

Know Your Schools ... Online

Good News You Can Use about the Solon Schools.

Friday, April 28, 2023

Know Your Schools ... Online is part of the district's [Strategic Plan](#) goals for communications. It is a monthly publication providing more immediate, consistent and relevant information to all families, staff and our Solon Schools community.

You are receiving the April issue of Know Your Schools ... Online today due to the loss of our beloved Solon High School science teacher, Crystal Cespedes, last week and our district focus on supporting students and staff in navigating this difficult loss. The outpouring of love and kindness from our school community has been tremendous. Details about visitation on Wednesday were shared over the weekend.

We know trauma, loss and grief impacts many of our students and families. Following are several resources from our mental health team to assist families in supporting their children through times of grief and loss.



If your child is ever struggling or having difficulty coping with loss, please be sure to reach out to your child's principal or counselor so we can put the needed supports in place.

RESOURCES FOR HELPING YOUR CHILD WITH GRIEF:

[Addressing Grief](#)

[When Grief/Loss Hits Close to Home: Tips for Caregivers](#)

[Parent's Guide to the Grieving Child - Western Reserve Grief Services](#)

RESOURCES FOR FAMILIES - SEXTORTION, CYBERBULLYING, INTERNET SAFETY

THIS IS SEXTORTION

Financial sextortion is a scam.
You are not alone.
There's help.

If it happens:

- ✓ Stop responding
- ✓ Take screenshots
- ✓ Report and block user
- ✓ Tell someone!

✗ Don't send more images
✗ Don't pay any money
✗ Don't respond to demands
✗ Don't continue the conversation

Even if you comply with demands, they may carry out the threat.

It doesn't matter what has happened.
If you have been a victim, please get help.

As a follow-up to the April Internet safety program for families and teens with the Solon Police Department, we have compiled the tips and takeaways from that session with additional helpful resources provided by the Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force.

Young people in our community are currently facing these online dangers. It is important to understand the risks and know that help is available. These important resources are all linked on the Health & Wellness - Social-Emotional and Mental Health Resources page on the district website: <https://www.solonschools.org/domain/484>

TWO SOLON SENIORS NAMED PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLAR SEMI-FINALISTS



Ava Preston



Aakarsh Garg

Solon seniors Aakarsh Garg and Ava Preston have advanced as semi-finalists in the 2023 Presidential Scholar Program, which recognizes the nation's most distinguished graduating seniors. Aakarsh and Ava are among only 628 students nationwide and 26 in Ohio to advance to the final round and still be in the running to become a Presidential Scholar for this year. Ava is Solon's first semi-finalist for Presidential Scholar in the Arts.

"It is a great honor and exceptional accomplishment to have reached the semi-finalist phase in this highly selective and prestigious program," according to the U.S. Commission on Presidential Scholars. "The achievements of these outstanding students deserve acknowledgement."

The 2023 U.S. Presidential Scholars will be announced in mid-May.

SOLON SCHOOLS AWARDED A BEST COMMUNITIES FOR MUSIC EDUCATION AWARD



Reflecting the district's continuous commitment to high-quality music education, the Solon City Schools have been honored with the prestigious Best Communities for Music Education designation for 2023. Given by the National Association of Music Merchants Foundation, the Best Communities for Music Education designation is awarded to school districts that demonstrate outstanding achievement in efforts to provide music access and education to all students. This is the 8th consecutive year Solon has received this honor.

To qualify for the Best Communities designation, the district answered detailed questions about funding, graduation requirements, music class participation, instruction time, facilities, support for the music program and community music-making programs. The information submitted was reviewed by The Music Research Institute at the University of Kansas.

Congratulations to all our students, staff, families and community.

FUTURE BUSINESS LEADERS OF AMERICA STATE TITLE

The Solon High School Future Business Leaders of America team won the State Leadership Conference and brought home the Conference Champion title and trophy for the first time in Solon FBLA history! The team members are Rishabh Mehta, Dandy Gong, Richard Liu, Ian Stewart, Alina He, Chahak Gupta, Christina Xin, Yasharth Pandey, Joshua Jiang and Allison Kaiser. Joshua Jiang received the Eleanor Gallagher Award at the conference for earning five first-place awards.



BUS TRANSPORTATION FOR 2023-24 SCHOOL YEAR

Planning is already under way for the 2023-24 school year. Working ahead to determine the number of students who will need bus transportation for next year is an important component of that planning. Bus transportation zones and numbers of riders on the bus will be the same as those implemented for the 22-23 school year. For increased routing efficiency, families who want their children to ride the bus to and/or home from school must **OPT-IN** for transportation.

Families must submit the [2023-24 Solon Schools Bus Transportation OPT-IN](#) form for their children to have a seat on the bus. The deadline to opt-in for bus transportation for the 2023-24 school year is May 31.

