

Superintendent Report

Sweet Home Central School District

Michael V. Ginestre
July 5, 2022

We Are Sweet Home

Tonight's Presentations

- District Safety Plan/Code of Conduct
- Recognize Roman Haen, Student Ex-officio
- Kristina Pinkowski, Therapy Dog Program
- Federal Funding Presentation
- Superintendent Report

Sweet Home Central School District

"EVERY STUDENT, ONE COMMUNITY, READY FOR THE FUTURE."

Public Hearing: District-Wide School Safety Plan & Code of Conduct

Sweet Home CSD

July 5, 2022

District Safety Committee 21-22

- *Ray Bailey, Middle School Assistant Principal*
- *JoAnn Balazs, Assistant Superintendent*
- *Sheryl Burke, Heritage Heights Senior Clerk*
- *Marissa Dauria, Athletics Director*
- *Joleen Dimitroff, Glendale Principal*
- *Bob Ehlenfield, Systems Engineer*
- *Donald Feldmann, Director of Finance*
- *Kristin Gernatt , Middle School Teacher*
- *Rebecca Harmon, High School Senior Clerk*
- *Wendy Januchowski, Willow Ridge Counselor*
- *Marianne Jasen, Board of Education*
- *David Awald, SRO / Amherst Police*
- *David Kasprowicz, Erie 1 BOCES*
- *Lynn Kawa, Glendale Counselor*
- *Matt LaRoach, High School Teacher*
- *Dina Mann, Middle School Teacher*
- *Jason Phillips, Middle School Custodian*
- *John Radens, Community Member*
- *Stephen Rozler, Supervisor of Buildings & Grounds*
- *Ona Strang, Willow Ridge Senior Clerk*
- *Linda VanDette, Heritage Heights Nurse*
- *Joelle VanDewater, Maplemere Teacher*
- *Robert Weselak, Director of Transportation*
- *Karen DeLaPlante, High School Assistant Principal*
- *Rob Woodford, Parent/ Community Member*

District Safety Committee

- District Safety Committee is charged with reviewing the following on an annual basis:
  - ➢ District-Wide School Safety Plan
  - ➢ Code of Conduct (and Plain Language Version of Code of Conduct)

District-Wide School Safety Plans

Per NYS Education Law §2801-a and NYS Commissioner's Regulations §155.17, public school districts must adopt a District-Wide School Safety Plan and building-level Emergency Response Plans for each school building

- District-Wide Safety Plan:
  - annual public comment for a 30-day period
  - includes an annual public hearing
  - approved by the Board of Education by September 1

Building-Level Emergency Response Plans

- Building-Level Emergency Response Plans:
  - Confidential, detailed information on how school personnel and students should respond to different types of emergencies
  - shared with law enforcement agencies and emergency responders
  - submitted to NYSED by the October 1 annually

District-Wide School Safety Plans

SECTION 1000: GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

- Purpose, District-Wide Safety Team Members, Concept of Operations, Plan Review and Public Comment

SECTION 2000: GENERAL EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLANNING

- Identification of Sites of Potential Emergencies
- Plans for Taking the Following Actions in Response to an Emergency Where Appropriate
- District Resources Available for Use During an Emergency
- Descriptions of Procedures to Coordinate School District Resources and Manpower During Emergencies
- Procedures for Annual Multi-Hazard School Training for Staff and Students
- Procedures for the Review and Conduct of Drills and Other Exercises to Test the Components of the Plan

District-Wide School Safety Plans

SECTION 3000: RESPONDING TO THREATS AND ACTS OF VIOLENCE

- Policies and Procedures for Responding to Implied or Direct Threats of Violence by Students, Teachers, Visitors and Others
- Standard Operating Procedures for Emergencies
- Policies and Procedures to Contact Parents, Guardians or Persons in Parental Relation in the Event of a Violent Incident or an Early Dismissal.

