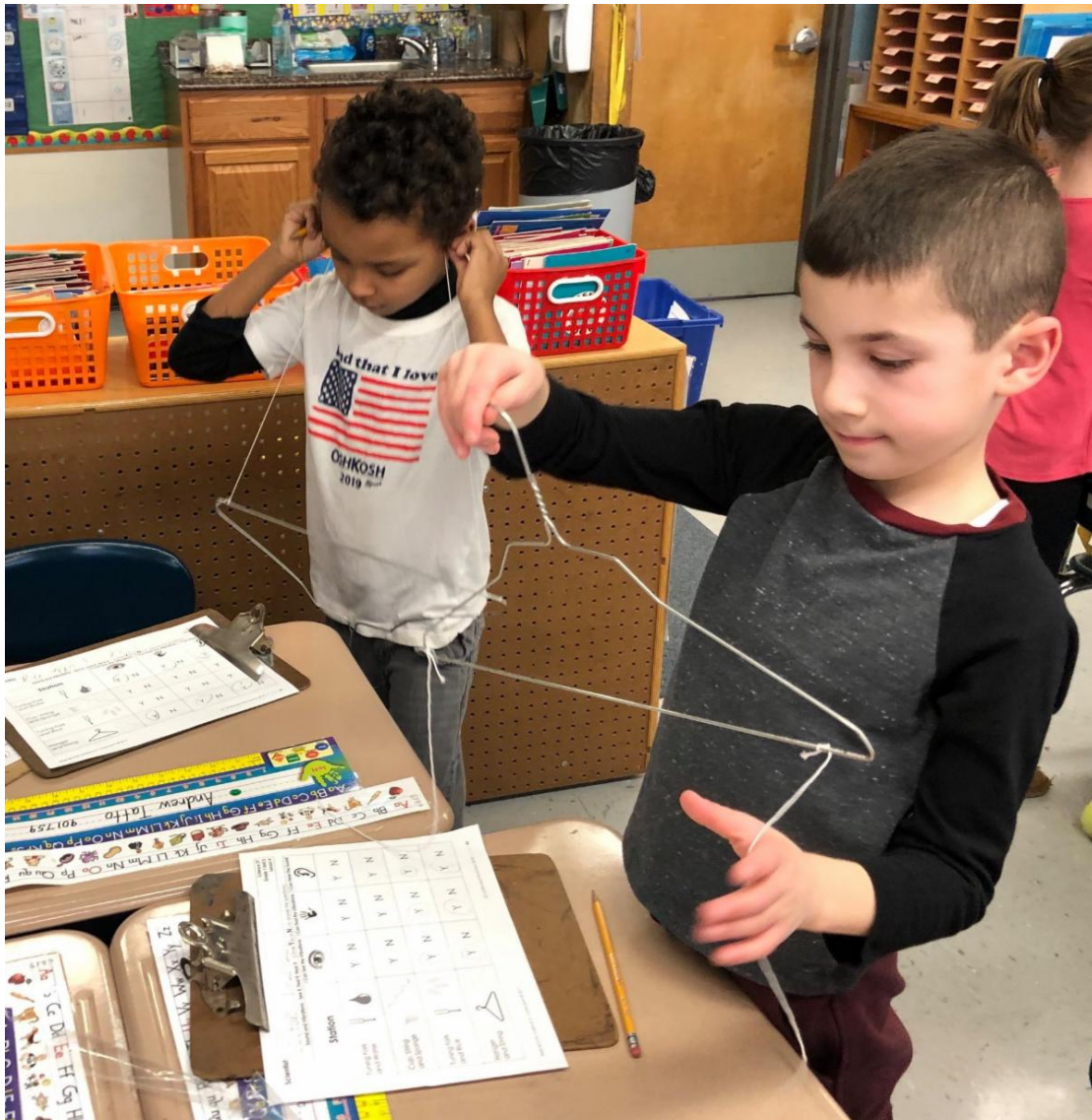


# Tusker Nation

SOMERS CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NEWS  
FOR SCSD FAMILIES

## The Latest News from Somers Schools

### Feeling the Vibes in Science



*First-graders Roman Casimir and Colton Gorgone conduct an experiment to learn about vibrations and sound.*

These first-graders at Primrose Elementary are learning that exploring science through doing is fun.

"I learned that the vibration goes through the string from the hanger!," one student told co-teachers Nancy Hannon and Crystle Regulbuto.

The students used materials at four different stations to collect evidence to support the idea that vibrating materials can make sound and that sound can make materials vibrate. They also discovered that sometimes in a science experiment you can get wet, and sometimes you have to pick up many small grains of rice. But usually, you record your findings on a data collection sheet, discuss your findings with your whole class and add your findings to your science notebooks.