Families who need day care or shared parenting transportation must also complete the [2023-24 Day Care/Shared Parenting Transportation Request Form](#). A new shared parenting form must be completed each school year. The deadline for the Day Care/Shared Parenting form is July 7.

SCHOLASTIC GOLD KEY FOR POETRY



Solon Middle School 8th grader Manasavi Gurajala earned a Gold Key in this year's national Scholastic Art and Writing Competition for her poem, Sparkly August Nights.

This prestigious competition enables students from across the country to showcase their artistic and writing talents.

COMMUNITY OPEN HOUSE FOR AFTER PROM IS MAY 13

To provide a safe and drug- and alcohol-free atmosphere for students' after-prom festivities each year, the Solon High School PTA stages an extensive, themed event immediately following prom. This year's After Prom event will again be held at the high school, where seniors will enjoy the theme "Alice in Wonderland" with games, music, food, dancing and other activities.

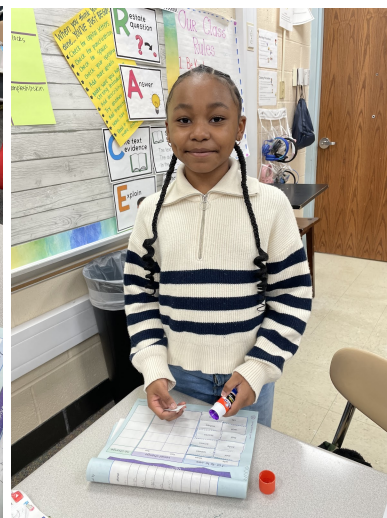
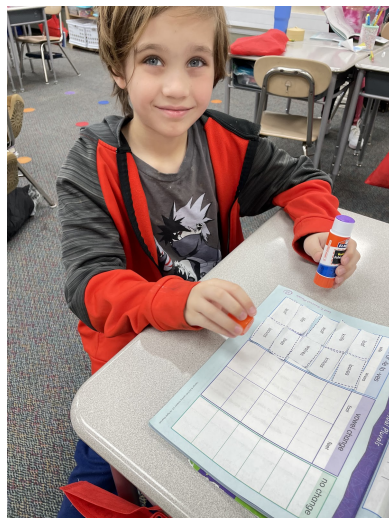
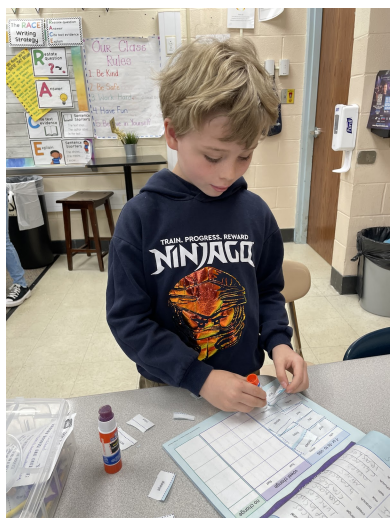
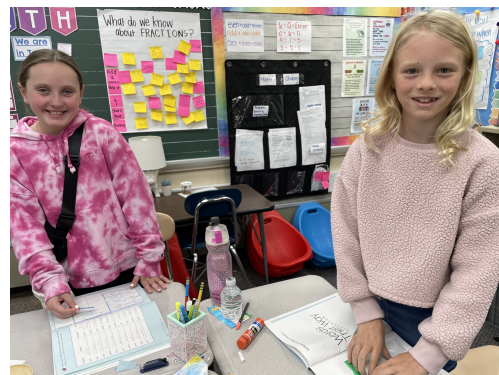
The public is invited to an open house to view the extensive After Prom decorations all in keeping with the "Alice in Wonderland" theme just prior to the event on Saturday, May 13, from 6 to 7:30 p.m. Community members are encouraged to enter through the Senior Commons entrance to the high school near the auditorium along the east drive entrance to the school.



LEWIS LITERACY LEARNING

Word study is an important component of students' literacy learning.

After working on skills to form plurals by adding "s," Lewis third grade students were building on that learning by focusing on unusual plural words. The students learned that if a word ends in "f" or "fe," they need to change the "f" to a "v" and add "es." To provide practice, the students sorted words based on these patterns.



FUTURE PROBLEM SOLVERS DEMONSTRATE SUCCESS AT THE STATE BOWL

Three teams and four individual students from Orchard Middle School, Solon Middle School and Solon High School qualified for the International Future Problem-Solving Competition at the University of Massachusetts in June. The **international qualifiers** are:

- ★ **Shreshta Shastry**, Orchard, 1st place in Global Issues Problem Solving
- ★ **Vijith Koneru**, Solon Middle School, 1st place in Global Issues Problem Solving
- ★ **Abnar Fatima**, Solon High School, 1st place in Global Issues Problem Solving
- ★ **Mandi Lu**, Solon High School, 1st place in Scenario Writing
- ★ **Rebecca Jacob, Maahi Bandi, Nithya Natesan and Nandita Srikumar**, Solon High School, 1st place in middle division team Global Issues Problem Solving
- ★ **Bram Loveman, Isaac Bai, Vivian Li and Joy Fan**, Solon High School, 1st place in senior division team Global Issues Problem Solving
- ★ **Ariel Hsieh, Alana Guo, Alina He and Nandini Agarwal**, Solon High School, 2nd place in senior division team Global Issues Problem Solving

To see the names of all of the medal winners, read our full [FPS State Bowl coverage](#) on the district website. Congratulations to all of the team members on a successful state competition!



