

The Sussex Star

January 28, 2022

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Please be aware that as of Tuesday, January 18th, we made a change to our isolation and quarantine timeframes. In accordance with updated New Jersey Department of Health (NJDOH) recommendations, we will be reducing our quarantine time frame from ten days down to five days.

Individuals who need to quarantine will now be able to return on day six **if they do not have symptoms of illness**. If you have already been placed into a ten day quarantine, you can now return on day six if you do not have symptoms of illness. If symptoms persist (fever or if other symptoms have not resolved), continue to isolate until fever-free for 24 hours and other symptoms have resolved.

More information about the NJDOH recommendations can be found using the following link:

https://www.nj.gov/health/cd/documents/topics/NCOV/RecommendationsForLocalHealthDepts_K12Schools.pdf

Please don't hesitate to reach out to me with any questions or concerns as we continue to navigate these challenging times.

Shane Schwarz
Principal



2/2-Report Cards Available @ 4.p.m. on Parent Portal
2/18-Early Dismissal. Professional Development.
2/21-School Closed. President's Day.
2/24-BOE Meeting @ SMS @ 7:00 p.m.



Board of Education Meeting



Our Board of Education will hold a meeting at 7:00 p.m. on **February 24th** at Sussex Middle School. *Everyone is welcome!*

Testing



If your child has a pending Covid-19 test, please make the school nurse aware. Additionally, please keep your child home until the pending test results are finalized.

8th grade parents



Graduation gown payments **were** due to the middle school by Friday, December 17. Checks or money orders in the amount of \$20 should be made payable to the Sussex Middle School and dropped off at the Main Office.

Absentee Line



If your child is going to be absent from school for any reason, please call the absentee line at 973-875-4138 option 1 and leave the reason for your child's absence.

Free Breakfast & Lunch



In order to ensure safe nutritious meals are available to children, the USDA has approved free breakfast and lunch for ALL children enrolled in the Sussex-Wantage Regional School District for a limited time period.



We are excited to announce that we now offer a new online payment system called PaySchools Central. PaySchools Central provides all parents in our district with an easy way to manage lunch and breakfast accounts. This can all be done in the convenience of your own home through an easy-to-use online portal: www.payschoolscentral.com Or while on the go with a convenient mobile app. You will need to register at the link above. Additional information can be found on our school website in the department section under the food service tab or in the parent portal. If you need help along the way, please contact PaySchools Central at 1-877-393-6628 or email them at: psc_help@payschools.com.



Great news! Marking period 3 of the Achievement Academy, which features new course offerings, will begin on Monday, January 31st! Exciting opportunities including daily academic support, open gym, basketball skills, strategic board games, advanced volleyball skills, Let's Go to Japan in a Classroom, resiliency training, SMS social skills and CPR courses will be available daily beginning on Monday, January 31st. Course descriptions, a schedule, and a permission slip for marking period 3 are available in the auditorium and cafeteria at Sussex Middle School. Can't wait to see you there.

Walkers

All walkers at Sussex Middle School should utilize the following walking route: Newton Ave to Main Street. There are crossing guards positioned at the intersection of Newton Ave and 23 as well as the intersection of Route 23 and Route 284.

Parent Portal



The district has moved to **Realtime Notification** as its primary means of communication for school closings, emergencies and general notifications. Parents/Guardians will need to update their contact information on the parent portal. Should you have any issue logging into your parent portal account, please email your child's school secretaries for assistance.

Nurse's Corner



Sixth grade students are required by NJ law to have the Tdap and Menactra vaccines in order to attend school. If you have not yet done so, please forward proof of vaccination to the school nurse, Mrs. Silletti-Cayer. As a reminder, the nurse must have a current sports physical for the 2021-2022 school year on file in the health office in order for your child to participate in any extracurricular sports. More information regarding extracurricular sports and physicals was emailed to the school community on September 9th.

Please ensure that your child has a *reusable* water bottle with them. This will assist with daily operations at the water stations as well as in the nurse's office.

Please note that our school nurses are going through many masks in their offices. Please provide your child with an extra mask in their book bag should the one that they are wearing break. Thank you for helping to keep our students and staff safe!



SWPTO 2021-22 Family Membership sign-up is open! We are so excited for the school year to begin and your \$5 per family membership fee goes a long way to help us provide programs, materials, and events at our schools. Families can sign up here: https://forms.zohopublic.com/sussexwantageptoform/SussexWantagePTOMembershipSignUpPAID/formperma/SfOKSGp9fi06_oL5M-AzXJ9MQd_g-kwKxOwj1lc0iYc

All info is on our website <https://www.swpto.org/>

Student Success

It is no secret that parent involvement in a child's school experience is one of the keys to a successful school experience. It is clear that a) family processes and practices are strongly related to students' academic, social, emotional, and behavioral outcomes while students are in school and beyond, and b) that when schools and families collaborate to support student learning, student outcomes are improved (Henderson & Mapp, 2002). So how can we do this?

Family and School Collaboration is the key to a child's success in school. Open lines of communication and collaboration with your child's teacher is the bridge between home and school allowing strong partnerships between family and school. Strong partnerships are not the only way a family can be involved. Family involvement can look like a variety of ways. At home setting organized routines and plans in place reduces anxiety and stress that can spill over into the classroom making it difficult for your student to focus and perform to the best of their ability. Getting plenty of rest (students 5-12 should be getting at least 10-12 hours of sleep) and making sure the sleeping environment has minimal to no distractions. Develop a homework routine that includes a space to complete homework and expectations, ex: that homework needs to be completed before dinner time or practice, etc. Families can get involved by volunteering for school based activities; such as fund raisers, book fairs, even joining the school's Parent-Teacher Organizations.

Student Success (Cont.)

Most importantly, being your child's cheerleader and showing that you are excited for their school experience is the best way to start navigating your student's journey to a successful and positive year.

I would like to wish all the staff, families, and students a successful and happy school year.

Sara Maas, RTI Coordinator

Parking At SMS



When parking in the middle school parking lot, please utilize the parking spaces provided and adhere to New Jersey regulation 39 4-138 regarding the fire lane.

As a reminder, currently the school day begins at 8:40 a.m. and ends at 3:29 p.m. Students walking to school are asked to arrive no earlier than 8:15 a.m. and are to report to the auditorium upon their arrival. Students who are dropped off by a parent/guardian should be dropped off at the doors in the solar panel parking lot on Loomis Avenue between 8:15 a.m. and 8:35 a.m. Please refrain from utilizing the main entrance parking lot to drop your child off. Thank you for your assistance in keeping our students and staff members safe.



High Point Youth Lacrosse is starting in the Spring. After reviewing the survey that went out last year, we anticipate having a boy's team for grades 3-6.

If you would like more information please contact heather.yanoff@sparta.org. We are looking forward to having a feeder program for High Point High School. We will need to close registration in January in order to see if we have enough kids to make teams so we can sign up as a league with NJYLL. This will allow the kids who do want to play to register with another town if we don't have enough kids.

Utility Cost Assistance

Programs exist to help with utility costs. We are excited to be able to provide updated assistance program information and income guideline changes. Some changes include a higher monthly maximum benefit amount of \$180 and changes to the USF Fresh Start program which may forgive your current outstanding balance. On October 1, 2021, Utility Assistance programs were expanded for a two-year period to better assist those impacted by the continuing pandemic. Income guidelines for assistance programs have been increased to allow more households to be eligible. For example, a family of 4 can make up to \$106,000 and be eligible to receive assistance. In some cases, entire past due balances may be erased. Information on all available programs can be found on our website at www.elizabethtowngas.com/residential/energy-assistance.

