

Tusker Nation

SOMERS CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NEWS
FOR SCSD FAMILIES

Somers Schools - Home Edition



Tenth grade English students in early March, just before schools closed.

A Message from Dr. Blanch

Dear Somers Families,
I think it is safe to say that we never imagined our March edition of Tusker Nation would look like this! However, given how readily our students, teachers, and parents jumped into the necessity of distance learning, we have plenty of news and pictures to share. Please also see the links below for important information, including an invitation to join me on April 1 at 10am for a webinar and Q&A session.

I hope you are all finding healthy ways of coping during this difficult time. Please take advantage of the opportunities to get outside, spend time with your loved ones, and slow down the pace for at least a little while. I wish all Somers families the very best. Stay safe and healthy.

Sincerely,
Dr. Raymond H. Blanch

IMPORTANT LINKS

- You have questions? We have answers. Click [here](#) for answers to frequently asked questions about grading, free/reduced meals, spring break, and more.
 - For the Distance Learning Guide for Families click [here](#). It is an evolving plan and will be updated regularly.
 - Want to stay connected to friends and teachers? Like the SCSD Facebook page [here](#). Updated daily!
 - Join Superintendent Dr. Ray Blanch on Wednesday, April 1 at 10am for a webinar and Q&A session. Register [here](#). You do not need to download Zoom to attend. Send questions in advance to questions@somersschools.org.
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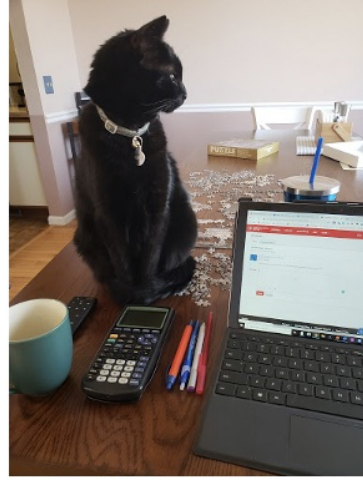
Learning From a Distance



Distance learning takes many forms, from assigned tasks to outdoor exploration, to self-directed projects.

Parents and students are stepping up and getting creative about learning from home. In addition to work assigned by teachers, kids are exploring the woods for PE class, curling up with their furry (and scaly!) friends to read a good book, decorating windows with "stained glass", and even winning competitions by virtually presenting Science Research projects. Click [here](#) to watch a stop-motion video inspired by a Scholastic assignment, created by a Primrose brother and sister.

Teaching from a Distance

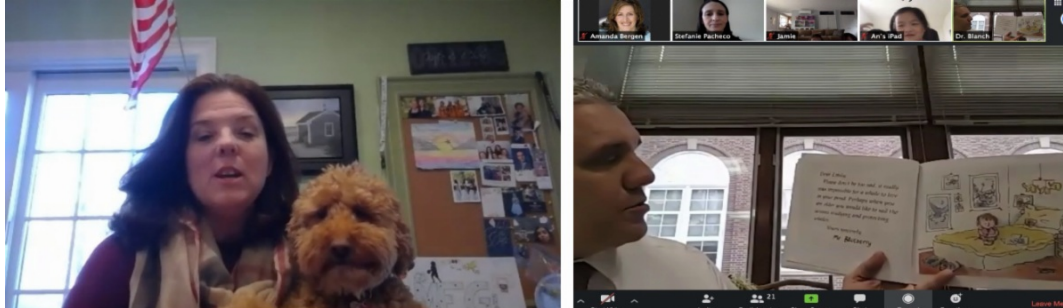


Dean Schuler prepping for the day at 5 am before his 2-year-old wakes up, Mary McEwan's furry co-teacher Colby, the SMS World Language department meeting, and Sid Soni teaching his AP Calculus students.

Teachers, like all parents, are juggling a new normal. Some are waking up in the dark to get in some work before the rest of the household starts the day. Others are involving their own kids to teach lessons. Watch [here](#) as middle school social studies teacher Jenna Schettino has her girls help students learn about ancient China.

