



THE SAVAGE EXPRESS

SIGOURNEY COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Feb 2012/Mar 2012

From the Desk of Superintendent Benita Gonzales

eSEAL

Many of you may have already heard that the district is taking steps to revoke the eSEAL charter. After critical scrutiny and careful consideration of all the pros and cons of continuing our charter status, I, with input from a variety of stakeholders have decided that it is in the best interests of our students and district to revoke our charter status.

Why?

Early this summer we went through a renewal review with the state and found that we were deficient in 5 different areas. While those areas have been rectified, it compelled me to look closer at our charter and required further communication with the state regarding questions about current operation of eSEAL. During this time of investigation, the Department of Education and I learned that operating the “4 + 1” program* was outside the parameters of our original charter application and that led to further discussions about the viability of continued operation of the “4 + 1” program as we know it in Sigourney**.

I also learned that the majority of the charter components could be met in a revised and strengthened business program without charter status. Currently we provide only one business class that would be recognized for credit at the post-secondary level (College or University) and feel that our school *should* and *can* do better. As a result, Kristen Burghorn—current eSEAL director, has been diligently working on creating courses of study for a revamped business program that will be ready for student enrollment for the 2012-2013 school year.

I find the saying that “when one door closes, another opens” is certainly true in this case. I am excited about

the opportunities our students will have available to them with the new business program that has been developed. Also, as a result of providing a new comprehensive business program, I feel our students will be better prepared to meet the rigors of college or career choices in this arena.

Further, I know there has been some concern about how this will affect the Academy. The Academy and the Charter are two completely separate programs and either can exist without the other. In other words, the Academy WILL NOT be affected as a result of the revocation of the charter. In short, students will still be able to take classes that fulfill both their high school and college credit needs. Some classes will qualify as concurrent meaning they will receive credit for high school and college with one class.

I hope this will help clear any confusion of what is happening with eSEAL and ask for your support as we move forward in providing strong educational experiences for our students.

* “4 + 1” as defined in our application was an innovative schedule for grades 9-12 that would allow students to reduce their class load on Monday through Thursday and a block schedule on Friday would allow time for our students to take advantage of other educational options.

** “4 + 1” as we know it in Sigourney – the opportunity for students that have completed their graduation requirements to attend Indian Hills Community College as a 5th year senior.

From the Desk of Curriculum Director Shannon Webb

Iowa Assessments: ITBS/ITED Testing March 19-23

As your child begins to prepare for the upcoming ITBS/ITEDs, they will notice that these assessments have an all new look. The forms are new, along with all new questions. The new tests were written and reviewed by Iowa educators and field tested on Iowa students. The test booklets have all new page layouts that are in full color.

The Core Curriculum has been on the forefront of educators across the state for the last five years. The Iowa Assessments will help determine how students are performing on the state curriculum as described in the Iowa Core. The assessment will help measure student growth and progress from year to year. It will help teachers identify a student’s strengths and identify areas that may need additional emphasis. The assessments produce information that enable sound decision making and provide a focus for teachers to evaluate their instruction. Lastly, these assessments will provide information about your child’s performance relative to the school, the state of Iowa, and the nation.

For accountability purposes, the state of Iowa has defined three achievement levels - not proficient, proficient, and advanced. These achievement levels are used by the Department of Education in the calculation of Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for schools and districts. One of the biggest changes with the Iowa Assessments is that proficiency will be based on using standard scores and not percentile rank. The standard score is a number that describes a student’s location on an achievement continuum. The standard score scaled can be used to monitor proficiency and year-to-year growth of a student.

As our test window approaches, we will make sure that all students are aware of the changes and that they are comfortable with the new ITBS/ITEDs. Test results should be back by mid April. All parents will be given their child’s scores and a clear explanation of their proficiency level. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me by phone or e-mail.

SIGOURNEY COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT MISSION STATEMENT

The Sigourney Community School District, in partnership with family, business and community, will provide quality instruction and a progressive curriculum in a secure and challenging environment. All students will have the opportunity to acquire the knowledge, skills, and character to become productive citizens in a global society.

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Keokuk County
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Please direct questions to:

Kathie Hammes..... 622-2025

Confusion On the Smokefree Air Act

Submitted by Lynne Zoulek, Sigourney Youth Tobacco Prevention Adult Sponsor (formerly known as JEL)

It has come to my attention lately that some have asked me about what is and isn't included in Iowa's Smokefree Air Act. The Iowa Smokefree Air Act (Iowa Code § 142D), enacted on July 1, 2008, protects the health of the public and employees by preventing exposure to secondhand smoke (also known as environmental tobacco smoke) and the 4,000 chemicals and 69 cancer-causing compounds it is known to contain. The Smokefree Air Act prohibits smoking in almost all public places and enclosed areas within places of employment, as well as some outdoor areas. In all honesty, I have had to check with the "pros" at the Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH) on a few items myself. With all of the stipulations and exceptions, the confusion can be understandable.

So where are the places in Iowa where smokers are prohibited from lighting up? All public indoor places, such as bars, restaurants, and businesses are included in the Smokefree Air Act. Smoking is also prohibited in all company used vehicles. There are a few, limited exemptions, including the gaming floor of casinos and up to 20 percent of hotel rooms. For many hotels rooms, however, there is no accurate way to eliminate smoke from entering the no-smoking areas, making the issue null.

It is especially in outdoor spaces when the interpretation of the law is hazy. For that, I refer to fact sheets from iowasmokefreeair.gov as a reference. Key phrases are underlined for emphasis.

For entertainment venues:

Smoking is not allowed in the designated seating areas (permanent or temporary) of outdoor entertainment venues where members of the general public assemble to witness entertainment events, including but not limited to: stadiums, sports arenas, amphitheaters, and bleachers.