District-Wide School Safety Plans

SECTION 4000: COMMUNICATION WITH OTHERS

- Description of the Arrangements for Obtaining Assistance From Emergency Responders and Local Government Agencies
- Article 2-B of the Executive Law
- Non-Public School Information and Procedures to Contact

District-Wide School Safety Plans

SECTION 5000: PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION STRATEGIES

- Policies and Procedures Related to School Building Security
- Policies and Procedures for the Dissemination of Informative Materials Regarding the Early Detection of Potentially Violent Behaviors
- Appropriate Prevention and Intervention Strategies
- Strategies for Improving Communication Between Students and Staff and Reporting Potentially Violent Incidents
- Description of Duties and Required Training of Hall Monitors and Other School Safety Personnel
- Crisis Management Plan

District-Wide School Safety Plans

APPENDICES:

- Appendix I: Buildings covered by the District Plan
- Appendix II: Outside Resources
- Appendix III: Law Enforcement & Security Professional Services Contracts/MOUs
- Appendix IV: Public Employer Health Emergency Plan

Committee Recommendations

- District Safety Plan
  - **No changes recommended to the 2022-23 District-Wide Safety Plan aside from updating demographic information (names and numbers of staff), updated contracts with Amherst PD and Vista Security, and other non-substantive updates as appropriate**

Code of Conduct

Per NYS Education Law 2801, all school districts must adopt a Code of Conduct for the maintenance of order on school property:

- District Safety Committee reviews and updates the Code of Conduct annually and makes recommendations to the BOE for adoption
- The District holds at least one public hearing annually on the proposed Code of Conduct.
- The BOE adopts the Code of Conduct.
- A plain language version of the Code of Conduct is disseminated to all students and families.
- The full version is posted on the District's website & copied to NYSED

Code of Conduct

I. Introduction
II. Definitions
III. Student Rights and Responsibilities
IV. Essential Partners
V. Student Civility & Dress Code
VI. Prohibited Student Conduct
VII. Reporting Violations

Code of Conduct

VIII. Disciplinary Consequences, Procedures, and Referrals
IX. Alternative Instruction
X. Discipline of Students with Disabilities
XI Corporal Punishment
XII Student Searches and Interrogations
XIII. Visitors to Schools
XIV. Public Conduct on School Property
XV. Dissemination of Code of Conduct

Committee Recommendations

- Code of Conduct:
  - Section IV, Prohibited Student Conduct
    - Section 4: Conduct that endangers the safety, morals, health or welfare of others:
      - Remove: Internet Bullying
      - Add: Cyber Violations

In response to Internet/social media issues, the committee recommended updating language to better address online behaviors that impact student welfare

Recommendations:Code of Conduct

<u>"Cyber" violations</u>- i*nappropriate and/or unauthorized use of technology (i.e., personal electronic devices such as smartphones or cell phones; computers; cameras; video and/or audio taping equipment; software; etc.) and/or the Internet to engage in behaviors including, but not limited to bullying, intimidating, threatening, harassing, maligning and/or defaming others, accessing websites for non-academic purposes (e.g.social networking; media downloads, etc.), as well as use of unauthorized proxies or "tunneling". Cyber violations also include violations of the Acceptable Use Policy. Such behavior may result in disciplinary action regardless of whether it occurs on school property and/or at school-sponsored events or off-campus when a nexus between the behavior and substantial disruption to the school environment or material interference with school activities exists or is foreseen to exist.*

30-Day Public Comment Period

- District-Wide Safety Plan & Code of Conduct are posted on Website for Public Review
- Comment Period runs **June 21 to July 20**
- Submit Comments to JoAnn Balazs
- Plans are scheduled for Board Approval at the August voting meeting

Questions?



We Are Sweet Home

Therapy Dog/Service Animal Policy Update

- Looking to update policy on service animals to include the implementation of a Therapy Dog Program in the District.
- Vetted by policy committee on June 8.
- Therapy dogs are highly trained and are designed to help ease anxiety and increase focus in the classroom.
- Kristina Pinkowski is here tonight to present to the Board on the program.



