

Stanton Community Schools

Home & School CONNECTION! (Working Together for School Success)

Volume XVII, Issue 6

December 31, 2019

From the Superintendent's Desk

By Michael J. Sieh

Honoring Those!!

By now, most of you know that my last official day at the Stanton Community Schools is June 30, 2020. That date will mark the conclusion of my 19th year at SCS! I'm not sure where time has gone for not only is this year flying by, but so did the previous 18 years.

As I reflect on my years at SCS, I can't help but think about all the people who helped me grow so I could serve this community. Some growth experiences were because of happy occurrences while others came with a great amount of personal pain. Regardless, the growth put many things in motion so we could have an AWESOME school at Stanton.

The people throughout the years have been amazing!! Where do I start? Current and past students would be a great place. Like most educators, my most gratifying moments come when students (current or former) tell me how I have impacted their lives. I also love it when a student tells me a memorable story. For example, I have a great story about playing cards. Dr. Chris Stogdill and I came the same year. Since neither of us knew anyone, we started a friendly competition to see who could know the most students by their first names. I obtained a copy of the previous year's yearbook so I could quickly learn names and faces (Did not share my strategy with Dr. Stogdill). But we wanted to know them even better, so we started a pitch card game

during lunch. We would challenge the students to a game of pitch in my office. What the students did not know was that we were trying to get to know them and others during the game. We understood that the students had to believe that we were trusting and caring. If we could garner this trust, then they would spread the word that we were more than okay. Shortly after we began, negative comments started spreading about our friendly game, so the game came to a squelching stop.

Fast forward 15 years, a couple of now 30-year old's start talking about this game with me and how it impacted them. At the time, they were seniors. They indicated to me that they would do anything to get to play. Just so happened, I still had the deck of cards, so I gave it to one of them as a memento. In the end, the game was fun, had a negative moment, but lasting memories!

The staff has been amazing over the years as well. Lasting memories and friends have been gained through my career at SCS. I have numerous stories to tell about my staff that just make me laugh out loud. For their dignity and mine, I will keep some of them to myself. But what I can tell you is that all them truly care about the students of SCS. One example is that Karen Gray still edits this newsletter every month prior to be published (no need

to cringe Miss Gray, everyone knows you still have it).

And finally, members of the community have been great to work for. A parent's most valuable resource is his/her children. You learn this quickly when working with children and being a parent yourself. All parents are willing to do almost anything for his/her children. For the most part, the drive is a good thing, but sometimes our own children can cloud our judgement. Most times, parents of this community have been willing to dialogue concerning difficult situations to come up with sustainable solutions. Solutions that become positive teachable moments. I can think of many times where conversation had to happen in order to come up with a solution. Parents are good about re-thinking issues after time passes. What may have been an issue yesterday is no longer an issue today.

Parents of our students come and go and come again. What I mean, parents will show up to all their children's activities. Then they become empty nesters and you won't see them for a while. But wait a few years, they are back in the bleachers as grandparents. I have noticed that grandparents tend to enjoy the child's activities more because their stress level is so much lower.

Thank you so much for making my family and I feel a part of this community in the past, present and future!

Reporters

Dr. Sieh Superintendent
Dr. Cunningham..... H.S. Principal
Mrs. Remm Elementary Principal
Mrs. Fernau..... Counselor
Mrs. Holoubek School Nurse
Mrs. Flood Cheer & Dance
Mr. Peter..... PE/Weights Instructor

Events Calendar

January 3

- No School
- Teacher Inservice

January 6

- School reconvenes (8:00 a.m.)

January 13

- School Board Meeting (7:00 p.m.)

January 20

- Staff Development (Motivational Speaker at Norfolk Senior High) - No School



www.scs-ne.org
(402)439-2233

Happy New Year!

Questions??? Please Call!
Central Office – 439-2233
High School Office – 439-2250
Elementary Office – 439-2639

Connecting with Dr. Cunningham

By Dave Cunningham & Lindy Fernau

Mental Health Services for Students at Stanton Community Schools

Growing up can be tough for kids. Kid's bodies and brains are changing rapidly, grappling with new ideas and influences, that will eventually shape who they become as adults. Kids growing up in today's society is much different than when I grew up. I think kids today might have it worse than many of us due to the influence of technology.