For seating and serving areas of a restaurant:

Smoking is prohibited in all outdoor seating or serving areas of restaurants. These areas include all outdoor places where customers are seated and served food or beverages. Smoking is allowed in a defined outdoor area of a restaurant, such as a patio or a portion of a patio, provided that there is no seating in such area and no restaurant employee serves food or beverages to a patron in such area.

For public grounds:

The Smokefree Air Act prohibits smoking on the grounds of state and local government buildings. For example this includes all county courthouses and maintenance shops.

For school grounds:

Smoking is prohibited on all school grounds, including parking lots, athletic fields, playgrounds, tennis courts, and any other outdoor area under the control of a school. Smoking is prohibited inside any vehicle located on school grounds. This would include any baseball/softball fields owned by the schools that would be located away from the main campus of the school.

In summary, the Smokefree Air Act applies to all businesses, including vehicles. This also includes all golf courses, bars and restaurants that serve food or drinks outside, as well as all grounds of our courthouse and school grounds.

Over the last couple years of the enactment, I have personally witnessed violations of the law in all of the following locations across Iowa: hotels, car dealerships, school grounds, golf courses, and outdoor patios for bars and restaurants. If you witness these violations, please make a report to IDPH; visit iowasmokefreeair.gov to file a complaint or call 888-944-2247. If needed, the complaint can be made in confidence. According to a report by the American Cancer Society and the American Lung and Heart Associations, tobacco-related hospitalizations in Iowa have declined 10.7% and have saved \$348 million in costs in the two years since passage of the Smokefree Air Act. It is important to protect the law and ensure that it is adequately enforced if these benefits are to continue.

If you or someone you know is trying to quit smoking, visit the Quitline Iowa hotline at 1 (800) QUIT NOW (1-800-784-8669). Quitline Iowa is a toll-free, statewide smoking cessation telephone counseling hotline. Trained counselors provide callers with information about the health consequences of tobacco use, assistance in making an individualized quit plan, and on-going support through optional follow-up calls.



NO SMOKING

Pursuant to the Iowa Smokefree Air Act

For more information or to register a complaint call
1-888-944-2247 or visit www.IowaSmokefreeAir.gov



From the Desk of PK-12 Principal Kim Harmon

Happy New Year!

As we start election year 2012, we can be assured that this will be a year of much conversation about education. Turn on CNN, FOX News or any local news station and you can hear the latest politician or expert talking about reform in education. In this election year educational reform seems to be a hot topic.

The state of Iowa has been harshly criticized recently and statistics indicate that as a state we have slipped from having one of the best educational systems in the country to having one of the most average educational systems in the country. Here are some of the statistics being thrown around by Governor Branstad and others across the state:

- Iowa's 4th graders have moved from being top performers in reading in 1992 to 27th in the country in 2010
- 8th graders in Iowa have slipped from #1 in the country in math in 1992 to 28th in math in 2010
- Iowa is ranked 37th in the country for the percentage of our population with a bachelor's degree, which translates into 25% of our population with 4-year college degrees
- We are ranked 43rd in graduate degrees with 8% of our population having degrees beyond a bachelors
- Iowa is 35th in its percentage of high tech jobs
- We are 35th in new business incubation
- We rank 37th in the number of scientists and engineers in our state
- We are 41st in high speed internet access per capita
- Approximately 200,000 fewer students were enrolled in Iowa schools in 2010 than in 1972 --711,000 students in 1972; 508,000 in 2010
- The state ranks 40th in online course enrollment
- We are spending less in Iowa on technology than a decade ago

However, amidst all of this gloom and doom, the fact remains that Iowa has the 8th lowest dropout rate in the nation. Some states face graduation rates as low as 50-60% while Iowa graduates almost 90% of our students. This fact notwithstanding, there is good reason to look at a change in the way Iowa does business educationally. Governor Branstad has called for changes that require our students to think critically, solve problems, and communicate effectively.

At Sigourney Schools, we have started to make the transformation. Our 1:1 computer technology for grades 5-12 moves us ahead of many schools in our state. Our Virtual Reality Program at the Junior/Senior High School introduces students to cutting edge technology and provides them with opportunities that are only available in a handful of schools across the nation. But these things are only the beginning.

I have no crystal ball to see into the future but based on meetings I have attended recently, reports I have read, and conversations I have been a part of, there are several likely changes that will be seen in our schools in Sigourney and across the state in the future. Here are some of the things parents and students can expect:

1. Required competencies for advancement

With the implementation of the Iowa Core Curriculum and the Common Core Curriculum, what is being taught in schools is likely to look much more similar across the state and across the country. With that will come the need for students to be able to demonstrate mastery of the skills or competencies assigned to each level. Once mastery is demonstrated at one level, the student will be ready to move to the next.

2. Competency levels replace grade levels

The grade leveling system we have all grown up with may become a thing of the past or, at the very least, look different in the future. Common sense and research tell us that students learn at different rates and the rather arbitrary selection of a nine month span of time that we have historically given students to learn the required information for that grade level has been fine for some, not enough for others, and more than enough for still others.

In the future, it is likely that students will be grouped by skill level or competency readiness. That may put all nine-year-olds in the same room but there may be accelerated 7 or 8 year olds who are ready to work on the same skills with them or a 10 or 11 year old who is also working on the same competencies.

Governor Branstad's latest plan for Iowa schools included a statement that no student would leave 3rd grade until he/she is proficient in reading. Leveling students by competency readiness is a more practical way to approach that mandate than the traditional system of retention for the struggling learners.