Sweet Home Central School District

Therapy Dog Program

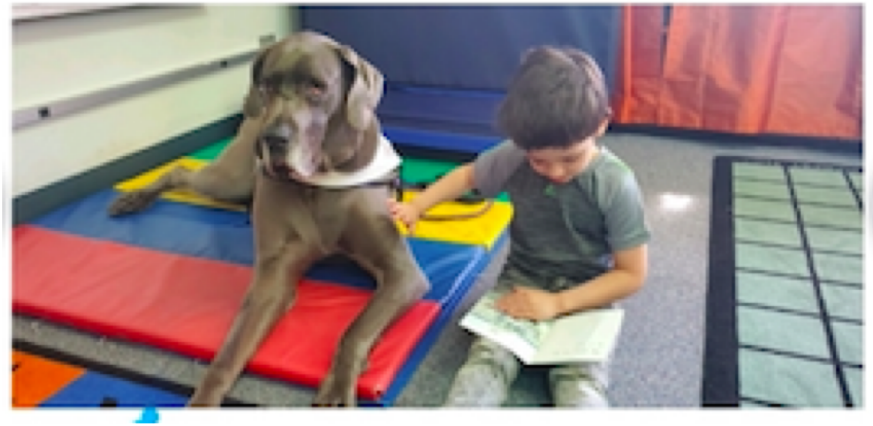
Please click link above to therapy dog handbook



Introduction

Therapy dogs have a significant impact on:

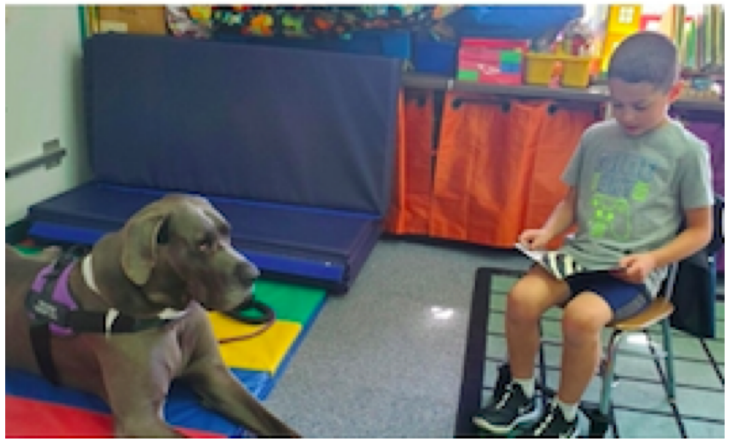
- the enhancement of a child's psychological development
- can improve social skills, increase self-esteem among other benefits
- can teach responsibility, compassion and respect for other living things.
- can calm fears, relieve anxiety, relieve stress and teach necessary skills





- Can make a measurable difference in terms of gaining various skills such as reading enhancement
- Can contribute to emotional and relational development
- Can decrease anxiety
- Can enable students to work through issues such as anger management, bullying tendencies and other psycho/social problems
- Can serve as a catalyst for forming adaptive and satisfactory social interactions
- Can help with guided activities and group discussions to help teach students learn how to handle interpersonal conflicts and to develop constructive responses.

When a child is able to regulate his/her emotional and relational skills, they are ready to learn; thus they have the maximum ability to benefit from classroom instruction.



Therapy dog programs in the Sweet Home Central School District will be designed to support instructional goals

Description of Program

Therapy dogs in schools is a specific, research-based (academic and mental health) intervention program that is designed to achieve established goals.

The therapy dog intervention is intentionally incorporated in health, education and human service for the purpose of therapeutic gains and improved health and wellness.

The therapy dog is certified and trained, working under the direction of a certified, and registered professional, as part of a larger intervention program.

