

INSIDE SOMERSET & SOMERSET BERKLEY



@Somerset_PS

Family Newsletter

Dear Families,

This newsletter serves as a means to share information with you from our schools to highlight upcoming events, student and school successes, and other happenings within the Somerset Public Schools and Somerset Berkley Regional High School. I hope that you enjoy seeing and reading about the various activities our students engage in at school.

I would like to take this opportunity to address a growing concern. In school, we teach our students to be responsible users of technology, which includes the use of social media. Social media can be a truly powerful tool for creating positive change and awareness. However, it can also be used by students to write and distribute hurtful statements to or about others for many to see. Cyber-bullying is something that is a frequent challenge and topic of discussion in our schools. Recently, we have experienced several instances of parents using social media to write disparaging, hurtful comments about teachers and other faculty members. Some of these comments have been perceived as threats and create an unsafe feeling for teachers in a time when incidents of school-related violence are happening more frequently.

I respectfully ask parents and guardians to contact a teacher directly whenever a concern arises. After discussing a matter with a teacher, if a parent feels the situation is not resolved then the parent should contact the principal. Much more can be accomplished when parents and teachers work together and communicate concerns appropriately and professionally rather than turning to social media and writing potentially defaming or threatening statements. Thank you for helping us to create and maintain the safest school environment we can for our students and staff.

Sincerely,
Jeffrey Schoonover

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Credit for Life at SBRHS



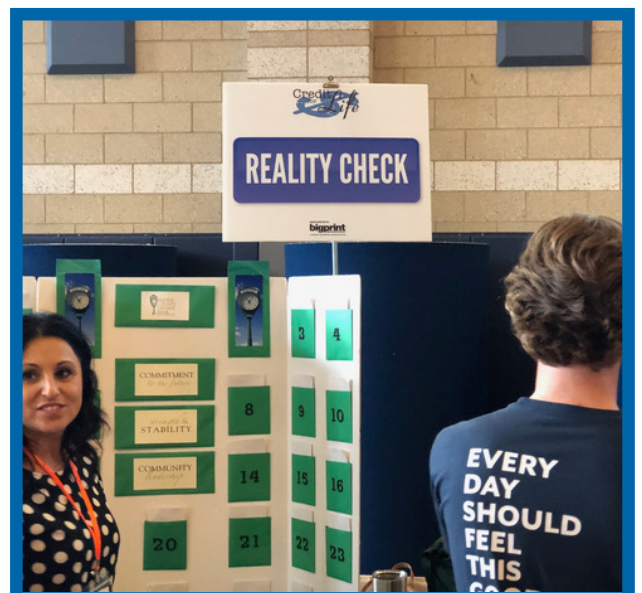
On October 10, students in grades nine and twelve participated in the Credit for Life event at SBRHS while students in grades ten and eleven completed the PSAT. Credit for Life has students envision themselves as being 25 years old with a job and a salary after they had moved on from high school, graduated from college or left the military.

Based on the occupation that students selected, they were given a monthly income and then went around to different booths in the gymnasium where they spent that budget on housing, transportation, clothing, insurance,

personal luxury, groceries, health care and other expenses during the simulation of saving, spending and budgeting.

At each booth, students spoke with professionals about their spending options. The goal of the students was to stay within their budget while maintaining a lifestyle they could be happy with. Credit counselors at the fair helped the students add up the expenses in their budgets and advised students on ways to make their budgets work realistically.

Credit for Life was sponsored by BayCoast Bank and involved nearly 75 volunteers from various, local businesses who helped students learn about how to manage a household budget. This was the second year that Credit for Life was offered at SBRHS. Creating more financial literacy learning experiences for students was something identified in the high school's strategic planning process. In addition to Credit For Life, the high school will be creating additional financial literacy opportunities and requirements for students.



Capstone Projects At SBRHS

For the 2018-2019 school year, SBRHS has created a Capstone Project option within senior English classes. A capstone project is designed to provide students with an opportunity to extend learning, stretch potential, and challenge abilities. The SBRHS capstone course consists of four major components: research paper, product/performance, portfolio and presentation. Through the project, students will demonstrate accumulative life skills in time management, research, problem-solving, organization, public speaking and self-sufficiency.

The student's learning goal is to choose a topic, profession, or social problem that interests them and to explore it deeply. It might be investigating a topic the student has always been curious about or choosing something they know little about and taking their understanding of it to a new level.

Students must **research** and document information related to a subject of their choice - a subject in which they have an interest, but are not already an expert. Their research must be a worthwhile stretch beyond what they already know. As part of a student's research, they must obtain a **mentor** to advise them throughout their project. The mentor must be knowledgeable or a professional in the student's area of interest. Students must spend a minimum of 15 hours face time/contact with their mentor.

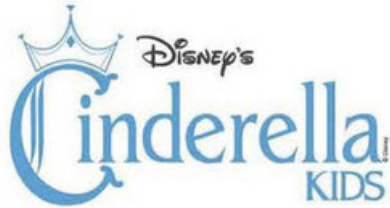
The next component is the **product**. Students apply the information they have gained from their research to manufacture a product. The product may be an actual physical product, a performance or demonstration, or a service to the community. There must be a clear relationship between the student's research and their product.