3. Letter grades replaced by more telling reports

In a new, reformed educational system, report cards will look different. Using competencies (also called standards or outcomes), reports home will communicate the exact skills that a child can perform or knowledge that has been demonstrated and to what level of proficiency. They will also indicate the skills still needed for mastery before the child is ready to move on to the next level.

4. Homework takes on a new look

Homework has always been controversial among researchers. They don't seem to be able to decide its exact value but in a new system one clear fact is that it may look different. Parents and students are likely to see more projects and open-ended assignments. Group work will continue to be important and real-world types of problems will become the focus.

We have already seen this in some classes at some levels within the district but we can expect it to become more wide spread. We will be placing a strong emphasis on communication skills—reading, writing, and speaking—and expecting demonstrated proficiency at each level before a student moves on to the next level.

Students are also likely to see more goal setting and reflection on their own learning experiences. In education we call this metacognition—thinking about one's own thinking. In other words, teachers will be asking students to think about how they reached an answer or solution, why they made the decisions they made to solve the problem. When we help students to understand their own thinking, we begin to be able to guide them in thinking more critically and expand their problem-solving skills.

None of these changes will happen tomorrow and none will be successful without community support. Sounds great! We are still in the conversation stage but the time is going to be coming very soon for us to decide whether or not we will allow our state's position as an educational leader to continue to slide or if we are going to buckle down and do the hard work needed to make the changes needed to put us back on top. I'm betting on us.

I look forward to working with the Sigourney staff and community to make our schools the best they can be. Please feel free to contact me by phone (Elem. 622-2350; JSH 622-2010) or email (kim.harmon@sigourneyschools.com) with any questions or concerns you may have.

Elementary PE

Submitted by Mitch Eslick

A great deal has been happening lately in the Sigourney Elementary PE classes. The 3rd-6th grade students concluded a unit of various kickball games, ranging from a partner kickball game to Mat Ball. Previously those same students participated in our volleyball unit, where we did a review of the basic volleyball skills and then played a few different types of volleyball games. The students did a great job with both units, being very active and having fun with both. The Kindergarten through 2nd grade students just wrapped up doing various activities with the parachute. The parachute was able to keep all of the Kindergarten through-2nd grade students active at once, and they had a great time playing with the big parachute!

The first weekend in January was the Elks Free Throw Hoop Shoot contest in Oskaloosa. We had 12 students advance from our competition with-in our PE class, from those 12 we had three students who placed either 1st or 2nd advancing to the next round of the competition. Those students were Megan Stuhr (8-9 year old girls), Josh Mohr (8-9 year old boys) and Dustin Haines (10-11 year old boys). Congratulations to those students and good luck at the next round of the competition!

Coming up in February the 2nd-6th grade students will once again be participating in Jump Rope for the Heart. This is an opportunity for our students to raise some money for a very worthy cause, the American Heart Association. For an entire week, February 20-24th, we will be doing various jump rope activities in PE class. Information will be coming home with the 2nd-6th grade students in the coming weeks!

“Savage Eye”

Submitted by Joleen Louwsma

In October, my communications class took on the project of resurrecting the “Savage Eye.” The students were excited to write about school events and learn more about journalism. The total process of writing articles for the “Savage Eye” introduced students to journalism and gave them an opportunity to have a real life experience in writing.

We began the project by brainstorming ideas for stories. The only requirement for a story is that it has to be about a school or community activity. We found out there are lots of things going on at school. Students were responsible for developing interview questions and setting up interviews. After the interview process, students wrote the articles and edited other students’ articles.

This project addresses several areas within the curriculum. Students are using higher level thinking skills in the interview process and asking questions. Students apply writing skills in the initial writing of the article and in the editing process.

Our plans are to continue the “Savage Eye.” The communications class is not offered during the second trimester. Currently, there are students in the TAG program and other students interested in writing helping to keep the paper going. During the third trimester, the communications will pick up covering activities for the paper.

Next year we plan to expand the communications class. It will be offered all three trimesters. This gives students the ability to continue writing. Along with writing for the newspaper, the class will be expanded to include a weekly digital news broadcast. If you have a student interested in communications, or if you have an event we can cover, please contact me at joleen.louwsma@sigourneyschools.com or call the high school, 641-622-2010.

From the Desk of Administrative Manager Deanna Hutchings

10 Websites to Help Improve Your Child’s Reading

Does your child like to get on the computer at home? Listed below are some great websites to help improve your child’s reading skills while having fun online.

1. **[tickettoread.com](http://www.tickettoread.com)** – This site is a part of our K-2 Readwell curriculum. Your child has their own username and password. If your child can’t remember their password, please contact the school or your child’s teacher.
2. **http://www.tumblebooks.com/library/asp/customer_login.asp** – This is a website that our school has purchased a subscription for. If your child can’t remember their username or password, please contact the school or have them ask their teacher.
3. **<http://www.sadlier-oxford.com/phonics/student.cfm#grade3>** – This website is for kids grades K-6. If your child struggles with phonics, you can have them start on a lower level to practice some of the needed skills.
4. **<http://www.starfall.com/>** – This website is for younger children who need help or want additional phonics practice.
5. **<http://www.gamequarium.com/>** – This website is for all ages, and it covers more than just reading! However, if you click on Readquarium, you will be taken to a page that has a lot of reading resources for your child to use.
6. **<http://www.funbrain.com/brain/ReadingBrain/ReadingBrain.html>** – This website is geared toward older children. They can read books online, read comic strips, play games, and fill in MadLibs.
7. **<http://www.rif.org/kids/readingplanet.htm>** – This site allows you to listen to books online, play reading games, do reading activities, and practice your writing skills.
8. **<http://www.storylineonline.net/>** – This website allows you to stream videos of the Screen Actors Guild Foundation members reading children’s books.
9. **<http://www.iowaaceonline.org/>** – Once you are on this website, click where it says BookFlix (Prek-3). This website is another site that your child would use our school username and password for to listen to stories online. If your child can’t remember this information, please contact the school or your child’s teacher.
10. **<http://www.abcy.com/>** – This site contains education games and apps for grades K-5.



