

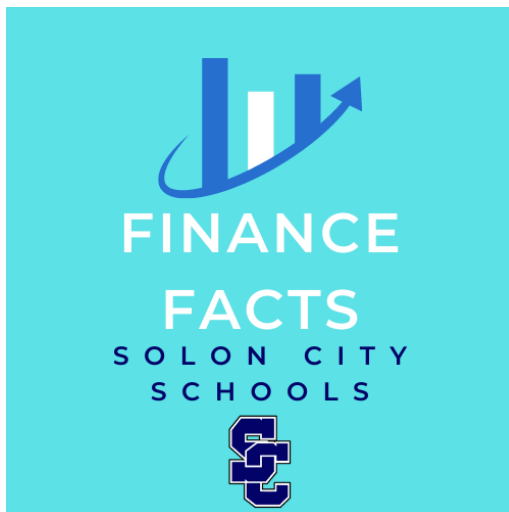
Know Your Schools ... Online

Good News You Can Use about the Solon Schools.

Friday, March 24, 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.

FINANCE FACTS: DISTRICT FACES STEEP LOSSES UNDER PENDING STATE LEGISLATION



Although it is still early in the process, several bills introduced in the current state legislative session would have a devastating impact on the district's bottom line. The most onerous of these bills is House Bill 1, which in its current form calls for a flat state income tax rate that would result in a \$1.2 billion reduction in state revenues. To recoup that loss in the state's coffers, HB 1 proposes substantial changes to property taxes, such as eliminating the existing "rollback," or credits, the state currently pays for property owners.

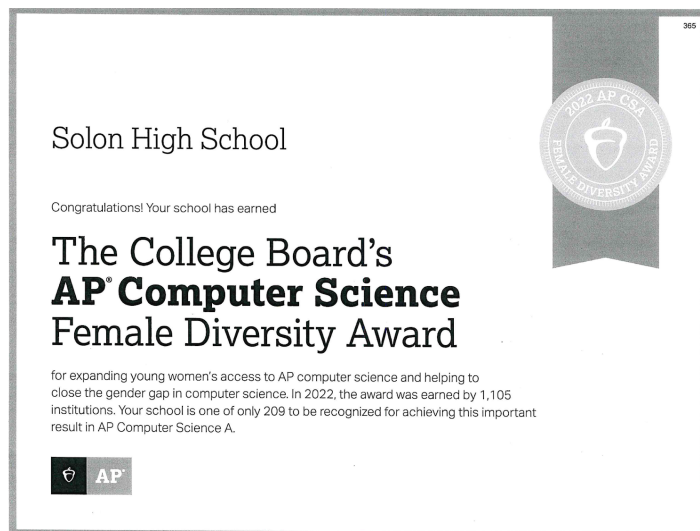
The proposed income tax reductions from a flattening of the tax rate would not mute the significant property tax increases businesses and homeowners would face if HB 1 is enacted. As currently drafted, HB 1 would result in an annual direct funding loss of \$1.1 million to the Solon Schools, plus our business and residential taxpayers would face an unvoted property tax increase due to the elimination of the rollback credits. HB 1 would also result in an increased property tax burden of approximately 5 mills for our businesses and homeowners. In real dollars, this change would cost the owner of a \$300,000 home an additional \$525 a year in property taxes. This is a double hit for our community and the schools as taxpayers would face unvoted increases and the district would still lose more than \$1 million a year.

There are significant unintended consequences of this legislation, calling into question whether the bill can advance. The district has been in direct contact with our state lawmakers and to express opposition to the bill as currently written due to the potential financial losses for our schools and the increased property tax implications for our residents and businesses.

We will continue to keep you updated on HB 1 and other pending legislation with serious implications for our district's finances. In the meantime, please read the [HB 1 TALKING POINTS](#) to learn more about how HB 1 would compound previous revenue losses resulting from state tax law changes that our district and community have had to absorb.

AP COMPUTER SCIENCE FEMALE DIVERSITY AWARD

Solon High School just received an AP Computer Science Female Diversity Award. The award is presented by the College Board to schools for expanding young women's access to AP computer science and helping to close the gender gap in computer science. SHS is one of just 209 U.S. schools to receive the award for achieving this result in AP Computer Science A. An introductory college-level course, AP Computer Science A focuses on helping students understand coding as well as designing, writing, analyzing and testing code.



EXPLORING THE WORLD OF WORK



Roxbury students engaged in hands-on and interactive learning about the wide range of careers they could consider during the school's annual Explore the World of Work Day on March 10. Working their way through the mini-career fair, the students visited 25 exhibits showcasing such careers as nursing, architecture, law, firefighting and medicine. More than 125 parent and community volunteers spent 500 volunteer hours on EWOW Day to make this student-favorite event possible.