Program Principles

- Research-based
- Purposeful, based on goals
- Requires district approval and adherence to the Sweet Home Central School board policy and implementation guidelines
- Part of the multi-tiered system of mental health and academic support
- An experiential intervention provided by a professional who is certified as a Therapy Dog handler, working under his/her direct scope of practice
- Provided in systematic, designated areas with progress monitoring and data collection to determine efficacy and efficiency

How Therapy Dog Programs can be Implemented in Schools

- During individual counseling sessions (scheduled)
- During small group counseling sessions (scheduled)
- During small class instruction (planned and scheduled)
- During large class instruction (as planned and scheduled)
- During large class sessions (planned and scheduled)
- In the hallways and other common areas during designated times

At all times when a therapy dog is in the school building, the dog's presence will always be under the strict supervision of his/her Owner/Handler and will work exclusively toward the goals and objectives established.

Progress toward the goals of the program will be regularly evaluated and adjustments may be made to respond to the available data.

The Value of a Therapy Dog Visit

- Animals have long been recognized as a positive addition to the healing process (both physical and mental).
- In facilities, visits from Therapy Dogs have shown an increased happiness, calmness, and overall improved emotional well-being.
- Studies have shown a decrease in blood pressure and stress levels during Therapy Dog visits.
- Therapy Dogs provide a break from the daily routine of school and loneliness for students and staff.

Purpose

- Increase a positive culture and climate within the educational setting.
- Increase the social-emotional well being of the students and staff.
- Increase the sense of belonging for students that could lead to better attendance outcomes.
- Support for student academic achievement.



Goals & Objectives of Program

1. ***Improve culture and general mood of the school***

Therapy dogs provide many healing effects including:

- Reduced stress and anxiety/anxiousness
- Decreased feelings of depression, loneliness and feelings of isolation
- Decrease in aggressive behaviors
- Increase in socialization resulting in a sense of happiness and well-being
- Increase in mental stimulation
- Increase emotional support during crisis situations
- Decrease of blood pressure
- Release of strain and tension
- Can draw out a person from loneliness and depression.

Goals & Objectives of Program

2. *Make a connection with at-risk students to improve behavior and attendance*

- The emotional well-being of students is a large factor in their success.
- The presence of a therapy dog can give students a sense of happiness that allows them to perform better academically.
- Dogs have been incorporated into schools in order to allow children to discuss issues with a truly impartial listener.
- There are many children who struggle to open up to a mental health provider or teacher about issues that they are facing. Interaction with animals can relieve their anxiety and improve their mood.

The therapy dog will give our mental health staff the opportunities to talk with children that otherwise wouldn't share how they feel about a specific situation. Children may find comfort in talking with the dog, and in turn will be willing to share with a trusted adult.

Many children who experience emotional troubles often lack trust, and using the intervention of a dog may help the child to develop trust. Interacting with animals helps to decrease anxiety, manipulative /abusive behaviors, depression, increase self-esteem, self-worth, expression of feelings and ability to trust. (Chandler, 2001)

Goals & Objectives of Program

3. *Improve attitudes with learning*

- Reading to dogs can eliminate the fear of judgment for many children.
- Many studies have shown that students are able to improve perceptions of learning because of the increased motivation and interest they have in reading with a dog.
- A study of the All Ears Program conducted at the Veterinary School at the University of California-Davis showed that school children who read aloud with a handler/dog team improved their reading skills by 12 percent compared to children who read with only an adult. (Paddock, 2010)



Reading Programs with Therapy Dogs

- Provides a relaxed and “dog-friendly” atmosphere, which allows students to practice the skill of reading.
- Many of the children who have difficulties reading as a result have developed self-esteem issues. They are often self-conscious when reading aloud in front of other classmates (Therapy Dog International, 2022).
- By sitting down next to a dog and reading to the dog, all threats of being judged are put aside.
- The child relaxes, pats the attentive dog, and focuses on the reading.
- Reading improves because the child is practicing the skill of reading, building self-esteem, and associating reading with something pleasant (Therapy Dog International, 2022).



What is Therapy Dog International?