Students Express Their Opinions

Submitted by Terri Glandon

Sigourney Schools now has a debate club for students in grades 5-8. The first meeting was held on Monday, January 16th and was attended by 13 students. During debate club meetings, the students will learn the purpose of debate, tips on how to be a good public speaker, and how to take notes during debates. And of course, they will debate topics that are of interest to them! Some topics will be based largely on opinion and others will be based on research that the students have done.

The debate club will be using the parliamentary debate style. This type of debate has teams of three students each. One side is the opposition and argues against the topic. The other side is the proposition and argues in favor of the topic. Students will be selected randomly for teams and will not get to choose whether they are for or against the topic. This requires them to see topics from different viewpoints and encourages critical thinking skills.

The sponsors for the debate club are Terri Glandon, Julie Tremmel, and Kelly Mousel. They are very excited to see how the students grow and develop as debaters in the coming weeks and months.

Upcoming debate meetings will be held on: January 30th, February 13th, February 27th, March 12th, March 26th, April 2nd, and April 16th from 3:30-4:45 in the SCR (Second Chance Reading) room.

eSEAL Incubator Update

Bows & Ribbons, Katelyn Wheeldon, Owner

This past month I wrapped Christmas presents and made candy bouquets. I am very happy with how my candy bouquets sold and looked. I will continue making the candy bouquets during the rest of the year! I am in the process of planning gift baskets and candy bouquets for the Coaches vs.. Cancer game on January 28. I am doing different themed gift baskets, some small and some big. I will also be making candy bouquets that are themed, as well. I am planning on donating a portion of the money from these baskets and bouquets to the Coaches vs... Cancer game. If you need a gift wrapped, or are interested in gift baskets/bouquets, feel free to e-mail me at katelyn.wheeldon@sigourneyschools.com.

Lifetime Treasures, Kelsey Dyson, Owner

Oh, how the time is continuing to fly by! It is crazy that we are halfway done with the school year already. I will be graduating in four months, wow! But, as the time flies by, Lifetime Treasures is staying busy as always. Before Christmas, I was extremely busy selling little gifts to the teachers that I made with recycled pop bottles and turned into candy apples. I was surprised as to how many people were interested in this little present. Since the holidays are over, I am now working on getting ready a couple of things for some of my classmates for graduation and another project that I just took on. On February 15th, I will start the selling of scrapbooking kits that I will be putting together. I will have ten predesigned kits that will be for sale. I will also have a "Buy two, get one free" sale going on during this time. I am hoping that this project will be very promising to my business and I hope that quite a few of our members of the community will take part and purchase one of these handmade kits. I am already taking orders for people who know they want them now. Thanks for all of your support! If you are interested in ordering a kit, or want more information, you may call 641-660-3358 or email me at: kdyson12@gmail.com.

Preschool & Kindergarten Round-Up Parent Meetings for 2012-2013 School Year Scheduled

Submitted by Brian Kingrey

Attention parents of preschool- and kindergarten-aged students. The Sigourney Community School District will hold a Parent Meeting for each grade level to discuss the ins and outs of the preschool and kindergarten world. This meeting is for incoming preschool and kindergarten parents for the 2012-2013 school year.

If your child is **4 years old by September 15, 2012** he/she is invited to attend Bright Beginnings Preschool. If your child is **5 years old by September 15, 2012** he/she is invited to attend kindergarten at the Sigourney Elementary.

The PRESCHOOL PARENT MEETING will be held MONDAY, MARCH 19, 2012 at Bright Beginnings Preschool located at 300 W. Kelly St.

The KINDERGARTEN PARENT MEETING will be held TUESDAY, MARCH 20, 2012 at the Sigourney Elementary Commons at 509 S. Jefferson St.

Each meeting will be held from **6:00-7:00 p.m.** At your meeting, documentation of your child's birth certificate, immunization records, and physicals will be needed. If your child attended Bright Beginnings Preschool this year, 2011-2012, then the office already has your information on file. However, it may need to be updated. Nurse Northup will be available to answer any questions you may have. On the night of the meeting, office personnel will collect your documentation, make copies of the necessary information, and return your documents to you at the end of the 1-hour meeting.

We welcome you to our buildings to speak with the teachers and administration about the wonderful world of early childhood education offerings within the Sigourney Community School District.

If you have questions feel free to contact Brian Kingrey at 622-2350 or brian.kingrey@sigourneyschools.com



Sixth Graders Diving into History

Submitted by Amy Jones

What do Genghis Khan, Baroque music, the Manhattan Project, Princess Diana, Henry Ford, and the Underground Railroad all have in common? They are among the topics chosen for study by this year's sixth graders. Topics had to fit in with the theme "Revolution, Reaction, and Reform in History," the theme used by the National History Day organization.

This is our first year to do history fair projects at Sigourney Elementary. Students can choose a performance, a documentary, a website, a paper, or an exhibit. We started brainstorming and researching ideas in December and have been working to turn our facts into projects during January.

Another component of history fair is a process paper. Our process papers explain the steps taken to complete the project. Information found in this paper includes how a student chose his topic, how research was completed, steps taken in completing the project, and the relationship of the project to the History Day theme. Students are also asked to explain whether sources they used were primary (information from a particular historical event or time, written by the actual participant or an observer) or secondary (usually created by historians or someone who has studied the event or period in time).