SCHOOL SAFETY UPDATE

The most important work we do is keeping our schools, students, staff and visitors as safe as possible. Our entire district team is focused on this critical task. The police incident that occurred close to our campus on April 6 drove that point closer to home. The most important takeaway from that challenging day is that no one was seriously harmed and that this incident did not come into the school or onto the school grounds. It was closer to our schools than any of us would have liked, but our systems worked.



Our district team has been debriefing since that day so that we can apply lessons learned to our safety plans moving forward. We have already pinpointed several areas in our internal communications protocols that can be refined to further increase response time. This is the same after-action reflection we conduct after each drill as well, identifying areas of improvement to incorporate into our plans. That will continue.

On the day of the incident, Roxbury staff acted swiftly to put the school into lockdown. The situation was handled by the police in less than a minute from when the car came into proximity of the school. That quick timeline impacted the actions taken by the other schools that day. Orchard, the high school and the other schools on campus were not placed in lockdown as the situation resolved itself faster than we could initiate the educational lockdowns for those buildings. We have already made adjustments to our internal procedures to ensure that educational or 'soft' lockdowns occur as soon as any other school enters a non-drill lockdown situation.

Although the district contacts families and staff simultaneously to drills being initiated, during a real situation such as the one on April 6, families will not get an immediate message. During any security event, we work collaboratively with the safety forces to get accurate information out to the community as quickly as possible. These are fluid situations and active investigations and it is critical to understand that the information is in a constant state of flux during these times. We must also defer to the police in regard to what information regarding the law enforcement aspects of the situation are communicated to parents and community. This is accomplished through real-time dialogue.

We are enhancing our internal protocols to help reassure students during and after the state-required three school safety drills each year. The practice these drills provide is important so that students and staff members understand exactly what they need to do and where they should go in case of a real emergency.

The detailed components of school safety plans are not published or subject to open records requirements as those seeking to do harm to a school could identify vulnerabilities from reading the specifics of plans. However, we are working on strengthening our communication protocols to provide as much information about how the drills work at the start of the school year for more clarity and understanding among families.

We take the safety and security of everyone in our school community very seriously. It is incumbent on all of our stakeholders to work collaboratively to keep our schools safe. We continue to study best practices and incorporate new information, lessons learned and feedback so that both our proactive plans and responses continue to improve.

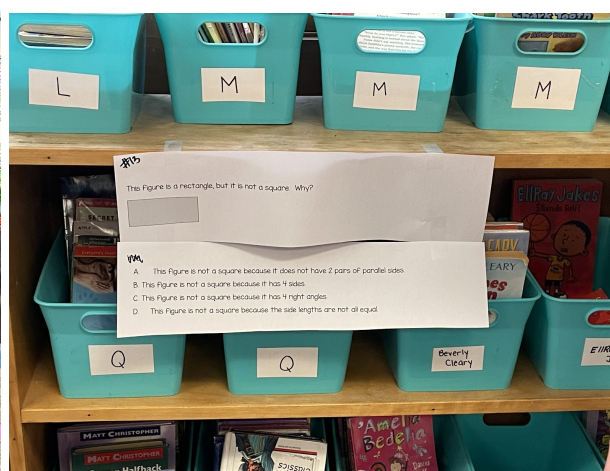
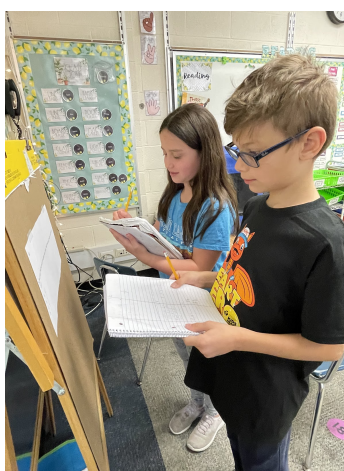
Lessons in Yarn

A group of Orchard students has been learning the art of crocheting. They traded their recess time twice a week to learn how to crochet with sixth grade teacher Debbie Bonacci.



WORKING TOGETHER TO FIND THE SOLUTION

Working in pairs, Roxbury third graders used the strategies they have learned this year to demonstrate their understanding and apply their knowledge to solve math problems covering topics such as finding area and perimeter.