INTERNET SAFETY PROGRAM FOR TEENS AND FAMILIES

The Solon Police Department will be sharing important information for students and families to help safeguard students online and on social media during an April 4 program at 6:30 p.m. in the Solon High School Wellness Center. Specifically, the program will address cyberbullying, cyberstalking, sexting and sextortion. The program is aimed at middle and high School teens and families and will include time for questions.

[REGISTER FOR THE APRIL 4 INTERNET SAFETY PROGRAM HERE.](https://forms.gle/L7LWtqEvGCKOL637)



LEWIS SECOND GRADE INTERNATIONAL FEAST



Lewis Elementary second graders and their families celebrated the diversity of their school community at the annual International Feast. This event is a long-time Lewis tradition featuring a potluck dinner to culminate the students' geography unit on world cultures. Each family brings a dish to share representing their family culture, traditions or heritage. Among the countries represented in the dishes students brought to share were Albania, Italy, Algeria, Germany, Israel, Iran, Poland, Ukraine, China, Ireland and Russia. Many students also wore

traditional clothing. Student volunteers from Solon High School helped facilitate themed activities including Chinese jump rope.



BUILDING OUR COMETS COMMUNITY: MODEL U.N. ETHNIC EXPO

Led by the Model U.N. club, Solon High School's cultural clubs staged their annual Ethnic Expo this month to spread awareness and celebrate the diversity of the school community. The high-energy event showcased traditional foods, clothing, music and dancing. The student members of the SHS culture clubs spent hours designing their exhibits, planning the food they would serve and activities they would share with the community members who attended the Ethnic Expo. Their inspiration created a festive and engaging ambiance.



DR. SEUSS WEEK IN PARKSIDE KINDERGARTEN CLASSROOMS

Each year, the Parkside Kindergarten teachers plan a Dr. Seuss-themed literacy week. Classrooms feature a different book each day read by guest readers. Superintendent Fred Bolden kicks off the week each year as the guest reader for *The Cat in the Hat*. Guest readers are an effective way to get some of our youngest students excited about reading.



STRATEGIC PLANNING WORKING GROUPS

This month, our responsive practices strategic planning work group met several times to continue the work identified in the actions plans for this area. The 25-member team includes district psychologists, social workers, counselors, pyramid coaches and teacher leaders. They worked on several aspects of the strategic plan centered around data collection and analysis.

The communications working group has also begun its process of collecting data to design and implement more streamlined communications procedures and protocols that meet the needs of all district stakeholders.



CAREER TECH EDUCATION: SPARKING STUDENTS' FUTURES



Solon High School senior Samarra Sharpley is getting a jump start on her career in culinary arts by participating in a 2-year program through Excel TECC, the career technical education consortium serving students from Solon and nine other area schools. She is getting real-world experience in restaurant kitchens while she hones her skills and culinary talents. To learn more about Samarra's work and educational experience, watch this feature story from News 5 Cleveland:

<https://www.news5cleveland.com/news/local-news/oh-cuyahoga/teens-find-recipe-for-success-in-beach-wood-bistro-student-run-restaurant>.

Solon juniors and seniors have the opportunity to participate in one of 22 different career technical education programs offered through Excel TECC. The goal of Excel TECC is preparing students to enter a 4-year college, a 2-year technical school or enter the workforce through the career of their choosing. Career and Technical Education integrates academics in a relevant curriculum and prepares students to be college- and career-ready by providing core academic skills, employability skills and technical, job-specific skills. Through College Tech Prep agreements, students are able to earn from 3-28 college credits in their career technical programs while still in high school.

SPEECH & DEBATE REPEAT STATE CHAMPIONS - AGAIN!

The Solon High School Speech & Debate team has won its second State Championship in two years! Solon placed 1st out of 84 teams competing at States. On their way to a state crown, 27 of the 52 Solon qualifiers finished at octafinalists, quarterfinalists, semi-finalists and above. Dev Ahuja is a State Champion in U.S. Extemporaneous Speaking and Viresh Mittal and Sarah Liao are State Champions in Policy Debate. Congratulations to Vikram Sundaram, who was named the 2023 District Student of the Year by the National Speech & Debate Association.



Fifteen team members have already qualified for the national tournament in Phoenix in June.

LET'S DANCE!

Solon Middle School 8th graders danced the night away at the end-of-the-quarter dance on March 16. These dances resumed last year and have been very well received by the student body. The events enable students to build connections with their peers in a fun and relaxed atmosphere.