Learning to correctly cite information can be challenging when doing research. The National History Day organization requires MLA format to cite sources. In this age of technology, we have been lucky to use NoodleTools, a website which helped with placing items in the correct order, punctuation, and capitalization. After entering the needed information (authors, titles, publishing information, etc.), we were able to email the correctly generated citation to ourselves to use in our bibliographies.

All of this work is leading up to the big event on January 30th - History Fair 2012! Our elementary fair will include time for other classes to view our work in the morning, judging in the afternoon, and then a chance for families and the public to view from 5:30-6:30 p.m. in the evening. Fifteen projects will be chosen by our afternoon judges to attend the regional history fair competition in Fairfield on March 20th.

Everyone is welcome to attend our History Fair on January 30th. Who knows, maybe you will learn something new.

National History Day 2012

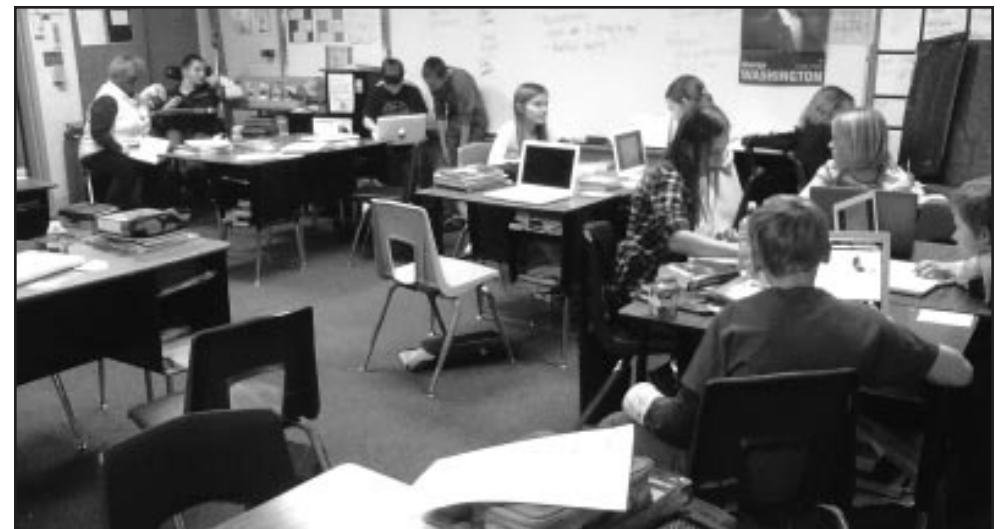
Every year National History Day frames students' research within a historical theme. The theme is chosen for the broad application to world, national or state history and its relevance to ancient history or to the more recent past. This year's theme is Revolution, Reaction, Reform in History. The intentional selection of the theme for National History Day is to provide an opportunity for students to push past the antiquated view of history

as mere facts and dates and drill down into historical content to develop perspective and understanding.

The NHD theme provides a focused way to increase student's historical understanding by developing a lens to read history, an organizational structure that helps students place information in the correct context and finally, the ability to see connections over time.

Past Themes

1980- The Individual	1996 - Taking a Stand
1981 - Trade & Industry	1997 - Triumph & Tragedy
1982 - Work & Leisure	1998 - Migration
1983 - Turning Points	1999 - Science & Technology
1984 - Family & Community	2000 - Turning Points
1985 - Triumph & Tragedy	2001 - Frontiers
1986 - Conflict & Compromise	2002 - Revolution, Reaction, Reform
1987 - Liberty: Rights and Responsibilities	2003 - Rights & Responsibilities
1988 - Frontiers	2004 - Exploration, Encounter, Exchange
1989 - The Individual	2005 - Communication
1990 - Science & Technology	2006 - Taking a Stand
1991 - Rights	2007 - Triumph & Tragedy
1992 - Discovery, Encounter, Exchange	2008 - Conflict & Compromise
1993 - Communication	2009 - The Individual
1994 - Geography	2010 - Innovation
1995 - Conflict & Compromise	2011 - Debate & Diplomacy



Progressing with Responsibility

Sigourney Community School District is committed to your student's academic achievement as well as his or her athletic and social endeavours. Three years ago when we decided to move forward with the MacBook initiative, which put a computer in nearly every child's hands, we were nervous about a lot of things. Responsibility was at the top of the list! We knew that putting a \$1000 computer in the care, custody and control of a 10 year old might be a risky idea, but we guessed it would not be much worse than if they were 17. These are the years when kids really learn the basics of independence, and hopefully interdependence.

Responsibility, independence, interdependence... what does all this have to do with a MacBook? Not only is it an electronic device with a loads of sensitive components and requires special care and delicate handling, it is also a key having the potential to open doors to limitless creativity and many wondrous places. We all know that computers allow kids to play games, check email, create documents, and develop presentations, but it is also a portal to the world wide web (WWW). This can be a really amazing resource or a complicated and scary place, and sometimes both. Social tools like Skype allow students to not only send text chat but open real time face to face conversations via the cameras built into the macbooks. Cameras? Yep - Every MacBook has a built-in camera controlled by the students. They can shoot pictures or stream live video to and from another at anytime, from anyplace with Internet access. Cool? Yes! Scary? Yes it could be, but it doesn't have to be. The school district takes some precautions to eliminate the obvious ugly side by installing a software filter to keep kids from accessing web based content that is considered inappropriate. We also have the ability to monitor certain activities of the computers usage at anytime as long as the computer is connected to the Internet. But what happens when no-one is watching? Who is ultimately responsible? I think that responsibility lies with the student. Holding them accountable and helping them make some good decisions along the way is paramount, but at the end of the day that individual is the one that needs to learn to make the right choices.

