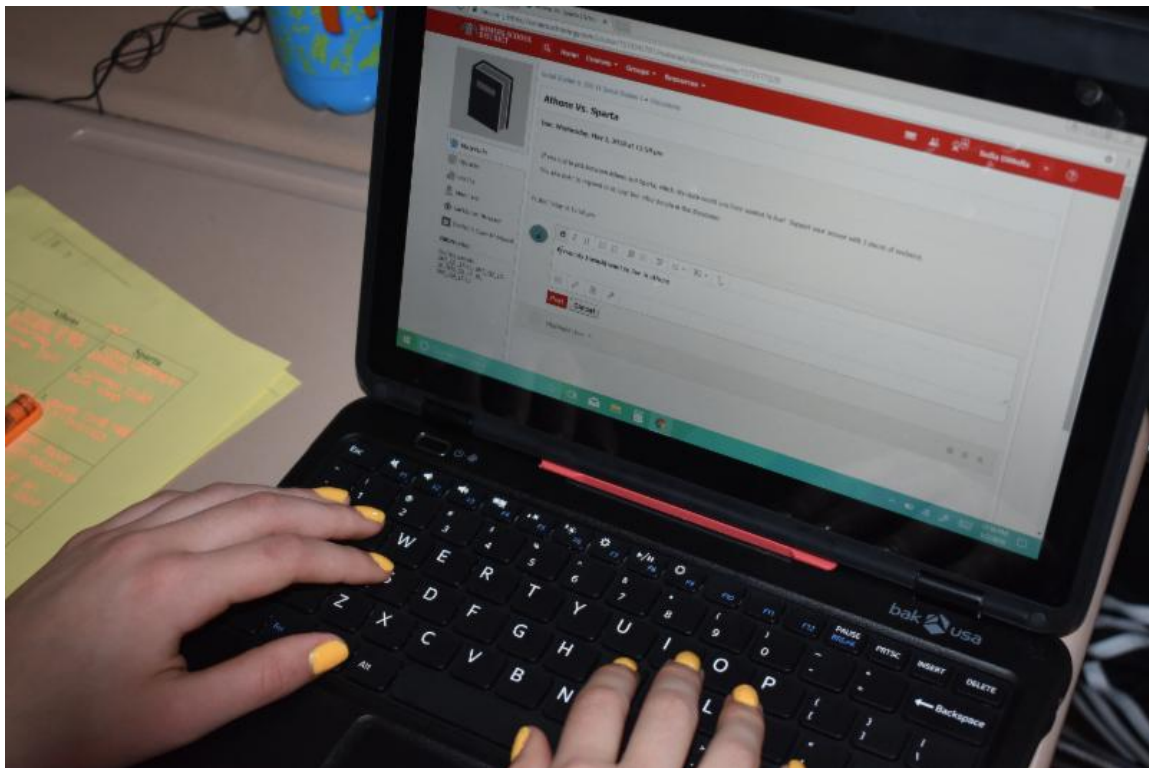
While the focus of the club is volunteering and community service, the Lions members make sure the kids come away with much more. They coach them in leadership, self-confidence, and networking. Lions members serve as mentors and advisors, but the Leo Club is entirely student run.

"They really hold each other accountable," says Lions President Paul Laspina. "They hold other kids' feet to the fire and demand participation."

The club requires 20 volunteer hours per year, but many members do far more than that. Co-President Natalie Walsh wants to continue her participation in the organization beyond graduation. This week she was inducted as an official Lions Club member and she plans to work with the local chapter when she heads to college in the fall.

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## New Learning Management System Introduced for Grades 6-12



*A middle school student uses the Schoology program in social studies*

Starting in September, parents, teachers and students in grades six through 12 will have access to an online, centralized hub for finding information, communicating and collaborating. Schoology is a learning management system that allows users to create, manage, and share content and resources.

English language arts teacher Dawn Stanczuk is part of the Schoology pilot program at the middle school. "I love how Schoology allows me to give instant feedback, and it holds the kids more accountable," says Stanczuk. "They are more engaged, and the quality of their discussion responses has improved exponentially."

Schoology LMS integrates many of the existing curriculum resources in the Somers Schools, including McGraw-Hill Education, TurnItIn.com, and Microsoft services. The program will help students organize their work because all assignments will be in one place and parents will be able to login to see their children's assignments. Schoology also supports blended learning and flipped classroom.

"Students can take standards-based online assessments," says Kevin Guidotti, Director of Innovations in Learning, "And teachers can see mastery reports of student learning." Schoology allows teachers to network with other educators around the country. For example, there

are interest-based groups teachers can join for the International Baccalaureate Programme, assessment testing, and special education. Guidotti calls that element of the LMS "Facebook for teachers", where teachers can join to ask questions and share best practices.

For now, Schoology will be available for the middle and high school communities, with expansion to the lower grades expected at some point during the 2018-2019 school year.

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## Staff Trains for Active Intruder Threat



*Police officers and Superintendent Dr. Raymond Blanch lead active threat training for staff*

Students got an early start on their Memorial Day weekend, but staff members stayed for the full day to complete Active Threat Training. Led by Westchester County Police, staff learned what to do in the event of an active intruder situation, with a focus on what law enforcement calls "Avoid-Deny-Defend". Staff members broke into small groups to learn tactics and discuss concerns about an active threat situation in school buildings. These groups were led by staff members who attended a train-the-trainer workshop in February. "The teachers and staff members were very responsive and empowered by the presentations and the discussions," said Joseph Bernardi, the district's Chief Emergency Officer. "They want to have the necessary tools to keep their students safe."

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## WISE Mural Time Lapse



Somers High School seniors Stavroula Doukakis and Jessica Clayton created this mural for their collaborative WISE project. Click the image to watch the time-lapsed process. See it in person at the high school outside the old cafeteria.

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# Learning From the Experts on Authors Day

Somers Intermediate School celebrated the 26th annual Authors Day with photojournalist Lori Adams, children's author Gordon Korman, poet Darren Sardelli. The authors presented their techniques and best practices during separate assemblies for each grade, sharing with the students their enthusiasm and love of reading, writing, or illustrating.



## PTA hosts Bus Driver Appreciation Breakfast



For more than 20 years the Somers PTA has hosted a breakfast to show how thankful our parents are to the drivers, monitors and all the transportation personnel who keep our children safe. This year we honored Thelma Barlow who retired as the Crossing Guard at the Somers Middle School and Somers Intermediate School campus after 36 years. Special thanks to all who volunteered and donated to this wonderful event!

## Parent Resource Video Library

### Somers Spotlight

[L.I.F.E. \(Learning Inclusively for Everyone\)](#)

### High School Counseling Department

[Grade K-10 Road Map to Success PowerPoint](#)

[Financial Planning for College PowerPoint](#)



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