Students are growing up, going through awkward stages and first crushes, but today's students are doing all of that on social media, Instagram, and SnapChat. Students are judged by the number of likes they have on Instagram, not how personable they are when talking to another person. Many do not know how to talk to another person with eye contact. Students today are distracted, they're under a lot of pressure and they are suffering from mental health issues more than ever before.

The education community is increasingly getting involved in these types of issues because educators are best known for "caring for the whole child." Research shows that for students to be successful academically, that educators need to meet the student's other needs. Those needs include their social and emotional needs which many times are outside the reach of the traditional roles of the school.

Researchers believe everyone needs five competency skills; self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision making. These are skills that all people and all learners will use across a lifespan. The skills will need to be continuously developed throughout their lives. These skills help us to recognize, understand, label, express, and regulate our emotions.

Each of us has a different trigger of stress throughout our

life and different emotions can hijack our body's ability to process the appropriate or meaningful response. Due to the triggers of stress many people are not able to regulate a given situation due to the information they have been taught. Social-Emotional learning teaches and targets skill sets, and competencies that underscore a person's ability to learn. Social Emotional Learning is how children and adults learn to understand and manage emotions, set goals, show empathy for others, establish positive relationships, and make responsible decisions.

According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, one in five children and adolescents experience a mental health problem during their school years. Examples include stress, anxiety, bullying, family problems, depression, a learning disability, and alcohol and substance abuse. Serious mental health problems, such as self-injurious behaviors and suicide, are on the rise, particularly among youth. Unfortunately, estimates of up to 60% of students do not receive the treatment they need due to stigma and lack of access to services. Of those who do get help, nearly two thirds do so only in school. In fact, research has shown that students are more likely to seek counseling when services are available in schools.

The American Psychological Association (APA) periodically surveys for stress in the American public. In the [2018 APA survey](#), teens reported worse mental health and higher levels of anxiety and depression than all other age groups.

Stanton Community is partnering with Oasis Counseling International to expand our

Please see **MENTAL HEALTH**, page 4

Reminiscing with Mrs. Remm

By Sarah Remm

A Time to Reflect

Well, here we are. Halfway through another school year, which brings a perfect opportunity for reflection. There are so many reasons to celebrate! The teachers and staff work hard each and every day to provide the best learning experiences to the students. They demonstrate dedication to the curriculum and the tried-and-true instructional strategies. Their willingness to continue to learn about and implement what is best for students is tremendous. Our focus continues to be on quality student responses and student engagement, as well as providing appropriate feedback to students.

The students have also been working hard to improve their skills and build their knowledge. This year brought a new reading initiative to public schools-NebraskaREADS. With this, our focus is on closely monitoring reading progress throughout the school year. Assessments are given in the fall and winter and again in the spring. The result of our fall benchmark was 73% of students at or above the reading target. The outcome of the winter benchmark showed 83% of our students at or above the target, just below our building goal of 85%. Definite growth is happening!

With the NebraskaREADS

initiative, individual reading improvement plans are developed for students needing more reading support through interventions in kindergarten through 3rd grade. Parents will be notified in January if their child is exiting a current reading plan because he or she has met the target. Parents will also be notified if a reading plan will be developed for their child because he or she did not meet the reading target for the winter benchmark. As always, parents are encouraged to contact the school with any questions or concerns about their child's academic progress.

As we concentrate on reading, let's think about the oh-so popular New Year's resolution of increasing one's exercise routine. Is reading considered exercise? As a matter of fact, it is. While it may not be the kind of exercise we typically think of, reading is exercise for our brains. Many benefits result from consistent and meaningful reading habits, including understanding language structure, developing vocabulary, and improving concentration. Reading to your young ones, encouraging independent reading with your older children, and modeling good reading habits are great ways to "hit the gym" in the year 2020.

MENTAL HEALTH OF GEN Z LEAST LIKELY TO SAY THEIR MENTAL HEALTH IS EXCELLENT OR VERY GOOD

% reporting excellent or very good mental health



Holoubek's Health Tips

By Lisa Holoubek

New Year, Healthier You!