Therapy Dogs International (TDI®) is a well established, nonprofit, volunteer organization dedicated to regulating, testing and registration of therapy dogs and their volunteer handlers for the purpose of visiting nursing homes, hospitals, schools, libraries, other institutions and wherever else therapy dogs are needed.







Therapy Dog Visit to Glendale's 8:1:1 exceptional classrooms

Mandy Woodward's exceptional classroom

Alyssa Braun's exceptional classroom

Danielle Kawa's exceptional classroom


ZONES
Calming Corner



Kaia & Jersey







Frequently Asked Questions

1. **Who is the dog at my child's school?**

   _____is a _____, who has completed and been registered with Therapy Dogs International (TDI). The therapy dogs handler is _____.

1. **What does a therapy dog do at school?**

   The dog has many different jobs at school. The therapy dog will be working with students. The dog will also work with their handler to provide assistance for students including, but not limited to, effort, participation, social awareness, confidence, engagement and the belief in their power to succeed.

Frequently Asked Questions continued...

3. I am worried about allergies. Is this concern being considered?

- The dogs are well groomed, well kept.
- The owners have submitted veterinary health records prior to the visit
- All dogs are wiped down with an allergen reducer wipe prior to entering to help reduce dander and allergens.
- Dogs may stay on a designated clean blanket / mat that the handler provides
- The coordinator also coordinates with our school nurse to be aware of students who have allergies. Please reach out if additional concerns are present.
- In all of the classrooms in SHCSD there is a High-efficiency air particulate (HEPA) air filtration / air purifier running 24/7 which helps to reduce allergens. According to United States Environmental Protection Agency, this type of air filter can theoretically remove at least 99.97% of dust, pollen, mold, bacteria, dander, allergens and any airborne particles with a size of 0.3 microns.
- You may also opt out of the visit https://forms.gle/Q4Cf6mGtCfyhjUDZ6

Frequently Asked Questions continued…

4. **My child is afraid of dogs. What should I do?**
   Please contact **Kristina Pinkowski** if your child has an aversion to dogs. There are several rules that our dog and handlers follow at school to ensure that all our students and staff feel safe.

Also, please know that therapy dogs are USED in the treatment of overcoming the fear of dogs. If you would like more information on how therapy dogs can help your child with this fear please contact Kristina Pinkowski at **1-716-250-1297** or by email at kpinkowski@sweethomeschools.org

5. **Whom do I contact with questions?**
   Please contact **Kristina Pinkowski** if you are interested in learning more about these programs and how they may help your child. She can be reached at **1-716-250-1297** or by email at kpinkowski@sweethomeschools.org

6. **What do I need to do if I do not want my child to work with the therapy dog at school?**
   If you have any reservations and do not want your child to participate in the Therapy Dog program, please use the link below to access the Opt-out form. If you are unable to access the link, please contact the individual identified above.

   https://forms.gle/Q4Cf6mGtCfyhjUDZ6



In Closing

There is endless research available on the benefits that animal therapy programs have in schools, libraries, hospitals, prisons, nursing homes, and airports. I am asking that we work together for collective greatness. We have to do more for our students and adopting an animal therapy policy is adding another much needed tool to our toolbox.

I stand before you tonight with the courage, dedication and organizational skills needed to lead Sweet Home's Therapy Dog Program.

Link to Forms

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1HpP1FUfnoQ5EVxA_zxwMU0Kgg1diGlVIeOUfxi2cHHw/edit?usp=sharing

Thank you for your time and consideration

SWEET HOME

"EVERY STUDENT, ONE COMMUNITY, READY FOR THE FUTURE."

