

January  
February  
2010

## **DIRECT DONATION DRIVE**

We extend our gratitude to all parents who were able and willing to contribute to South by sending a donation to the Eugene Education Fund during our fall, 2009 Direct Donation Drive. Our goal for the school year is to reach \$90,000 or more, and it's never too late to make a donation. Over the past few years, individual donations have ranged between \$10 and \$10,000. No donation is too large or too small. In our next newsletter, we will report on our progress toward our goal. Thank you for your support!

## **ON-LINE NIGHT SCHOOL TAKES SHAPE**

While the majority of our students find success in handling the academic rigor at South, some students may become credit deficient in core academic areas. This fall, School District 4J terminated "Night School" which used to provide some classes students could take for replacement credits.

In its place, we have just recently hired a teacher to assist students in benefiting from an on-line learning system run by a company called APEX. The teacher, Peter Wiebe, meets with students in our Mac Lab on Monday through Thursday from 4 - 6 pm. Students with schedule conflicts can enroll in the same on-line courses and meet with a teacher at Churchill between 6 - 8 pm. The APEX system provides many more course options than the former Night School, and it also allows students to finish courses at a faster individual pace. Because we have a limited number of seats, seniors and juniors who are credit-deficient get first priority. Enrollment requires referral from a student's school counselor.

## **PARKING PERMITS FOR SALE**

There are still plenty of parking spaces for sale in the school parking lots. Students may choose from the yellow zone in the east lot and both yellow and red zones in the west lot (Sorry, the blue and red lots on the east side of the school are full.). The parking permit will be at a reduced rate for the rest of the school year; check with Joni de Saint Phalle in the finance office for more details. Remember that cars parked without a permit are subject to towing!

## **DRIVER EDUCATION REGISTRATION OPEN**

Registration is now open for the winter session of driver education at SEHS. The session will begin January 11 and run through March 15, on Monday and Wednesday from 4:30-6:30 p.m.

Call 342-4339 to register. A learner's permit is required for a student to register for the program.

## **VISITOR PARKING LOT: A FUN PLACE TO VISIT, BUT NOT FOR DROP OFF!**

It's 7:55 a.m. and you're pulling into the visitor lot to drop off your student. As you make the turn, someone ahead of you stops in the fire lane. You stop and wait. Your student gets out, you're ready to leave, but the driver in front of you is doing the "I'm learning how to drive, so I get to drive to school" switch of drivers, plus unloading...what is that? A cello, athletic bag, and bags of food for the food drive?! Now cars are backed up onto 19th Ave all the way to the west parking lot and beyond.

Sound familiar? This has become the daily dance in the visitor parking lot in front of the school. The visitor parking is simply not supposed to be used as a drop off point (Check out your Parent-Student Handbook). Rather, we encourage you to use the west, east and back parking lots to drop off your student. As well, entering the west or east lots from 19th and exiting onto Patterson will reduce the backlog of cars trying to exit the school lots via 19th Ave. You'll find less traffic, a shorter wait and a more relaxed morning experience.

## **WINTER WEATHER IS COMING:**

Sign up now for weather-related school closure alerts!

When we have to close or alter our school or bus schedules due to hazardous winter weather, you want to know as quickly as possible. Now Eugene School District 4J is offering another way for parents, students and staff to be alerted if there are snow closures or delays.

There are several ways to find out about weather-related closures, delays and 4J bus route changes on snowy or icy days:

- Text-message alerts (NEW!)
- 4J website, [www.4j.lane.edu](http://www.4j.lane.edu)
- KRVM-FM 91.9
- Other radio and television news stations

Want to sign up for the new text-message alerts? Go to [www.4j.lane.edu/weather](http://www.4j.lane.edu/weather) to learn how.

# FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Dear South Eugene Families,

I hope the holiday break provided you with time to relax and spend quality time with the many important people in your lives.

As we turn the calendar page to 2010, we are just four weeks from completing the first semester of this school year. This is an important time for parents to check in with their students about how their studies are coming, for courses tend to include culminating activities that are not only meaningful experiences but that also can make or break one's final grade. Most teachers post grades on Basmati or other ways, and if there is any question about your student's current standing in a class, please contact the appropriate teacher.