SOLON BUS DRIVERS PARTICIPATED IN THE OHIO SCHOOL BUS ROAD-E-O

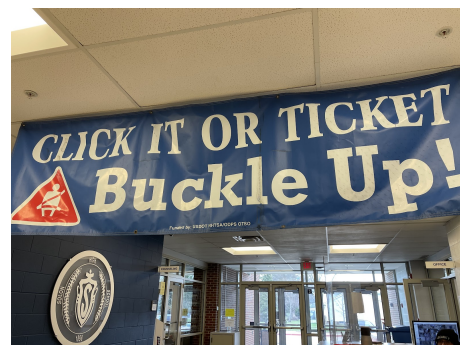
For the first time in many years, a team of Solon bus drivers participated in the Ohio School Bus Driver Safety ROAD-E-O in April. The event brought together school bus drivers from around the state to participate in driving skills tests and working knowledge of the vehicles they drive. Our Solon team was named the second most spirited and brought home an award for the most rookie drivers competing for their district.



CLICK IT FOR A TICKET

Being ticketed by Solon Police officers in April at the high school was actually a good thing. It meant the Solon High School drivers and passengers were wearing their seatbelts as required by law when they arrived at school on April 11. The students then traded their tickets for a snack treat and opportunity to win a \$149 gift card from the officers during their lunch periods. The \$149 value of the gift card equated to the approximate cost of a real traffic citation for juveniles failing to wear seatbelts.

This engaging program is part of the annual Click It for a Ticket educational collaboration between the Solon Police and the SHS Students Against Destructive Decisions club. In addition to the “ticketing,” the officers conducted pre- and post-program surveys of seatbelt use and the SADD club made announcements with facts about seatbelt safety during the two-week campaign.



A pre-campaign seatbelt survey showed 92 percent of drivers and 86 percent of passengers wearing seatbelts as they pulled onto high school grounds. After the in-school awareness campaign, seatbelt adherence increased to 94 percent for drivers and 92 percent for passengers. The increase was positive,

but the goal remains 100 percent. Adults are urged to model consistent seatbelt use for their children and encourage their students to always wear seatbelts.

NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY INDUCTION

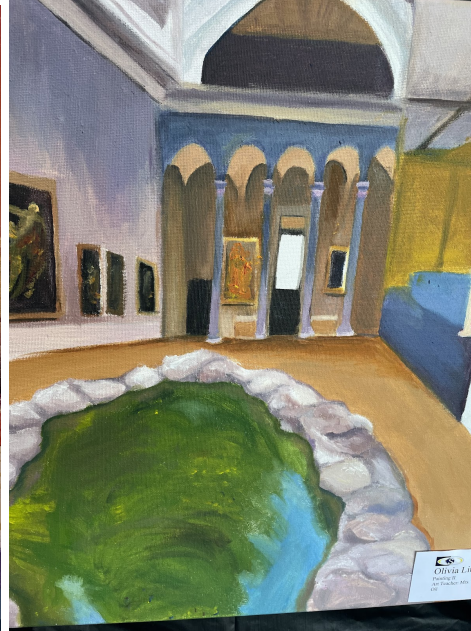
Fifty-eight Solon High School juniors were inducted into the National Honor Society in April. Students were selected based on their accomplishments in the areas of scholarship, leadership, service and character.

The new Solon High School NHS members are: Nandini Agarwal, Myiesha Alam, Isaac Bai, Sasmitha Baskaran, Shayna Berke, Janhavee Bhat, Mehr Bindra, Mackenzie Blackford, Elizabeth Bondarchuk, Abby Brown, Logan Chandler, Marianne Chang, Aniket Chaudhari, Sanjana Chirravuri, Elle Davis, Simone Davis, Sophie Desatnik, Thu “Laura” Do, Sarah Dong, Ziyi “Joy” Fan, Ari Friedman, Praise Fugamade, Owen Grossman, Alana Guo, Taryn Halley, Lauren Haverstick, Alina He, Jiajun “Jerry” He, Caitlin Hillman, Anwyn Hobbs, Ariel Hsieh, Riya Jacob, Alison Kaiser, Prajval Kesireddy, Jordan Klein, Sophia Lance, Kathryn Lee, Lindsey Li, Vivian Li, Vivien Luce, Siya Maheshwari, Jennifer Martel, Brian McQuaide, Ayushi Mukherjee, Lillian Newby, Sairam Pantham, Mugdha Patil, Tali Rabkin, Janie Radis, Varun Sathyajeeth, Daniel Sher, Mahita Somanchi, Riya Verma, Mrunmayi Warade, Nathan Whitman, Anna Wong, Kira Zakem and Kyle Zhou.



SHS & SMS ART SHOW

The artistic talents of Solon High School and Solon Middle School students were on display at the annual Comets Art Show in the Wellness Center at SHS. This year's show was titled "Our Voices on Display." Solon offers a wide range of art courses for students including: Drawing I and II, Painting I and II, Ceramics I and II, Advanced Sculpture, Advanced Studio, Computer Graphics I and II, Animation I and II, AP Drawing, AP 2D Design, Photography - Digital/Film, and AP Art History.