SMS SOCIAL ADVOCATES for YOUTH

A group of Solon Middle School students participated in the SAY 8th Grade Youth Forum at John Carroll University this month. Through a series of group discussions and activities, students from around the area talked about the importance of being positive influences and leaders. All of the students who attend the forum, along with the school's SAY social worker Logan Babcock, have shown leadership over the past two years at SMS.



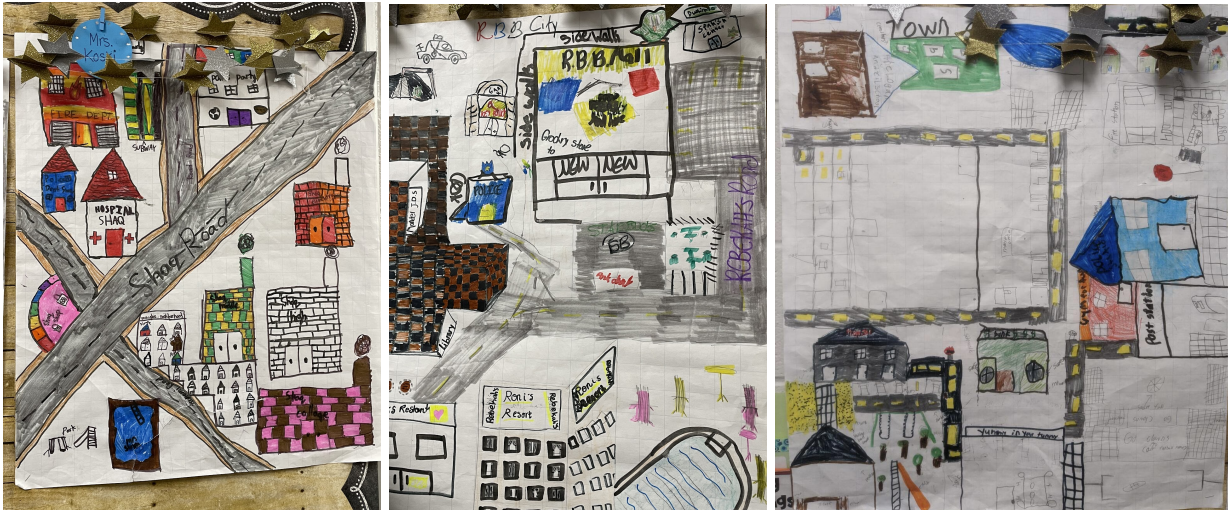
CHARTING A COURSE OF THEIR OWN DESIGN

Using their creativity and imagination, Parkside students designed treasure maps as part of a recent geography lesson for social studies. Specifically, the students drew a map with required elements and listed all of the elements in a map key. By designing a map of their own, students are able to apply the skills they are learning in reading maps of all kinds and understanding geographical elements.



CITY SCAPES

Lewis students became urban planners this month. As part of a government unit in social studies, the students collaborated to develop a city concept. The students depicted elements of government and public services such as roads, schools, and police and fire departments. Through their group discussions and planning, they made laws and consequences for their cities and showed evidence of those laws by including elements such as stop signs, cross walks, courts, jails, speed limit signs and trash cans.



HISTORY CONNECTIONS - HOLOCAUST SURVIVOR MEETS WITH 9th GRADERS

Holocaust survivor Roni Berenson shared her harrowing story of life in Nazi Germany and fortunate escape to the United States - and Cleveland - during a presentation to Solon High School world history students this month. She detailed poignant remembrances of her life as a young girl in Berlin, where she witnessed brutal changes in the society around her, including public humiliation and beatings of other German Jews.

Now 92, Mrs. Berenson was in 5th grade in 1941 when her family finally secured passage on a transport train through France and onto a Spanish freighter ship headed for the United States, one of the last to bring refugees out of Europe during the war. She is one of only three students in her 5th grade class to survive the Holocaust and one of few living survivors today.



She talked about the tragedy of millions of lives, including 6 million Jews, lost during the Holocaust and other genocides such as in Darfur and Myanmar. "I hope you remember that terrible things can happen when we don't respect each other and have hate for other people," she told the students.

SOLON HIGH SCHOOL DRAMA CLUB SPRING MUSICAL

The cast and crew are hard at work on this year's spring musical production, *The Addams Family*!

