

Suffield High School

August 2013

From the Principal...



Dear Parents, Students and Friends:

Greetings! The Suffield High School faculty and administration hope that you are enjoying your summer and that the season is proving to be restful and restorative for you and your family. As it always does, summer is sliding by at record speed – and the beginning of another school year is fast approaching!

The administrative team at SHS has been very busy this summer hiring new staff and planning program improvements. Specifically, we will welcome new teachers in the Agriscience, Mathematics, English, Family and Consumer Science and World Language departments. We continue to make improvements to the Advisory program, based on feedback from faculty and students, to allow for more meaningful meetings and a stronger connection between Advisors and students. As has been the practice the last few years, one of the first advisory meetings of the year includes a “book chat” about the students’ summer reading selections. Students are reminded to return to school prepared for those conversations.

Once again, we are pleased to report positive gains for our students with respect to their performance on CAPT! We are so proud of our students and our faculty for a tremendously positive four-year trend! These results indicate that our continued focus on using data to improve student performance has been effective. Our most significant work this summer includes our efforts to continue aligning curriculum and assessments with the Common Core State Standards. As districts across the state transition from the CAPT assessments to the new SBAC assessments in the next two years, we want to be sure our students are fully prepared for this measurement. As part of the transition to SBAC and CCSS, our data team structure which has been in place for the last four years will be updated to reflect a more fulsome Professional Learning Community approach based on the work of Richard Dufour and other national leaders in education. In essence, PLCs meet regularly in a collaborative model to examine student work and address how best to improve student learning.

In other news, our *Wildcat Advisory Group*, a team of carefully selected upperclassmen, will help transition the freshmen into our school family at our freshman orientation. This year, the program is scheduled for August 20th from 8:30am to noon; more information will be sent under separate cover to freshmen and their parents. I would like to take this first opportunity to ask parents to encourage their freshmen to check out the Clubs and Activities Guide which will be available at orientation. Our school boasts a multitude of co-curricular clubs and activities as well as a full athletic program to round out the overall experience of our students. Academics are a top priority, but the overall development and wellness of each individual is our *highest* priority. I cannot emphasize enough how important it is for students to find connections to their school beyond the classroom. Joining a club or activity helps students gain a sense of belonging, invest in their education more fully, and better manage their time.

If we may be of assistance to you throughout the summer months, please feel free to call us. In the meantime, enjoy the remaining weeks of fun in the sun and we’ll see you back here on the first day of school, August 27th.

Respectfully,

Donna L. Hayward