NCAA SIGNING DAY



Three Solon High School seniors signed Division 1 or 2 National Letters of Intent to continue their athletic and academic careers at the collegiate level.

- Riley Hnottavange, Lacrosse at Lake Erie College
- James Howell, Cross Country & Track at Loyola University Chicago
- Kean Porter, Football at Ohio Dominican University

CUTTING & SEWING INSEAMS - IT'S HARDER THAN IT LOOKS

Solon Middle School Family and Consumer Science students are making flannel pajama pants this quarter. The students use patterns to measure, cut and pin the front and back panels prior to sewing the pants using the classroom sewing machines.



STOP THE HATE CONTEST FINALIST



Simone Davis, a junior at Solon High School, was one of 10 area juniors and seniors to be named as a finalist in the annual Stop the Hate Youth Speak Out competition.

More than 3,000 students in the greater Cleveland area participated in the program sponsored by the Maltz Museum by submitting essays or original songs addressing bias or discrimination.

A SUNNY SALUTATION - YOGA WITH REGANO ELC PRESCHOOLERS

Regano ELC preschoolers participated in a fun session of yoga activities with advanced yoga students from the high school. The young students loved the animal poses and enjoyed dancing and moving to the song “Sun Salutation.”



ORCHARD FOURTH GRADE ORIENTATION

Lewis, Parkside and Roxbury fourth graders and their families began their transition to middle school in April at the parent-student orientation to Orchard. The school continued the successful format started last year of a combined parent-student evening event. The Orchard team assigns the students from all three elementary buildings into four groups over two nights so they can learn more about Orchard and go on a school tour. The best part of the night is the tours, which are led by current Orchard student leaders. The students are excellent at answering questions about Orchard and their pride shows through as they show off their school.



ARRIVE ALIVE PROGRAM - REAL-LIFE EXPERIENCE WITHOUT REAL-LIFE CONSEQUENCES

Solon High School's SADD club sponsored the Arrive Alive Tour to give students a hands-on learning experience regarding impaired driving. Throughout the day, students sat in a state-of-the-art simulator that enabled them to "drive" while distracted by texting or under the influence of alcohol or other drugs, such as marijuana. This enabled the students to experience real-life dangers without the real-life consequences. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, driver distraction is responsible for more than 58 percent of car crashes involving teens, and the fatality rate for teens involved in crashes is three times greater than for drivers age 20 and older. The goal of the program is to educate teens on the consequences of impaired and distracted driving and instill safe driving habits.



SAY LET'S BE REAL CAMPAIGN

In schools across the area, including Solon High School and Solon Middle School, a public education campaign is under way to promote a more realistic story about substance abuse among teens. Sponsored by the Social Advocates for Youth through Bellefaire-JCB, the effort is showcasing students from the seven school districts with SAY social workers. The colorful posters underscore data from the most recent Youth Risk Behavior Survey that shows the majority of teens are making positive and healthy choices and not using alcohol, tobacco, marijuana or other substances.



MATHCOUNTS TOPS IN STATE

Solon Middle School's MathCounts team of Evelyn Jin, Samuel Joo, William Hu and Gabriel Xiong earned first place at the state competition this month. MathCounts is a nationwide middle school mathematics competition. The team's advisor, math teacher Kendall Daulton, explained that the competition consisted of a team round as well as two rigorous, timed individual math assessments, ranging from 6th grade math through advanced high school geometry. The top-scoring individuals advanced to the Countdown Round, during which students competed one-on-one to answer tough math problems in front of the audience.



NEW US NEW YOU - SENIOR SPOTLIGHTS

Solon High School began celebrating the Class of 2023 on April 27 by taking photos of seniors to include in a video montage called New Start New Us, which will be posted for the community on #FutureFriday, May 5. The slide show highlights the students' post-SHS plans, such as college choice, the military, safety force academies, the work force or a gap year.