My expectations are no different when it comes to the physical care and condition of the MacBooks and the accessories. No one knows the condition of their MacBook better than the kid carrying it. If there is something wrong with their assigned computer I typically don't know about it until they bring it to me and show me the issue. On a daily basis I will see on average a dozen students with various levels of computer troubles. Anything from a program not responding properly, a battery not holding a charge, and maybe even a broken power adapter. Sometimes I even see a broken screen... When these troubles occur the student is expected to contact a school official (Teacher, Principal, Associate or Myself) and explain the issue so we can deal

Submitted by Kirk Magill

with it. I have a hard time fixing what I do not know is broken. I encourage the students to contact me directly since I will be the one that usually has to fix issues for the district. I have a sign-up sheet on my door for students to leave me a request if I am out of the office. I also respond to students who email with request. I encourage them to become interdependent and learn to ask for help when they need it. Even if asking for help with a broken screen might not be a fun thing to do, they need to learn to do it.

We ask the parents and guardians of the students to assist us by allowing this process to occur. We ask you to assist us at home by encouraging a safe environment for your kids to learn in. Many families do not allow their kids to take their MacBooks to their bedrooms with them at night, others shut the Internet off after a certain time of day. Keeping kids accountable and responsible discourages them from taking unnecessary risks and keeps them safe. We also promote that you to take a look at your students MacBooks on a regular basis. Look over the physical condition as well as the content. Have them show you their music collection, take a look at their pictures. Look over the miscellaneous files and folder on the desktop. Look at their list of Internet bookmarks and make sure you like what you see. If you notice physical issues with their computers, have them send me an email, or tell them to discuss it with a school official. We really need the students to continue to take the initiative on the upkeep of the MacBooks and take responsibility for the care and maintenance of them. If you have concerns, we still would like to hear from you as well, but I feel like the initial requests should be coming from the student.

I am very pleased to report that in general the students are very responsible and that we have had a very low amount of overall damage and loss to the Macbooks. I am proud of the students and the way they behave in regards to the technology and it's daily use. Don't get me wrong; we have our share of daily challenges, but we also have an exceptional staff and a great bunch of kids!



From the Desk of PK-12 Guidance Counselor Keri VanDenHeuvel

Parents Take Part in Student Success

Parenting is the most joyful job you will ever have, and the toughest! As a parent, you must meet your child's physical needs, emotional needs, and intellectual needs.

You can meet your child's physical needs by doing all you can to keep your child healthy and safe. Provide your child with good nutrition, a safe environment, plenty of rest, exercise, daily hygiene needs, and medical care.

Your child needs emotional support, too. Every child needs love, a sense of security, praise and a good home life. The way family members treat each other has a big influence on a child's emotional health and development. Respect your child's feelings.

Help your child enjoy learning. You can talk with your child starting at infancy. As your child grows, talk about what you are doing and why. This will help your child learn. Encourage your child to ask questions. Stay involved in your child's schoolwork. If you have questions, contact the teacher and ask. Do your best to provide learning tools for your children. Art supplies, music or musical instruments, blocks, puzzles, models, globes and books encourage learning. Read to your child. Take your child to museums, zoos and libraries. Help make learning fun!

Work hard to teach your child appropriate behavior. Teach your child how to get along with others. Good manners, sharing, listening, helping others and respecting others' needs are all important. Teach your child that screaming at people and hitting are not good ways to deal with feelings. Encourage your child to talk about feelings instead. Discipline with love. Make sure your child understands what the rules are and why it is important to follow them. Be consistent in how you want your child to behave. A positive approach always works well. Be a role model for your child. Children learn by imitating. Be the kind of person you want your child to be. Encourage independence and allow your child to try new things.

Enjoy your children! Parenting is a big job, but well worth the effort.

Information provided by Channing I. Bete Co., Inc.



Students Prepare for Honor Choirs

Submitted by Randy Stitcher

The southeast district of the Iowa Choral Directors sponsors an annual Youth Honor Choir Festival that's held at Iowa Wesleyan College in Mt. Pleasant. This year's event, including one elementary choir and one middle school choir is on Friday January 18. Students have been busy learning the music for several weeks. On the day of the event, they will join students from across southeast Iowa for rehearsals and an evening concert. Sigourney students preparing for this event are:

Elementary Choir:

Sopranos: Rylie Shettler, Tanner Halleran,
Macie Leonard, Caleigh Dale.
Altos: Khloe Snakenberg, Madysen Leonard,
Leah Carter

Middle School Choir:

Sopranos: Hannah Redlinger, Samantha Sande
Altos: Olivia Wallerich, Sarina Gretter
Tenors: Austin Glandon, Luke Hames
Bass: Tanner Bos, James Barnett

In addition, four Sigourney High School students are preparing for the annual "Sing Fest" Honor Choir at Central College in Pella. This event including High School students from across the state, will be held on February 9th. The day will end with a public concert featuring the High School Honor Choir, Central College Concert Choir and several High School soloists chosen by audition during the day. Sigourney Students who are preparing for Sing Fest are:

Soprano: Cassidy Leer
Altos: Tisa Tollenaar and Gretchen Witzenburg
Bass: Eddie Conrad

Anyone is interested in attending one of these public concerts may contact one of the above students or details.

Upcoming Highlights in Ms. Shaw's Art Room!

Submitted by Rebecca Shaw

It's been a busy year in the High School Art Room! Art and Yearbook students are working hard to produce fantastic works of art in all forms! Words can't describe the Savage pride in the art wing of this school! If you have any questions about any of these events, please email: rebecca.shaw@sigourneyschools.com

Events Coming Soon:

Sigourney Schools First Annual Art Show! Students will be showcasing their work during the week of Parent/Teacher Conferences (March 6th-7th). The display will be located by the cafeteria. Students, Teachers, and Parents will have the chance to vote on their favorite artwork! Awards will be given for Best in Show, 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Place! Most pieces will be available for purchase.