In mid-January, students will receive copies of their second semester schedules and will have a couple weeks to meet with counselors and correct any errors or omissions. Students should check to see that full-year courses show up in their schedule along with any new semester courses. Some courses have openings, including our "Courageous Conversations" class, which is now offered for English credit. Also, seniors who have yet to meet with a counselor for their senior interview are urged to do so right away to ensure that they have all the required credits and courses lined up to graduate in June.

We are excited about the new Cardio Center, which may open as soon as February 1st. Made possible by a very generous gift from one of our families which then enabled us to secure matching grant funds, this facility will feature approximately thirty stations, including treadmills, ellipticals, recumbent and spin bikes, and more. All this equipment will be housed in an attractively fenced portion of the balcony overlooking the main gymnasium. P.E. classes and athletic teams will make good use of this new facility which will contribute to our students' good health.

Back in the classroom, we have increasingly serious and important challenges. I will continue to keep you updated about new Oregon graduation requirements. Our current seniors are the first class needing 24 rather than 23 credits, including 4 English and 3 Math credits. In addition to these changes, our sophomores need 3 credits of Science and 3 credits of some combination of Second Language, the Arts, and/or Career/Tech courses. Furthermore, they need to show proficiency by passing the state reading assessment. Freshmen will be held to all of the above, plus meeting the benchmark in writing. While most of our students currently meet these reading and writing benchmarks, approximately 20% do not. This is a huge challenge which our site council and staff will be working on in the coming months.

A related challenge is how to fund effective programs that meet the needs of those who struggle with academics, while

sustaining and improving opportunities for those who are ready for more advanced studies. We appreciate the fact that many of our families are doing all they can, simply to provide food and shelter for their children. Meanwhile, we are very grateful to those who do have the means and have already responded to our Direct Donation Drive letter, and we are hopeful that many others will soon contribute to SEHS through the Eugene Education Fund so that we can provide a comprehensive educational program that meets the needs of all students.

Finally and once again, I wish to recognize our remarkable SEHS student body. Their talent, intellect, creativity, and compassion for one another make this school an outstanding community. It truly is an honor to support and serve them here at SEHS.

Respectfully,  
Randy Bernstein  
Principal

## VOLUNTEERS MAKE A DIFFERENCE

If you are one of the many volunteers who weekly share your time and expertise with our students and staff, please accept a huge thank you from South Eugene High School for helping to make this a better place to learn and grow.

Each day I meet more and more of you who are faithfully serving in amazing ways. Whether you work in the library, tutor individual students, help in a classroom setting, serve on a Senior Projects panel, work in the Career Center, assisted with our Flu Shot clinics, or chaperoned a field trip or dance, the activities and opportunities you make possible are both valuable and difference-making!

Just recently, many parents cooked and baked to provide a wonderful luncheon hosted by Parent Council for our annual Staff Appreciation event. Other parents came to set-up, serve and clean up, providing an atmosphere where the Staff could gather, eat and enjoy time together. The staff really appreciated everyone who helped with this wonderful luncheon!

Looking ahead, we are looking for Senior Project panelists for January 21, 3:30-5:30 pm.

Panels are led by a Staff member and joined by a parent and community volunteer. We hold orientation for new panelists, and then pair them with experienced people. This is one of my favorite events and getting to watch the project presentations is a great experience.

If all of this sounds interesting to you, getting started is very simple. You can contact me, Kathy Ruggles, Volunteer Coordinator at [ruggles\\_k@4j.lane.edu](mailto:ruggles_k@4j.lane.edu) or 790-8016.

## SENIORS CAN STILL ORDER ANNOUNCEMENTS

Seniors who haven't ordered graduation announcements can still place an order. They should contact Miners' Graduate Services for their custom Class of 2010 graduation announcements at: [www.minersgrad.com](http://www.minersgrad.com) or call them at 689-4588.

# COUNSELING AND COLLEGE/CAREER CENTER UPDATE

## SENIORS

- It's scholarship/financial aid time! Come to the College/Career Center for help searching for scholarships. FAFSA worksheet forms are also available. Check bulletin boards and the SEHS website for scholarships processed through South. Oregon Student Assistance Commission (OSAC) and LCC scholarship applications are also available in the Career Center.

- January 30th is "How to Pay for College in One Day" (held at LCC.) This workshop blends College Goal Oregon's FAFSA assistance with scholarship workshops. Between 9:00-3:00 you can bring your documents and a financial aid professional will help you complete the online FAFSA. Two scholarship workshops will also be held in the morning: "How to Be a Competitive Applicant" and "Learn How to Apply for OSAC Scholarships". These scholarship workshops will repeat in the afternoon.