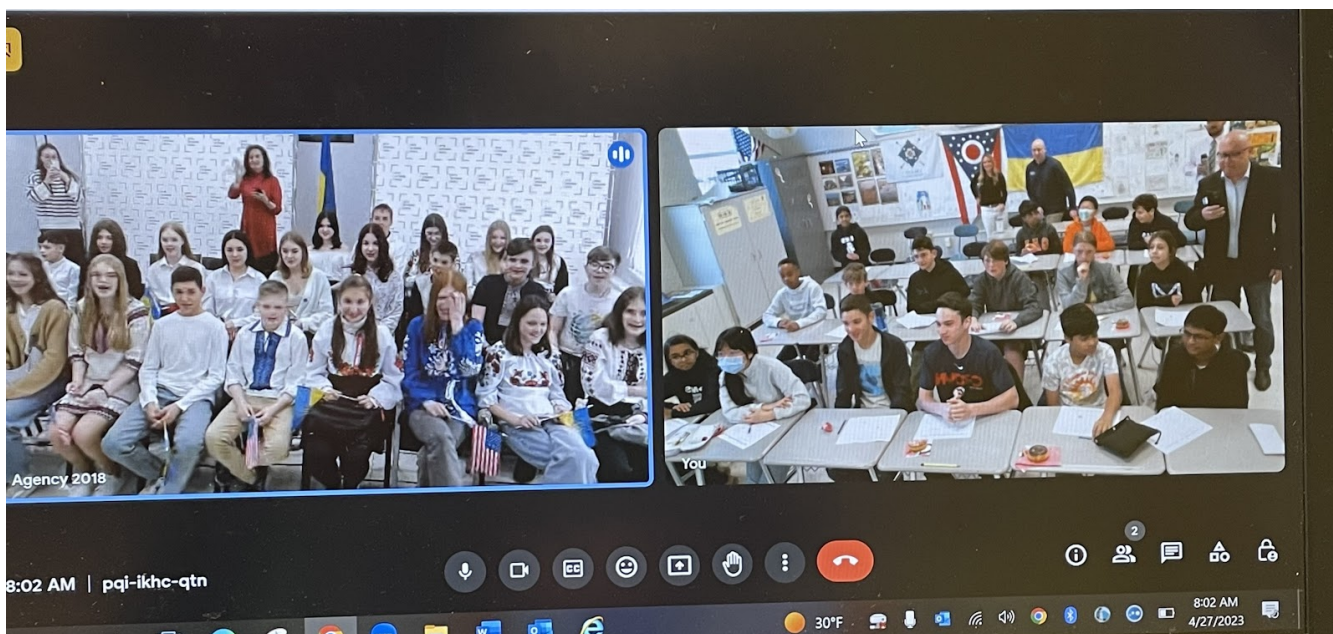
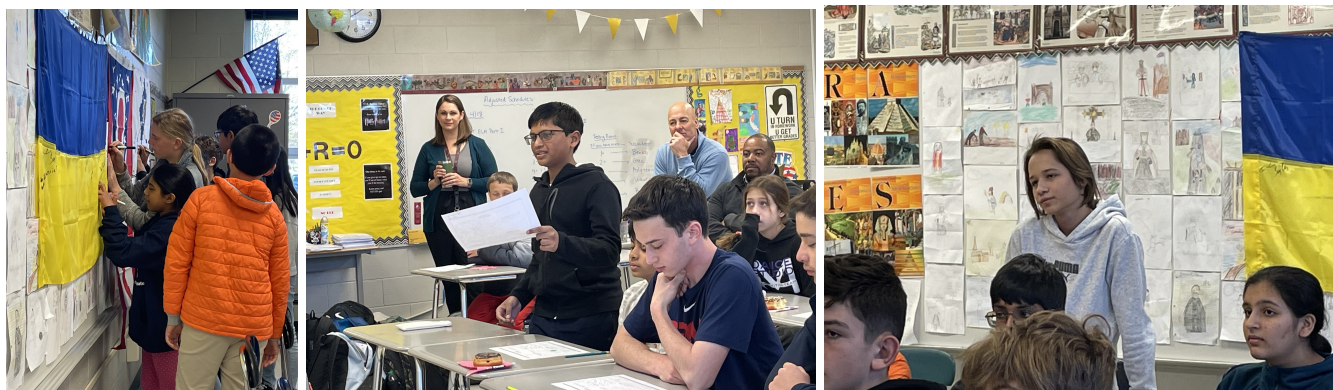
The success Solon students experience in choosing their “right match” college or other post-SHS plan is a reflection on the hard work of the high school’s counselors and staff, which includes relationship building with admissions professionals at the nation’s colleges, universities and technical programs. Solon High School has always had a positive reputation throughout Ohio as having outstanding students, but now SHS and its students are known nationally as well.



CULTURAL CONNECTIONS - LIVE INTERACTIONS WITH STUDENTS IN UKRAINE

Solon Middle School students are participating in a real-time cultural connection with students in Ukraine. The Ukrainian students attend a specialized math/language/biology school with 1,600 students in Bila Tserkva on the outskirts of Kyiv. The SMS and Ukrainian students connected over Google Meet for 40 minutes before school last week and shared information about their schools and about themselves. The students found they shared many commonalities, including love of dance, sports, the arts and video games. The SMS students also learned about the area of the school where the Ukrainian students must shelter nearly every day when the air raid sirens sound.

The connection is being facilitated through, URGENT, or Ukraine Relief & Giving Effort Non-Profit TogetherShip, a local organization. The students will meet next in mid-May and continue the connection into the future with the goal of building solid communication that will turn into international friendships.