Next Generation 2012 Juried High School Art Show: Presented by the Chait Galleries in Iowa City: Independent Art Students are carefully chosen to submit their artwork in this fantastic Gallery show! The show will be opening April 13th and go until May 11th. This opportunity is a great way for the students to get their work out into the public! Winners will receive cash prizes, and all artwork will be available for purchase.

SICL Art Show: Greg Walton will be putting on another Fantastic Art Show with the SICL District! Sigourney Art Students will be selected to submit 1-2 pieces of their artwork. This is open to all High School students! Place and Time for this show TBA.



Tassa Hackert, Katie Miller, and Miranda Seals show off some work in progress as they get ready for the upcoming Art Shows!

February Activities Calendar

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1 4:15 JH Boys BBall @ Keota	2 6:00 BB vs Tri-County	3 4:15 JH Boys BBall @ Tri-County 6:00 BB vs Montezuma	4 WR Sectionals @ Van Buren
5	6 NO SCHOOL (Prof. Develop.) 6:00 BB(2B) vs North Mahaska	7 4:15 JH Boys BBall @ Pekin 6:00 BB vs. Belle Plaine 6:30 PTO Mtg.	8	9 4:15 JH Boys BBall vs English Valleys	10	11 WR Districts @ Eddyville-Blakesburg Little Girls Basketball Trn.
12 8:00 am - 5:00 pm Sigourney Pride VB Trn.	13 1st Track Practice 4:15 JH Boys BBall vs Washington 6:00 Board of Education Meeting at City Hall	14 4:15 JH Boys BBall vs Pekin	15	16 State Wrestling Tournament Begins	17 Visit from "Apple" State Wrestling Tournament Continues	18 State Wrestling Finals
19	20 No School Presidents' Day (Snow Make-Up Day if Needed)	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29			All Dates are Subject to Change.

2011-2012 Sigourney JH/HS Yearbooks will be on sale until May 30th!

The price is \$30, cash or check made to Sigourney Schools (Please turn in to Ms. Shaw). The Yearbook staff is working hard to make this book the best one yet! Do not miss out on great memories! Please refer to the website for any more questions: <https://sites.google.com/a/sigourneyschools.com/yearbook-site/>

**Sneak Peak! 2011-2012 Sigourney Junior High/
Senior High School Yearbook Cover!**



March Activities Calendar

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
All Dates are Subject to Change.				1	2 End of Tri II	3
4	5 NO SCHOOL (Prof. Develop.)	6 6:30 PTO Meeting	7 2:30 Dismissal 4:00 to 8:00 pm Parent-Teacher Conferences 7:00 Sigourney Pride Meeting	8 2:30 Dismissal 4:00 to 8:00 pm Parent-Teacher Conferences	9 NO SCHOOL	10
11	12 1st Golf Practice 6:00 Board of Education Meeting at City Hall	13	14	15 B Track @ Central College Indoor Meet	16 8:08 pm-12:12 am KC STAAR Midnight March Madness	17
18	19 ITBS/ITED Testing	20 ITBS/ITED Testing G TR to UNI for State Indoor meet	21 ITBS/ITED Testing	22 ITBS/ITED Testing 6:30 FFA Banquet	23 ITBS/ITED Testing	24
25	26 4:45 B Track @ Pekin	27 NAEP Assessment for 8th Grade	28 NAEP Assessment for 8th Grade	29 B Track @ Belle Plaine	30 7:00 pm High School Spring Play	31 7:00 pm High School Spring Play

February Lunch Calendar

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
<p>Cereal is a breakfast alternative. Milk choices are offered with breakfast and lunch. 100% juice or fruit is offered with breakfast.</p>	<p>Alt Lunch: Hot Dog, WG Bun</p>	<p>Breakfast Served: 8:00 a.m. at BOTH Elementary and Jr-Sr High School</p>	<p>February 1 Long John ----- Corn Dogs, Fritos, Baked Beans, Fresh Orange</p>	<p>February 2 PB&J Sandwich, Potatoes ----- Chili, Crackers, Celery & Carrot Stix, Apple Wedges, Blueberry Muffin, Yogurt Dip</p>	<p>February 3 Scrambled Eggs & Ham, WW Toast ----- Chicken Tenders, Tossed Salad, Corn, Applesauce, Br & Butter Sandwich</p>
<p>Salad is offered as an alternative for grades 5-12. Alternative Lunch: Hamburger, WG Bun</p>	<p>February 6 NO SCHOOL</p>	<p>February 7 Sausage & Cheese Biscuit ----- French Toast, Little Smokies, Hash Browns, Mixed Fruit</p>	<p>February 8 Waffles, Diced Peaches ----- Chicken Fajitas, WG Wraps, (cheese & lettuce), Potato, Applesauce, Brownie</p>	<p>February 9 Breakfast Pizza ----- Hot Beef & Gravy Bowl, Whipped Potatoes, Corn, Strawberries, WW Dinner Roll</p>	<p>February 10 Egg Patty, Potatoes, WW Toast ----- Fritters, WG Bun, Rice Pilaf, Green Beans, Banana</p>
<p>Alternative Lunch: Rib Patty, WG Bun</p>	<p>February 13 Sausage Gravy & Biscuit ----- Chicken Nuggets, Peas & Carrots, Baked Apples, Trail Mix, Br & Butter Sandwich</p>	<p>February 14 Mini Pancakes, Applesauce ----- Beef Burgers, WG Bun, Seasoned Wedges, Cherries, Valentines Dessert</p>	<p>February 15 Ass't Cereal or Oatmeal ----- Ravioli, Tossed Salad, Pears, French Bread</p>	<p>February 16 Pancake/Sausage Stix, Raisins ----- Chicken & Noodles, Mashed Potatoes, Mandarin Oranges, WW Dinner Roll</p>	<p>February 17 Yogurt Parfait, Donut Holes ----- Rib Patty, WG Bun, Corn or Corn Mac, Mixed Fruit, Dessert 2:30 Dismissal</p>
<p>Alternative Lunch: Hot Ham, WG Bun</p>	<p>February 20 NO SCHOOL Presidents Day (Make-up snow day if needed)</p>	<p>February 21 Fr. Toast, Little Smokies ----- Savage Nachos, Baby Carrots & Dip, Apple Wedges, Yogurt</p>	<p>February 22 Long John ----- Pizza (school made) Cheese or Sausage, Corn, Rosy Applesauce, PB Cookie</p>	<p>February 23 Cooks Choice ----- WG Pasta & Meat Sauce, Tossed Salad, Peaches, WG Bread Stix</p>	<p>February 24 Cheese Omelet, WW Toast ----- Fish Sandwich, Cheese Stix, Coleslaw, Fruit, Chocolate Mousse</p>
<p>Alternative Lunch: Toasted Cheese Sandwich</p>	<p>February 27 Breakfast Wrap ----- Breaded Chicken Patty, WG Bun, Green Beans, Orange, Graham Cookie</p>	<p>February 28 Breakfast Stix ----- Tacos, (cheese, lettuce & tomatoes), Refried Beans, Peaches, Cinnamon Roll</p>	<p>February 29 Yogurt, Cinnamon Roll ----- Hot Ham, WG Bun, Oven Fries, Pineapple, Cottage Cheese</p>	<p>SCSD is an equal opportunity provider and employer. <i>Menu is subject to change without notice.</i></p>	<p>Note: WG Indicates a healthy whole grain food.</p>