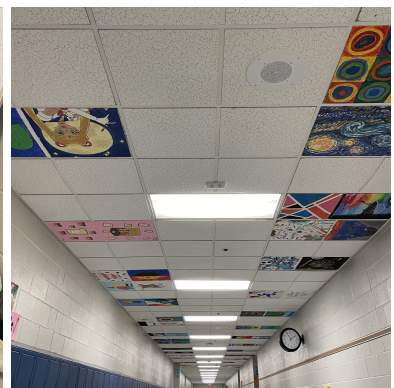


Tickets are on sale now through the Solon [Show Ticket Portal](#). Showtimes are April 20–22 at 7 p.m. and April 23 at 2 p.m. Tickets are \$16 for adults and \$12 for students and senior citizens. Solon and Glenwillow senior citizens are free.

The Addams Family is a comedy embracing the wackiness in every family. *(Parental guidance suggested)*

STOP - AND LOOK AROUND

Solon Middle School art students are carrying on the tradition of leaving their mark on the school with their artistic talents. The students are in the process of designing and painting their own ceiling tiles for the school hallways. If you are ever at SMS, be sure to look up - you won't want to miss the view!



25th ANNUAL SENIOR RECOGNITION DINNER

Many educators influence the academic path students take, but often there is one special teacher, coach or adviser who stands above the others and makes a significant impact on a student. The top 15 academic seniors in the Class of 2023 recently honored their “most influential” educators during the annual Senior Recognition Dinner, underwritten by Nestle. The educators did not learn which student had invited them until they arrived at the dinner. The students had varied reasons for selecting the educator they honored, from helping to prepare them for life outside the classroom to inspiring a love of learning. This year’s honored students and educators are:

Matthew Charney
Eshan Haq
Sarah Liao
James Mayer
Zimiao Meng
Viresh Mittal
Laura Mo
Janaki Nair
Helen Otterman
Aidan Pitzel
Ava Preston
Manikantha Puram
Joshua Russman
Vikram Sundaram
Nicole Zhang

Amy Charney, middle school Family & Consumer Science
Kirk Gielink, high school AP Economics
Val Parillo, middle school English
Daniel McKeen, high school AP Computer Science
Jeff Grimm, high school AP Biology
Bryan Ashkettle, high school AP Government
Ron Fabo, high school AP Physics
Nanci Bush, high school AP English
Nan Csarny, high school AP Calculus
Rob Rivera, high school AP European History
Aaron Jeter, high school AP Psychology
Teresa Pace, high school AP Seminar/Research
Ann Trocchio, high school counselor/Student Council adviser
Dan Ceci, elementary counselor/Speech & Debate coach
Brad Sims, high school counselor



CHANGES OVER TIME - SECOND GRADE HISTORY LESSON

Roxbury second graders got a close-up look at artifacts from the Solon Historical Society this month to help them make connections between the past and the present as part of their social studies learning. Many of the items the students learned about have historical relevance to Solon, including the hand-held school bell that belonged to teacher Grace Roxbury, a photograph of an early Solon school built in 1867 and a soda bottle from the Solon Springs bottling company. In comparing the past to current-day, the students learned that if they had gone to school in the past, they would have used a chalkboard slate for most of their work and their school would have had no electricity or indoor plumbing.



WHAT DO YOU DO ON THE NIGHT BEFORE A DAY OFF SCHOOL? GO TO THE LEWIS CARNIVAL!



Food, fun and friends were in full force this month as students and families enjoyed the return of the Lewis Carnival. Being the first full all-school festival since the pandemic, the carnival was well attended and the atmosphere electric. The kids participated in games to win prizes, got spray-on temporary tattoos and balloon animals, and of course, ate amazing carnival-themed food.



READERS GET SPRINKLES

Orchard students who completed a recent book reading challenge earned a sweet reward: An end-of-the day sundae bar! To qualify, the students had to record their book titles and important information about the book on a graphic organizer.



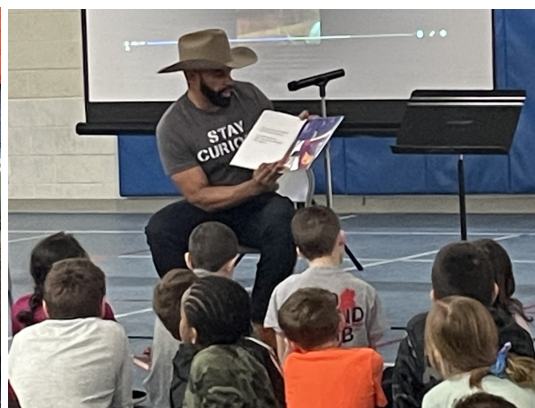
SOLON HIGH SCHOOL SUPER STACKS

School spirit was sticky and stacked high this week as seniors took on the faculty for Solon High School's first-ever "Senior Stack Attack" pancake eating contest. Throughout each lunch period, students and staff members raced to finish a 10-high pancake stack. The fastest times of the day were clocked by science teacher Joe Bubonics and senior George Hanna, who downed their stacks in 2:02 and 2:03 respectively! The fun event was sponsored by SHS Student Council, which kept the pancakes coming hot off the griddle for all five lunch periods.