- If you are still unsure of post-high school plans, come by the College/Career Center. We have many resources to help you decide what you really want to do. We are happy to meet with you, answer questions and find a way for you to learn beyond high school. Although January 15 is the deadline for applying to UO and Feb 1 for OSU, many other schools have rolling deadlines. Community colleges and many one-year training programs do not require SAT/ACT tests and offer many great choices of study.

## JUNIORS

- All juniors should be finishing their Junior Project. This project fulfills part of the Career Related Learning Standards required for graduation. Credit for this project will be included in 1st semester English grades and IHS projects grades.

- Through the Junior Project students have been examining their personal interests and career goals, as well as beginning to identify their post-high school options. The Oregon "Career Information

System" is the main resource used although reference books, catalogues, career and college guides are available. Students also confirmed their login to Naviance, our college and counseling website. Both of these web-based programs (CIS and Naviance) are accessible from home. Just call the College/Career Center (790-8011) or check the SEHS website for access information.

- PSAT Test results came in during December. They can be picked up in the College/Career Center.
- Juniors should sign up for a JUNIOR INTERVIEW in the Counseling Center beginning the end of January. Interviews will be in February and March.
- Junior Night (part of our Beyond High School Series) is Wednesday, February 17th from 7:00-9:00 pm.

## SOPHOMORES

- All sophomores will begin "SKILLS" exploration in the College/Career Center in February. They will be scheduled through their IHS projects classes or through Social Studies in Classic South. Students can watch for announcements about this in late January.
- Counselors will share the PLAN test results with sophomores after winter vacation.

## FRESHMEN

- Freshman Night is Thursday, January 21 at 7:00 pm in the Cafeteria. (Note that this is a change of day from earlier newsletters). Freshmen students and parents are invited to attend. Topics covered will be included in enews and posted on the SEHS website under Career Center - Beyond South.
- Travis Johnson, our freshman counselor, will visit all freshman classes in February and March to discuss transcripts and 4-year graduation plans.
- Freshman students will visit the College/Career Center through their advisory classes in either 1st or 2nd semester.

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### January

- 11 Foreign Language Project Day
- 15 MLK Assembly
- 18 MLK Day, NO SCHOOL
- 20 Freshmen Night, Beyond South, 7 p.m.
- 21 Site Council, 3:30 p.m.
- 27 Finals, Periods 2, 4, 6
- 28 Finals, Periods 1, 3, 5, 7
- 29 Grading Day, NO SCHOOL

### February

- 1 Second Semester Classes Begin
- 5 Choir Concert Benefit, 7:30 p.m.
- 10 Spring Sports Registration, 6-8 p.m.
- 11 Play, 7:30 p.m.
- 12 Play, 7:30 p.m.
- 13 Play, 7:30 p.m.
- 15 Presidents' Day, NO SCHOOL
- 17 Junior Night, Beyond South, 7 p.m.
- 18 Site Council, 3:30 p.m.  
Play, 7:30 p.m.
- 19 Winter Sports Assembly  
Play, 7:30 p.m.
- 20 Play 7:30 p.m.
- 26 Jazz Cabaret, 7:30 p.m.
- 27 Jazz Cabaret, 7:30 p.m.

See Google Calendar on SEHS Web Page

## ATTENTION PARENTS

Any student who wants to take an A.P. Social Studies class must first take the A.P. qualifier test, get their Social Studies teacher's recommendation and have a 3.0 G.P.A. If students have already passed the A.P. qualifier test, they do not need to take it again.

This year the qualifier test will be given in the Career Center on these dates: 2/9/10, 2/10, 2/16, 2/17, 2/23, 2/24. Students' Social Studies teachers will be handing out permission slips to interested students at the end of January. There is no charge to take the A.P. qualifier test.