"Science 21 is hands-on and our students are so engaged," says Hannon. "They feel like real scientists in these lessons, called 'Wild Wave' and 'Waves: Light and Sound.'"

"We loved seeing the excitement on their faces as they moved from station to station and when they saw, felt and heard the vibrations," says Regulbuto.

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## Middle School Musicians Practice MYP Techniques



### *Middle school jazz band musicians collaborate in a small group.*

The sweet sounds of jazz floated from the auditorium early one morning in February. Along with the music notes came excited voices and intense discussion. Student musicians were in a sectional; a small, student-led group in which students ask each other questions, learn from each other, and explore their instruments.

"We have more freedom to work on exactly what needs improving, and we are more comfortable taking risks in smaller groups," says one student.

As Somers Middle School moves closer to accreditation as an International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme, the music program already employs the attributes of MYP.

"Students in the performing arts classes develop critical thinking and participate in inquiry-based learning," says music teacher Rachel Malara, "while working both individually and collaboratively. These classes challenge perceptions, stimulate imaginations, and develop creative and analytical skills."

The students also say they feel more able to explore concepts that interest them, creating a more personalized learning experience. And as education research shows, an engaged student is a student who will absorb and retain information more easily, a hallmark of MYP.



The middle school is on track to apply for MYP authorization this fall, with a site visit by the representatives from the organization in the spring of 2021. The high school is in the beginning stages of implementing MYP for ninth and tenth grades. For more information on the middle school's journey to MYP, click [here](#).

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## Not Losing Their Marbles



*Alyssa Diaz, Reese Harney, and Savannah Piazza display their marble maze.*

Failing can be productive. That is one takeaway from the process of building marble mazes in the fifth-grade STEM Club.

"The students experienced that things do not always work perfectly the first time you build them," says Matt Lugo, club advisor and engineering teacher at the middle school. "Through hard work and a lot of trial and error, the students created successful designs."

The students used the tops of copy boxes to design the marble mazes, as well as parts made by the new laser cutter that was donated by the Somers Education Foundation. The club is so popular it has been split into three, grade-level sessions. The fourth-grade members designed and built laser-cut, balloon-powered hover crafts and they are putting the finishing touches on a hovercraft powered by a leaf blower, which they will ride across the middle school cafeteria.

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## Here to Help



***Nieve Mahood, left, and other members of the SHS Youth to Youth Club create a bulletin board profiling mental health professionals in the school.***

The Youth to Youth Club at the high school is spreading the word to classmates that there are many resources at school to help anyone who is struggling with mental health, and that it is okay to talk about it. The club members created a bulletin board of mental health professionals at the high school, including counselors, psychologists, social workers, nurses, secretaries in guidance and the Transitional Support Program.

"I think we can change and encourage people to be more open by normalizing the conversation," says Nieve Mahood. "We can do this by breaking the stigma behind mental health."

"The goal of the club is to bring more awareness to heavy topics that are hard to talk about," says Fiona Youngs, "And to make sure students know they are not alone."

Forming a connection in school with a caring adult can be life-saving for students, and the district makes those social-emotional connections a priority.

"Most adolescents do not want to appear different from their peers," says Kristen Rigaglia, social worker at the high and middle schools. "They can feel embarrassed at times to even ask for help. At the high school, we are trying to enhance mental health education and encourage students to reach out for support."

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**You Can Make a Difference**





*Mentors and their mentees celebrate the TEAM Tuskers Mentoring Program with games and snacks.*

If you are interested in having a positive impact on a child's life, there are many ways to volunteer in Somers schools. The TEAM Tuskers mentoring program matches adults with students to meet one-on-one for an hour every week during the school year.

New this year in the Somers school district is the VIPS program - Volunteers in Public Schools. If you are unable to commit to an hour every week but still have time to share, consider volunteering as a reading buddy in the elementary schools, or a math tutor in the middle school, or perhaps helping with set design for the high school musical. There are many different opportunities to volunteer in Somers schools. For more information on those opportunities and how to participate, click [here](#) to link to the VIPS web page and [here](#) for the TEAM Tusker page.

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**Want a Spot? Safety First.**



If students at Somers High School want a parking space as a senior, they must first attend a Driver Safety program sponsored by the SHS PTSA. Sophomores and juniors, along with a parent, attended a presentation on February 25. Somers Town Justice Michael McDermott and a New York State Trooper provided the students with an invaluable opportunity to learn from their powerful experiences and insights. Jacy Good from Hang Up and Drive shared her story of suffering severe brain injuries after a major car accident at the hands of a distracted driver. The presentation is mandatory for both students and parents in order for the student to obtain a senior parking space.



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