Additionally, students are keeping appropriate records of their progress and preserve everything in a **portfolio** that demonstrates their journey. These documents include personal notes, photographs, time logs with their mentor, journal entries, receipts, letters, the research paper, etc. At the conclusion of the school year, students will give a **presentation** to a panel of judges during which they will present their product and portfolio as well as describe their experience through the Capstone Project. Examples of topics that our students are completing this year include:

- researching the environmental factors that put children "at-risk" and what strategies after-school programs use to provide support and intervention. This student's product will be a fundraiser/drive that raises money or collects supplies for Boys and Girls Club in Taunton;
- researching the importance of music education to explore the effects that learning a new instrument has on brain function and neural plasticity. The product will be an after-school program that offers free lessons to students interested in playing the piano;
- organizing a local mountain bike race in order to raise funds to repair bridges on the mountain bike trails;
- redesigning tenant applications for the elderly at a specific housing complex and working with the elderly to assist in the application process; and
- creating an emergency evacuation plan for our area in the event of a natural disaster.

North Elementary Performs Cinderella

*North Elementary in collaboration with
Little Folks Theatre would like to welcome
you to the production
of*



Music and Lyrics by
Mack David, Al Hoffman and Jerry Livingston
Book Adapted and Additional Lyrics by
Marcy Heisler
Music Adapted and Arranged by
Bryan Louisele
Based on the Screenplay by
Ken Anderson and Homer Brightman

November 9th, 2018 at 7:00pm
November 10th, 2018 at 1:00pm
at

Somerset Berkley Regional High School Performing Arts Center

Adults \$10.00
Children 10 and Under \$5.00

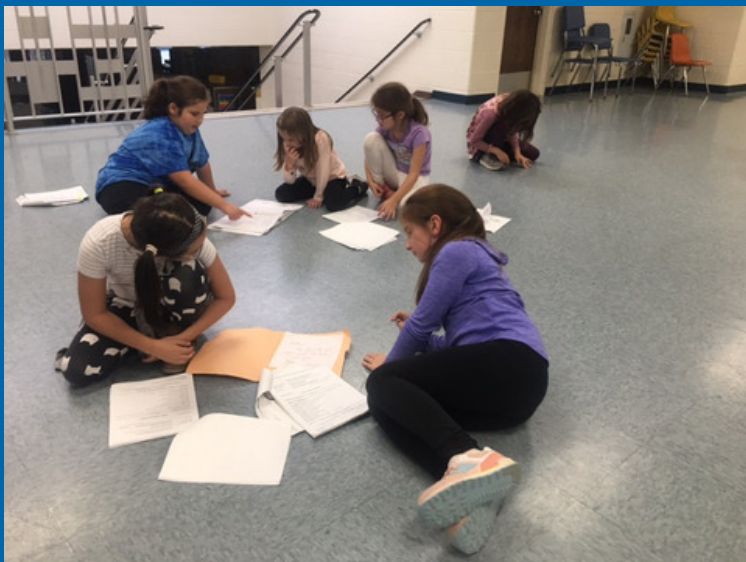
Tickets can be purchased at North Elementary or at
<http://little-folks-theatre.ticketleap.com/north-elementary/>

Cinderella Kids will be performed by North Elementary students at the Somerset Berkley Regional High School on November 9-10.

The performance on November 9th begins at 7:00pm and on November 10th at 1:00.

Tickets are \$10 for adults and \$5 for children and students.

Below are some recent photos of students rehearsing for the production.



Elementary Technology Help Sessions for Parents on November 6

This year at the elementary level we are using the Clever App to help students have a single sign-on to multiple technology applications (Lexia, ThinkCentral, Reflex Math, ReadyGen, etc.) that supplement our curriculum materials. To respond to the challenges students and families are experiencing with accessing these technology applications at home, Mrs. Jennifer Ashley, who is one of our elementary technology teachers, is running two sessions to help parents learn about the different applications, overcome login issues, and learn how to navigate these applications.

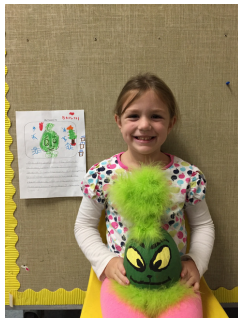
These sessions will be on Tuesday, November 6th, in the library at Somerset Berkley Regional High School. One session will be from 3:00-4:00 PM and the second session will be from 6:00-7:00 PM. To ensure everyone gets the attention and support they need, we are asking parents to sign up. We currently have 25 spaces per time slot.

To sign up for Elementary Tech Support night please use this link: <http://signup.com/go/WaOjAzV>

Halloween Fun at Elementary Schools



Kindergarten students at North recently completed their monthly family project in which students are asked to demonstrate speaking and listening skills along with completing a writing assignment in the classroom. Students decorated pumpkins of different literary characters.



On October 26th, South, Chace Street, and North Elementary Schools held Halloween dances for families. Fun was had by all who attended!



SMS Students Attend Peer Leadership Training on Anti-Bullying/ Cyberbullying At Bridgewater State

A group of Somerset Middle School students recently attended Bridgewater State University (BSU) for a day to participate in Peer Leadership Training. The middle school students worked with undergraduate students from BSU who are part of the Massachusetts Aggression Reduction Center (MARC) to develop student-led anti-bullying and anti-cyberbullying programs. MARC's research shows that having students from middle schools and high schools working directly with college students to be a highly effective model.



SMS Students Promote Anti-Bullying on Unity Day



On October 24th, students at Somerset Middle School participated in Unity Day, which is PACER's National Bullying Prevention Center's signature event during National Bullying Prevention month. Students around the world wear orange on this day to share the message that they are together against bullying and united for kindness, acceptance and inclusion.

