



# Tusker Nation

SOMERS CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NEWS  
FOR SCSD FAMILIES

## Somers Schools from a Distance



*Phoebe Sandoval in an Earth Day crown - from an SCSD Facebook post.*

One of the best ways to share how we are learning, teaching, and coping during this difficult time is through the Somers Central School District Facebook page. There are so many wonderful, uplifting pictures and stories to share - too many to fit in a monthly newsletter. Please click [here](#) to like the page, see what your friends, teachers, and co-workers are doing, and connect with your Somers community. #SomersStrong

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## Somers Supports Responders



*First responders express appreciation for face shields made by Somers teachers.*

The technology and engineering teachers in Somers heard the call for help and immediately sprang into action. Rich DeVito, Ed Amato and Matt Lugo have made hundreds of clear plastic face shields for first responders in this COVID-19 pandemic using 3D printers. Together with their colleagues in the area, they have distributed 6000 shields to hospitals, fire departments, nursing homes and doctors offices.

"I started making shields to help healthcare workers because of lack of personal protective equipment," says middle school teacher Rich DeVito. "I have family, friends and neighbors that work in health care and wanted to do what I can to help them."

Also joining the effort were the Somers Education Foundation and the Somers Middle School Parent Teacher Association. Both organizations quickly funded the purchase of more 3D printers in order to increase the production of the shields.

"Once school resumes," says middle school PTA co-president Michelle Dellorusso, "The 3D printers will support student learning in the middle school technology and engineering department, and MakerSpace."

Co-president Rosalind Gallino adds, "We look forward to when school is back in session and our children can be taught how tech was such a crucial component of controlling this virus."

The teachers are currently researching a project for students to improve the face shields design using computer-aided design (CAD).

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## **Masks for a Cause**



***Nicole Galletta demonstrates her homemade bandana mask.***

A Somers Middle School student is making a big difference for Somers families in need, and she got the idea from TikTok.

"Everyone was doing do-it-yourself videos on them so I decided to start making them," says 11-year-old Nicole Galletta.

The videos were demonstrating how to make face masks using materials at home. But Nicole wanted to do more than just make a few masks. She wanted to help her community at the same time. She started making protective face masks out of bandanas, selling them for \$5.00 each, and giving the proceeds to St. Luke's Food Pantry in Somers. So far the sixth-grader has raised \$3651.

"I also do a hand-written index card for each person who orders a mask, thanking them for the order with #StaySafe, which I include in the Ziplock bag with the bandana."

Nicole is part of the TEAM Tuskers Mentoring program at Somers Middle School. Her mentor, Nancy Hiller, was not surprised when Nicole undertook such a meaningful effort.

"She loves people and she loves to help," says Hiller. "She is always willing to do more than is asked of her to help other people."

Earlier in the school year, Hiller and Nicole were asked to participate in an effort to make cards for elderly patients in a nursing home. Instead of making just one, Nicole made five.

The mask-making effort has grown far beyond Somers. If a buyer is not local, Nicole will ship the masks. But if they live nearby, Nicole is happy to make a porch-drop, each bandana safely sealed in a plastic baggie. To order a mask from Nicole, email her mother at [caralyn\\_galletta@yahoo.com](mailto:caralyn_galletta@yahoo.com).

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*A slide from the video tribute to the Class of 2020 created by high school teacher Melissa Pynch.*

*This is hard. We are sad for you. We want to celebrate you.*

Those are the opening lines in an inspirational video created by Somers High School English teacher Melissa Pynch for the seniors in the class of 2020.

"With the stress of college, and Covid-19, Mrs. Pynch is a beam of light," says senior Tyler Cheatham. "The video she created was what we needed to hear."

The video has been viewed thousands of times on YouTube, Instagram, and Facebook. Pynch says her current and former students are some of the best people she knows and they inspire her.

"Leaving high school can be scary; the celebrations along the way help kids let go of their comfort zones," says Pynch. "Unfortunately, this year, high school may end abruptly for these kids - no final words, no hugs goodbye, no pomp and circumstance. I just wanted them to know that looking beyond this difficult time is important; the best is yet to come."

Knowing they may not have a prom, a senior class trip, or even a graduation ceremony is disappointing and upsetting. Pynch's video provided some much-needed support.

"When I saw Mrs. Pynch's video I was genuinely brought to tears," says Maggie Nestor. "A lot of the focus during this pandemic is rightfully towards those in need, which is absolutely how it should be. However, it was comforting knowing that our struggles are seen and understood. Mrs. Pynch is the type of person that will always make a positive impact on any one person, it doesn't matter who you are, she will always be there for you."

"I'm not quite sure how we will honor this class," says Pynch, "But they will graduate knowing they are loved by our community. We just may have to get creative this year!"

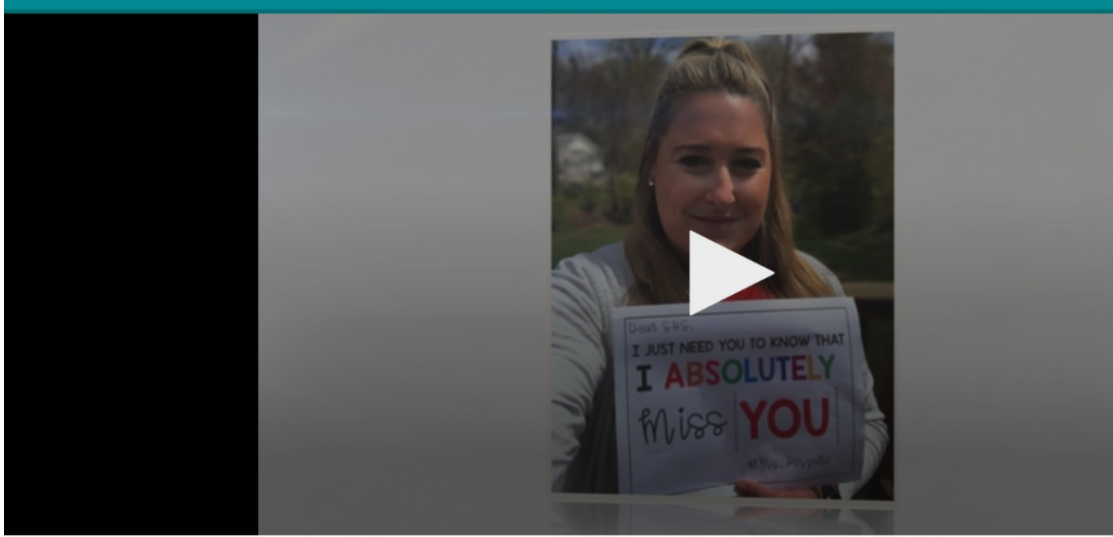
Watch the video [here](#).

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## Teachers and Staff Send Messages of Love and Support

Teachers and staff at Somers schools and at all grade levels have been reaching out to connect with and support their students in many ways. Some use email, some Zoom, and many have participated in heartwarming videos. Click on each image to watch the videos.

**Somers High School Team**



We miss you, SHS students!

Somers Middle School Team



Primrose teachers and staff send rainbows of hope.



Third Grade Team



First Grade Team



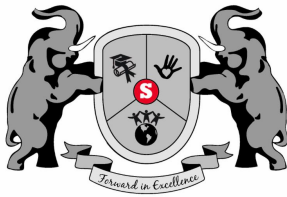
Fourth Grade Team



Second Grade Team



Fifth Grade Team



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