FEDERAL FUNDING PLAN UPDATE

Sweet Home Board of Education

Tuesday, July 5, 2022

Federal Stimulus Funding Plan

1. Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act of 2020 (CARES)
   - Grant Period Covers March 13, 2020 – September 30, 2022
   - $859,882 – application approved and expended
   - $49,492 – shared with 21 non-public and private schools per grant guidance

2. Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act of 2020 (CRRSA / CARES 2)
   - Grant Period Covers March 13, 2020 – September 30, 2023
   - $3,223,375 – application approved

3. American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA)
   - Grant Period Covers March 13, 2020 – September 30, 2024
   - $5,795,204 – application approved

CARES ACT - $859,882

- State Aid cut equal to federal allocation no increase in available budget
- Requirement to share federal aid with non-public schools, resulting in net budget reduction
- Priorities
  - Resume in person learning safely
  - Support remote hybrid learning
  - Work to close any potential learning gaps

What did Sweet Home use the funds for?

- Salaries for cleaning staff
- Salaries for teachers:
  - 10 Elementary Teachers
  - 1 Middle School Teacher
  - 1 Secondary Counselor
- Benefits for all above employees
- Total Expenditure: $810,390

CRRSA - $3,223,375

- Grant Period 3/13/20 – 9/30/23
- Priorities
  - Combat lost instruction time
  - Health & Safety
  - Lower class sizes
  - Work to close any potential learning gaps

Sweet Home Funding Plan

- New student desk to aid in social distancing
- Salaries & benefits for teachers over 3- year period:
  - ENL Teacher
  - K-8 Literacy Interventionist
  - School Psychologist
- 5 Remote Teachers*
- Stipends for extend days / AIS – teachers
- 2 years of lease payments for Maplemere Temporary classrooms
- Early Literacy Training – Beth Swenson*
- MERV 13 filters for 3 years
- Additional Student Desks
- Student iPads (1,000 each over 3 year grant)
- Classroom libraries (24 classroom sets per building)

ARPA - $5,795,204

- Grant Period 3/13/20 – 9/30/24
- Priorities
  - Combat lost instruction time
  - Health & Safety
  - Lower class sizes
  - Work to close any potential learning gaps

Sweet Home Funding Plan

- Salaries & benefits for teachers over 3-year period:
  - 8 elementary teachers
  - 6 additional literacy specialists
  - 4 high school teachers
  - Pupil Personnel Director
- Summer remedial reading teacher stipends
- 3 additional program aides at each building
- Purchase PowerSchool Performance Matters – student data tool; assess learning gaps
- 4 boiler replacements
- Renovation of Buildings & Grounds pole barn to aid in storage

ARPA Homeless Children $20,264

- Grant Period 3/13/20 – 9/30/24
- Priorities
  - Identify homeless children and youth
  - Provide homeless children and youth with wrap-around services to address challenges of COVID-19
  - Enable homeless children and youth to attend school and fully participate in school activities

Sweet Home Funding Plan

- Contracted transportation for one of our McKinney-Vento students
- $342.75 per day for 59 days

FEDERAL FUNDING PLAN QUESTIONS??

SWEET HOME

"EVERY STUDENT, ONE COMMUNITY, READY FOR THE FUTURE."

Questions, comment and feedback may be directed to Donald Feldmann, Assistant Superintendent at dfeldmann@sweethomeschools.org or (716) 250-1406.

We Are Sweet Home

UPK Update

- Thank you to Scott Wolf and everyone at Central Registry.
- Enrolled approximately 140 students to attend full-day UPK in September.
  - Five classrooms at Sweet Home, including two at Heritage Heights, two at Glendale, and one at Willow Ridge.
  - Four rooms will be operated by Four Seasons and St. Leo's.
  - Class lists finalized by July 6. Letters sent to families shortly thereafter.

Sweet Home Central School District

"EVERY STUDENT, ONE COMMUNITY, READY FOR THE FUTURE."

We Are Sweet Home

A Two-Prong Compromise for Moving Forward

1. Ask each elementary building to form a collaborative committee this summer to immediately address:
   a. What is an ideal lunch experience for all of our students? What are the characteristics? What does it look like?
   b. How can we create an experience that meets as many of these characteristics as possible? Let's think outside the box.
   c. Analyze the pros/cons of each possible solutions/ideas.