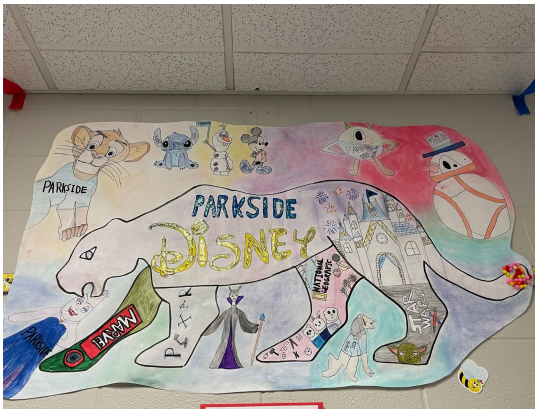
PICASSO-INSPIRED FACES

As part of their study of Pablo Picasso and his cubism style, Roxbury second graders created distinctive faces in the style of Picasso during a recent art lesson. Art teacher Dennis Martin told the students how Picasso rejected the traditional ways of realism portraits and instead painted in the cubism style by using more color and shapes. Students used oil pastels for the portraits since they blend easily and the colors can be layered to add texture, allowing for experimenting with color mixing and blending techniques.



PARKSIDE PANTHERS MEET MICKEY MOUSE

Each year, Parkside fourth grade students work in teams to design panthers in keeping with a theme. These large panthers are one of the focal points for the annual spring art show. This year's theme was Disney and the resulting themed panthers did not disappoint. Many Parkside students arrived at the art show last week dressed as their favorite Disney characters to celebrate their special panthers!



SOLON JAZZ ROOTS RUN DEEP

Solon High School's Jazz Band spent August 19 learning from professional artists as part of the DownBeat Jazz Education Days in conjunction with the annual Tri-C JazzFest. The student musicians participated in workshops and playing opportunities with the professional musicians led by Solon alum and renowned jazz trumpet player Dominick Farinacci.

The students enjoyed learning from the professionals, but they are also fortunate to learn from one of the best here in Solon - band director Mark Mauldin. Earlier this month, Mark was announced as an inductee into the 2023 Class of Cleveland Jazz Legends. "For decades, you have taught hundreds of students about the significant and uniqueness of jazz," Terri Pontremoli, Tri-C JazzFest director, said of Mr. Mauldin. "In addition, you have been an important musician on our jazz scene, performing at JazzFest as well as area clubs and theaters. We are grateful to have you in Cleveland, helping us grow Cleveland's jazz legacy."



CELEBRATING PROM & GRADUATION SAFELY



With prom and graduation just around the corner, the Solon Schools are urging students to make wise choices by celebrating responsibly and parents and local businesses that host underage student parties to ensure these gatherings are drug and alcohol free.

Ohio underage drinking laws include penalties for adults who enable underage drinking that occurs on property under their control. The law covers underage drinking in private homes as well as at hotels, motels, campgrounds and other public places like restaurants, according to the state Department of Safety Ohio Investigative Unit, which is charged with enforcing the liquor laws.

Parents/guardians should be aware of the following:

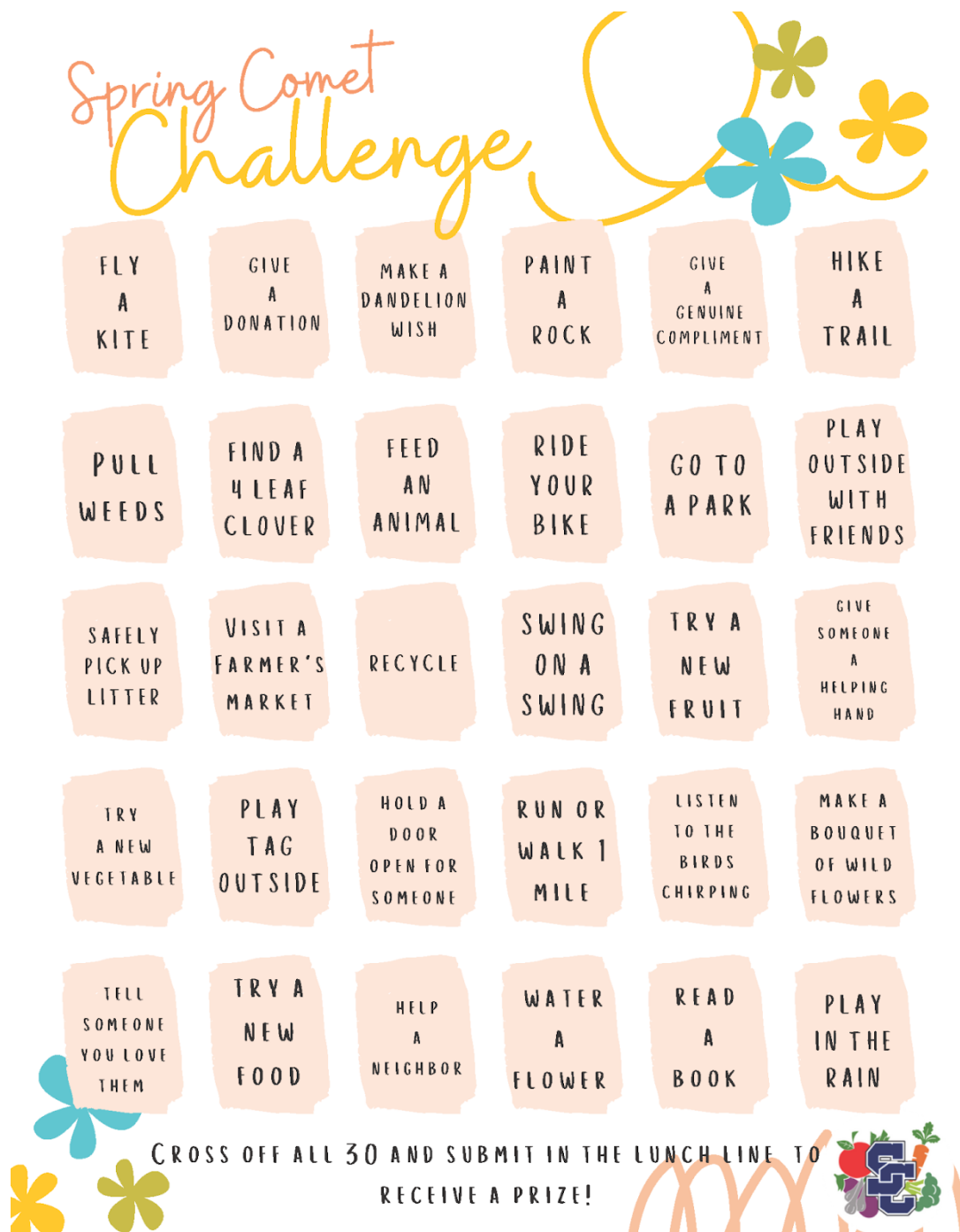
- *It is illegal to provide a place for an underage child and their friends to drink in a "safe" environment. In fact, parents are not permitted to provide alcohol to children under 21, who are not their own, even if it is in a private home and with the other parents' permission. Adults convicted of providing alcohol to a child under 21 years of age face maximum sentences of six months in jail and/or a \$1,000 fine.*
- *It is illegal to purchase alcohol for anyone under 21. Adults who purchase, sell or provide alcoholic beverages to underage children face a \$1,000 fine and/or up to six months in jail.*
- *Anyone under 21 who is caught driving with a blood alcohol concentration of .02 percent or higher, a level that is possible after just one or two drinks, can be arrested. Driving under the influence is punishable by suspension of a driver's license for at least 90 days and up to a maximum of two years, plus four points added to a driving record.*
- *It is illegal to have an open container of alcohol in a motor vehicle.*

If an after-prom or graduation party is held at a private home and the parents knowingly allow underage teens to drink alcohol, the teenagers and the parents are both violating the law. In addition, the parents can be held liable for any injuries or damage caused by a teenager who has consumed alcohol at their home.

State law also prohibits the use of false identification by a person under the age of 21 for the purpose of purchasing alcohol and the possession of an alcoholic beverage anywhere by minors, including in a public place or car.

SPRING COMET CHALLENGE

Good nutrition and regular physical activity are important to the health and well-being of our students. Schools play an important role in helping students develop healthier eating and exercise behaviors and habits, but we cannot do it alone. Making a real difference takes a community-wide effort, with families leading the way, to promote, support and model wellness. So, join us as part of our district wellness policy in taking the Spring Comet Challenge! Students can print out the challenge and turn in their completed sheet to their school lunch room for a reward!



Spring Comet Challenge

FLY A KITE	GIVE A DONATION	MAKE A DANDELION WISH	PAINT A ROCK	GIVE A GENUINE COMPLIMENT	HIKE A TRAIL
PULL WEEDS	FIND A 4 LEAF CLOVER	FEED AN ANIMAL	RIDE YOUR BIKE	GO TO A PARK	PLAY OUTSIDE WITH FRIENDS
SAFELY PICK UP LITTER	VISIT A FARMER'S MARKET	RECYCLE	SWING ON A SWING	TRY A NEW FRUIT	GIVE SOMEONE A HELPING HAND
TRY A NEW VEGETABLE	PLAY TAG OUTSIDE	HOLD A DOOR OPEN FOR SOMEONE	RUN OR WALK 1 MILE	LISTEN TO THE BIRDS CHIRPING	MAKE A BOUQUET OF WILD FLOWERS
TELL SOMEONE YOU LOVE THEM	TRY A NEW FOOD	HELP A NEIGHBOR	WATER A FLOWER	READ A BOOK	PLAY IN THE RAIN

CROSS OFF ALL 30 AND SUBMIT IN THE LUNCH LINE TO
RECEIVE A PRIZE!