CONNECTING BOOKS AND BRAINS AT ROXBURY

Roxbury students enjoyed an assembly packed with literacy, social studies and science connections this month. Solon High School social studies teacher Aaron Jeter visited the school to discuss some of the opportunities awaiting them at SHS. He talked about different social studies classes, such as history, geography and psychology (the study of the brain), and brought small animal brains from the SHS science department for the students to see and safely touch. He explained that the hippocampus is the part of the brain responsible for memory and told the students that reading, memory and rhyming are excellent exercises for their brains just like jumping jacks, pushups and sit ups are exercises for their bodies. Finally, he read his new children's book "Weekends with Dad," written in rhyming prose.



RED CROSS CLUB BLOOD DRIVE



Nearly 50 Solon High School students and staff members gave the gift of life this month at the school's annual blood drive. Organized by the school's Red Cross Club, students and staff were able to easily donate blood during a lunch or free period. Many of the students were first-time donors and reported positive experiences.

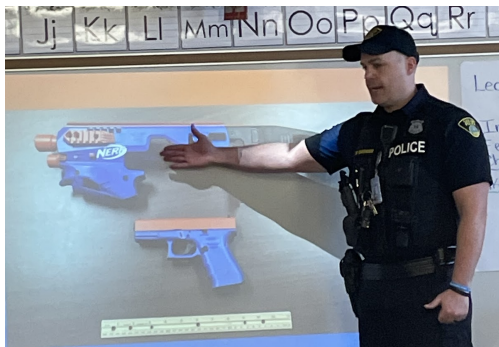


STEM SPOTLIGHT: ASPIRATIONS IN COMPUTING AWARDS



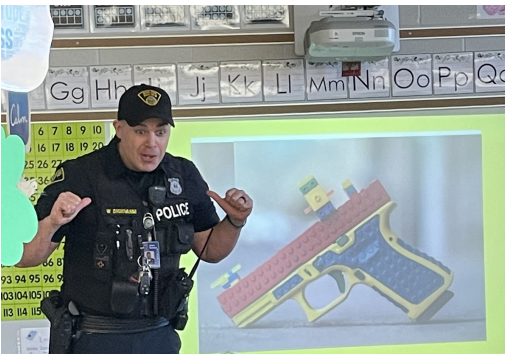
Seven Solon High School students received 2023 NCWIT Aspirations in Computing Awards for their computing-related achievements and interests. Award recipients are selected based on their aptitude and aspirations in technology and computing, as demonstrated by their computing experience, computing-related activities, leadership experience, tenacity in the face of barriers to access as well as their future plans. "Encouraging all students' interest in technology careers is critical," according to NCWIT. "Our workforce needs their creativity and unique perspectives to produce technology that is as broad and innovative as the population it serves." Solon's honorees are Affiliate Rising Stars Ayushi Mukherjee, Sahana Khanna, Jialing Zhu, Mrunmayi Warade, Laura Mo and Zaynah Wahab and Affiliate Honorable Mention Nicole Zhang.

SAFETY PRESENTATIONS



Throughout the year, members of the Solon Police Department spend time with students in various classes to provide direct information about topics related to safety. This month, Officer Courtenay Perkins spoke to Solon High School health classes about traffic safety, outlining specific laws, including the new distracted driving legislation, which makes using a phone or other device while driving a primary traffic offense.

Additionally, Officer Liz Hurford visited DARE/Decision Making classes at Solon Middle School to speak with students about Alcohol and Cannabis Impairment. Students learned how alcohol and cannabis affect the body and how alcohol impairs drivers. Students were able to experience simulated alcohol impairment by wearing special goggles and attempting to walk in a straight line.



First graders at Parkside Elementary learned about gun safety from Solon DARE Officer Billy DiGiovani. With incidents over the past year in which Solon residents found loaded firearms on a lawn and on a daycare center playground, this type of specific lesson for students is important and relevant. Officer DiGiovanni stressed that real guns can be easily disguised as toys. He used a song and video to emphasize that students must always "Stop, Don't Touch, Run Away and Tell a Grown Up" if they ever see a gun.