Some teachers are finding time and quiet to hold virtual classes on Zoom. Others are recording lessons for students to approach on their own time. Teachers are still meeting with their colleagues (virtually), planning lessons, and sharing new resources to help teach online. There are many different ways our teachers are rising to the challenge and Somers is grateful!

Connecting From a Distance



Principal Katie Winter's dog helps with Primrose morning announcements, Dr. Ray Blanch reads to an elementary class on Zoom, and the high school leadership team sings new lyrics to the Brady Bunch theme song.

Connecting with students and colleagues has been a priority for many teachers and administrators in Somers schools. Thank goodness for Zoom!

At the elementary level, both principal and assistant principal teams are sending daily morning announcements and the Pledge of Allegiance to students through video. Superintendent Ray Blanch is reading to elementary school students through live video conferencing. Middle school Principal Jeff Getman and Assistant Principal Jenn Spirelli are sending encouraging videos to faculty and staff, including a highly entertaining game of virtual Pictionary. Who knew Mrs. Spirelli has such digital drawing skills?! And one you don't want to miss, the high school leadership team did a riff on an old favorite, singing **new lyrics** to the Brady Bunch theme song.

The high school and middle school are holding virtual spirit weeks, the high school student center is showcasing a weekly student spotlight, and students are sending pictures and videos to their teachers to let them know how much they miss them.

Supporting from a Distance

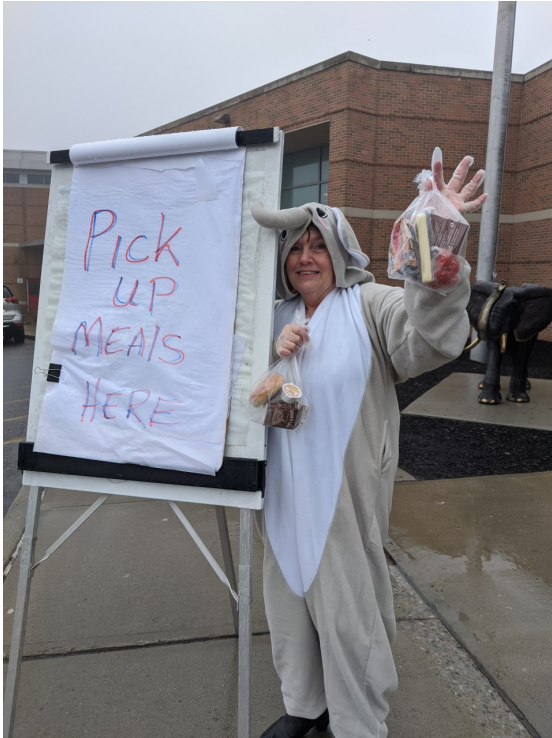


Julia Wilkinson (8th grade) has been filling her free time teaching herself some songs on the piano. Here is Lewis Capaldi's "Someone You Loved", accompanied by a slide show she created using pictures from the SCSD Facebook page. Click the image to watch.

It is amazing how resourceful we can be when necessary. The entire Somers community is finding ways to support each other even during quarantine.

Because of social distancing and the COVID-19 virus, the drama productions were canceled at both the high school and the middle school. These were two of many canceled events that devastated students, staff, and parents. To support these talented theater students, the middle school drama teachers recorded **this song** to cheer up students on the day "Bye Bye Birdie" was to open.

Photographer Paul De Feo took **stunning pictures** of the "Crazy For You" production at the high school, and shared his photographs with both the SCSD Facebook page, and the Somers Record.



Left, Food Services Director Norma Zeller shows her Tusker spirit while handing out food for the Free and Reduced Meals Program. For families in the program, meals are available for pickup at Somers Intermediate School from 9:30-12pm, Monday-Friday. Right, Somers fashion students are using their skills to sew masks for their families and front-line workers in the medical field.

"Pause" yoga is being offered via Zoom by SAASA (Students Athletes Against Substance Abuse), Substance Abuse counselor Nicole Tarr, and teacher Allison Ferrier.

Students around town are finding many ways to send supportive messages, from sidewalk chalk drawings, to baking, to using nature to inspire others. Be sure to like the **SCSD Facebook page** to see all the ways in which our school community is coming together to support each other.



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