March Lunch Calendar

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Cereal is a breakfast alternative. Milk choices are offered with breakfast and lunch. 100% juice or fruit is offered with breakfast.	Note: WG Indicates a healthy whole grain food. Alt Lunch: Toasted Cheese	Breakfast Served: 8:00 a.m. at BOTH Elementary and Jr-Sr High School	SCSD is an equal opportunity provider and employer. <i>Menu is subject to change without notice.</i>	March 1 Mini Pancakes, Applesauce ----- Salisbury Steak, Whipped Potatoes, Gravy, Apricots, WW Dinner Roll	March 2 (Dr. Seuss Birthday) Funnel Cake & Yogurt ----- Egg Omelet, (Alt. Green Eggs & Ham), Hash Browns, Banana, WW Toast, Birthday Cake
Salad is offered as an alternative for grades 5-12. Alternative Lunch: Hot Ham, WG Bun	March 5 NO SCHOOL	March 6 Sausage & Cheese Biscuit ----- Popcorn Chicken, Whipped Potatoes, Fresh Fruit, Muffin	March 7 Fr. Toast, Little Smokies ----- Tomato Soup, Crackers, Toasted Cheese Sandwich, Baby Carrots, Pineapple	March 8 Breakfast Stix, Raisins ----- Spaghetti & Meat Sauce, Tossed Salad, Peaches, French Bread	March 9 NO SCHOOL
Alternative Lunch: Fish Sandwich	March 12 Ham Combo Bar, WW Toast ----- Burritos, Nachos & Cheese Sauce, Corn, Blushing Pears	March 13 Assorted Cereal, Donut Holes, Raisins ----- Chicken Fajitas, WG Wraps, (lettuce & cheese), Tater Tots, Mixed Fruit, Brownie	March 14 Cheese Omelet, WW Toast ----- Savage Meat Loaf, Whipped Potatoes & Gravy, Strawberries, WW Dinner Roll	March 15 Cooks Choice ----- Walkin (tray) Tacos, (lettuce & cheese), Beans, Rosy Applesauce, Cinnamon Rolls	March 16 Yogurt, Cinnamon Roll ----- Pigs in Blanket, Macaroni and Cheese, Baked Beans, Pears, St. Patrick's Jell-O
Alternative Lunch: Hot Dog, WG Bun	March 19 Breakfast Pizza ----- Chicken & Noodles, Whipped Potatoes, Peas, Mandarin Oranges, WW Dinner Roll	March 20 Egg Patty, Potatoes, Toast ----- Rib Patty, WG Bun, Corn or Corn Mac, Tossed Salad, Apple Wedges	March 21 Cooks Choice ----- Steak Nuggets, Oven Baked Potatoes, Fruit Salad, Cinnamon Bread Stix	March 22 Oatmeal, Cinnamon Biscuit ----- Italian Meatball Sub, Buttered Pasta, Green Beans, Peaches	March 23 Mini Pancakes, Applesauce ----- Pizza (school made), Cheese or Cooks Choice, Corn, Applesauce, Oatmeal Cookie
Alternative Lunch: Hamburger, WG Bun	March 26 Breakfast Sandwich ----- Breaded Pork Sandwich, Rice Pilaf, Green Beans, Baked Apples	March 27 Fr. Toast, Little Smokies ----- Cooks Choice	March 28 Breakfast Wrap ----- Chburger Macaroni, Tossed Salad, Applesauce, WG Bread Stix	March 29 Yogurt Parfait ----- Hot Ham, WG Bun, Potatoes, Cottage Cheese, Pineapple	March 30 Cereal Bar & Ass't Cereal ----- Deli Turkey & Cheese Sandwich or Alt: Tuna Salad Sandwich, Baby Carrots, Dip, Pickle, Mac & Cheese, Fruited Jell-O



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