1. Form a Building Use Committee made up of Admin, Teachers, Parents, Support Staff that will:
   a. Review data to uncover enrollment trends in the District
      i. Census
      ii. Live Birth
      iii. Historical Enrollment Trends and Predict Future
   b. Task committee to develop a building usage report.
   c. In report, ask committee to make suggestions to the Board regarding the most practical, efficient ways to use our buildings while enhancing the student experience.
   d. Report to the Board in January/February regarding the data and ideas for building utilization. Solicit feedback from our community.

We Are Sweet Home

Community Town Hall Meetings This Summer

- District Office will host a Town-Hall meeting at each building this summer.
- Goal is to engage our community in how we will move the District forward together.
- Working with building principals now to secure dates. Once dates are finalized, we will send communications to families.
- Topics may include but are not limited to:
  - Introduction of Toyia Wilson, new Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction.
  - Building Usage Study
  - Capital Project
  - Strategic Plan Creation
  - Etc....



The Sweet Home Way

Northwest Amherst Community Center

- Community Advisory Board Committee Meeting
  - Met on June 27.
  - Planned initial opening of NWACC in September.
  - Town is hiring an assistant to help plan the opening.
  - Advisory Board will meet again in late July.

TOWN OF AMHERST
5583 Main Street | Williamsville, NY 14221
(716) 631-7000

We Are Sweet Home

Class of 2022 Commencement

Graduation statistics (thank you Kathy Stepniak):	
Total Graduates	223
Regents Diploma	74
Regents with Advanced Designation	51
Regents with Advanced Designation with Honors	55
Skills Diploma (SPED)	3
Local	2
Regents AND Career & Technical Endorsement	17
Regents with Advanced Designation AND Career & Technical Endorsement	11
Regents with Advanced Designation with Honors AND Career & Technical Endorsement	1

We Are Sweet Home

Class of 2022 Commencement

Staff that helped with Graduation:	
Antonio Perry, HS Principal	Graduation committee, MC at ceremony
Andrea Siwiec, Counselor	Graduation Committee, Senior Class Counselor, confirming that students have every opportunity to graduate
Scott Harriger, Counselor	Graduation Committee, Senior Class Advisor, Coordinating with UB
Ty Critelli, Counselor	Graduation Committee, Coordinating with UB, Departmental, outside and other non-Dollars For Scholars Scholarships,
Kristina Pinkowski, Teacher	Graduation Committee, Senior Class Advisor, coordinating with Seniors to know what to expect at graduation
Karen DeLaPlante, Assist Principal	Graduation Committee, coordinated exam schedules
Becky Harmon, HS Secretary	Graduation Committee, coordinated with UB, ordered food and flowers, coordinated all items to be moved from SH to UB, handed out diplomas at the ceremony

Cassie Kelly, HS Secretary	Inserts into diploma covers, diploma distribution at the ceremony, stuffed diploma packets, distribution of diplomas at ceremony
Sue Glenn, HS Secretary	Ticket distribution, confirmed nothing was outstanding (library book, iPads etc)
Jill McGloin, HS Secretary	Assisted Sue Glenn in confirming nothing was outstanding (library books, iPads, etc) Made calls for ticket distribution
Pam Becker, HS Secretary	Assisted Sue Glenn in confirming nothing was outstanding (library books, iPads, etc); Helped to distribute grad tickets
Kathy Stepniak, HS Secretary	Graduation Program, order diplomas and attached diploma types to them, prepared all the graduates envelopes to hand out at graduation, Departmental, outside and other non-Dollars For Scholars Scholarships, sending transcripts to colleges applied for during the school year and final transcripts end of year, Graduation statistics
Kathy Land, HS Secretary	Tracking successful completion of Boces programs, diploma distribution at the ceremony,handed out lawn signs @ Student Services , contacted students that didn't pick up diploma
Lyn Custodi, District Secretary	Dollars For Scholars
Don Feldmann, District Finance Officer	Dollars For Scholars, UB contract execution

We Are Sweet Home



Questions from the Board?