## AIDS/SUBSTANCE ABUSE PREVENTION FUNDED

Tibor Bessko's proposal 'AIDS/Substance Abuse Prevention (ASAP)' was awarded \$2,000 on Nov. 9 by the EEF board of directors. Gifts to the Eugene Education Fund made possible 51 grants so far, and more may be sponsored by year-end. Details are at [www.eef.lane.edu](http://www.eef.lane.edu). Grant support is in addition to donor-earmarked gifts parents and neighbors make through EEF. This steady support means our kids get wider opportunity and more individual attention. Some of our dreams remain unfulfilled. If you have not already made a gift this year, would you consider doing so now? Make your check payable to "South Eugene High School EEF" and mail it (EEF, P.O. Box 1015, Eugene OR, 97440) or bring it to our office. You can also contribute by credit card or monthly bank transfers. For more information call David Meredith at 343-6877.

## AFTER-SCHOOL HOMEWORK CLUB

This is just a reminder that our ASHC provides daily assistance for students who wish to access additional support in completing their homework successfully. The After-School Homework Club is held in room 714 four days/week, from 3:15-4:00 on Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday, and from 3:30 - 4:15 on Wednesday. Tutors are available each day, and a snack is provided. If your student is earning a C or less in any courses, we hope you'll encourage him/her to attend our ASHC.

## JOIN THE PARENT EDUCATION SERIES FOR A TWO-PART CONVERSATION/ACTIVITY

Parent Council will sponsor a two-part conversation/activity during their January and February Parent Education Series. Both sessions will run from 6:30-7:30 p.m. in the cafeteria.

At the January meeting, they plan to engage parents in a Socratic Dialogue on the topic of alcohol and other drug use by SEHS students. They will begin by providing parents with a brief piece of text on the topic, along with some relevant data.

Parents will be given a few minutes to read the text and to write down some questions that they'd like to explore. Parents will then be put into "Socratic Circles" which will be facilitated by South staff. There are several objectives to this exercise. One is to raise parents' awareness regarding what students are/aren't doing with regard to drugs and alcohol. Another will be to share and gather parents' input with regard to their insights and experiences on the topic as well as their questions that they would like to explore further at the February meeting.

Parent Council would also like to give parents a taste of the SEHS classroom experience by engaging them in a discussion structure that an increasing number of South teachers are using.

At the February 24 meeting, they plan to bring in some "experts" who can respond to many of the questions and comments that were raised the previous month. The goal is to be sure parents come away with a deeper sense of how they can work together with the school and as a community to encourage healthy behaviors, and also how to approach their own children/adolescents about making the right choices.

## SOUTH HIGH NEWS

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## AN INVITATION FROM PARENT COUNCIL . . .

By Mark Rosen, Parent Council Chair

During Parent Council's initial meetings this year, many parents shared concerns and contributed ideas for making South even more successful. After further discussion, Parent Council will submit the most promising ideas to the school for serious consideration.\* Here are some of the questions parents are raising:

- Should South downplay the role of lower-level academic skills, such as rote memorization, and emphasize higher-level scholarly skills, such as contrasting and connecting related concepts, formulating deep questions, leveraging research tools, and applying creative problem-solving methods?
- Should South emphasize personal development more, such as collaborating with colleagues, resolving conflicts cordially, and gaining resilience for handling disappointments and overcoming barriers?
- Should South adopt an alternative model for evaluating proficiency? Besides the historic testing model, should South offer students additional pathways for demonstrating cognitive competence before a semester ends, including stress-minimized options? Certainly, a live entertainer can't avoid the stresses of a

stage performance; however, does test time overly resemble show time?

The ideas we've gathered typically arose during dinner conversations and other contexts where students describe their positive and negative views about South. If the above questions seem worthwhile, or you believe South should increase, decrease or change anything else, please attend one or more Parent Council Meetings and share your suggestions, frustrations and/or enthusiasm for quality education. Parent Council meets the last Wednesday of each month at 8pm in the school's cafeteria. Let's leverage what we hear and influence how South prepares your student for adulthood. If you can, put the upcoming Parent Council Meetings on your calendar (the next two are Jan 27 and Feb 24, 2010). For more information, please contact me at 654.0784 or [sehsparentcouncil@comcast.net](mailto:sehsparentcouncil@comcast.net), or visit Parent Council's website at [parentcouncil.blogspot.com](http://parentcouncil.blogspot.com).

- South's policy-making organization, Site Council, will write the school's next three-year School Improvement Plan during the remainder of this academic year. Many parents don't realize how much genuine autonomy the state grants each Oregon school for innovating and shaping its own future, typically via the school's Site Council. Two other parents besides me are members of South's Site Council, and we'll submit and support all compelling ideas (and concerns) that parents contribute.