Every year, typically in January, millions of people (roughly one in three) resolve some sort of self-improvement goal (s). A much smaller percentage actually achieve those well-intentioned goals. While about 75% of people stick to their goals for at least one week, only about half of those are still on target 6 months later. So how can we help ensure success with our new year's goals? Here are some tips to make your goals stick:

- **Practice will power** - willpower is like a muscle - the more you use it, the stronger it gets. Start small - when you have a craving, squash it by distraction - busy your mind with other things, go for a brisk 5-minute walk, or replace with something meaningful. Use extra diligence, while using imagery to see yourself achieving your goal. Our brain responds surprisingly quickly to regular practice of willpower. Tell yourself that you can do it, and use an extra ounce of diligence, and it might be easier than you think.
 - **Make one change at a time** - since many new year's goals involve healthy behaviors, taking one at a time can help ensure success. When your brain and body adapt to one new healthy habit, or the absence of a bad habit, it's easier to adjust the thought/control center in the brain. Too many changes from your normal routine can be overwhelming.
 - **Break up your goals into manageable tasks** - if your goal is to get healthier by incorporating cardiovascular exercise into your day, start small and work up from there. If you haven't exercised in a while, start with a 5-minute walk for a few days, then increase by 5-10 minutes until you reach your goal. If your goal is weight loss, start with a goal of 5 pounds, rather than looking at the big picture of your entire weight loss goal.
 - **Lift your spirits** - laugh often. Find enjoyment in the everyday things of life. Keep in touch with family and friends - those who have close regular social contacts have been linked with greater adherence to self-improvement goals. Find a buddy who shares one or more of your goals, and help keep each other on track, all while enjoying the benefits of social interaction.
 - **Be your own cheerleader** - congratulate yourself on small accomplishments. Practice positive self-talk and don't rely on outside reinforcement. You can help yourself by believing in yourself and focusing on your positive traits. Repeat your greatest assets to yourself regularly and it can change your mood and outlook or write down 3 things you're proud of or have accomplished and look at the list often.
- Good luck with your goals for the new year - and here's to a happier, healthier you!

Cheer & Dance to Host Camp

(Flood) The Stanton Cheer and Dance Teams will hold a cheer and dance camp for girls in Pre-K through 6th grade. This will be held on Saturday January 25th, 2020.

The day will include learning cheers and a short dance with the high school teams. They will then perform at the Varsity Girls and Boys Basketball games that night starting at 6:00.

Registration is due to the elementary or high school office by Tuesday January 7th, 2020. Cost is \$40 and that covers a shirt, lessons, admission into the game as well as a pizza supper. Students will bring home forms from school, but if you need more information, call Jen Flood at 402-439-2639.

Happy New Year from Stanton Community Schools PE/Strength and Conditioning

(Peter) I thought I would give you a snapshot of what we have been doing in class and what we will do to start the next semester in January.

Leisure Time, in the first semester, has completed the following units: Badminton, Deck Tennis, Croquet, tossing sports, volleyball, hockey, soccer, handball, and finishing with kickball along with some more I am forgetting. This year's class is a lot of fun to work with and has given a ton of effort.

Weights classes are in the middle of their second Mesocycle of the year, each Mesocycle is 12 weeks long and consists of 4 micro cycles of 3 weeks. In the normal school year, we can finish 3 Mesocycles. The winter break is coming at a great time for our lifters as most have been working very

hard for the whole first semester and could use some time off.

Starting after break, Leisure time will jump into our base-running units which include wiffle ball and kickball baseball, then transition into our racquet sports like ping pong and pickleball. Pickleball is new this year and is by far my favorite PE game.

Weights will continue with our winter cycle for 6 weeks, which concludes with our testing time of the year. We test on the following: flying ten, vertical jump, broad jump, hang clean max, and bench reps or bench max. We will test after the winter cycle and then again in the spring. I will post a newsletter with the testing results.

Have a strong new year!!

School Reconvenes on January 6, 2020!



"I appreciate the text, Kate, but next time you can just raise your hand."

MENTAL HEALTH

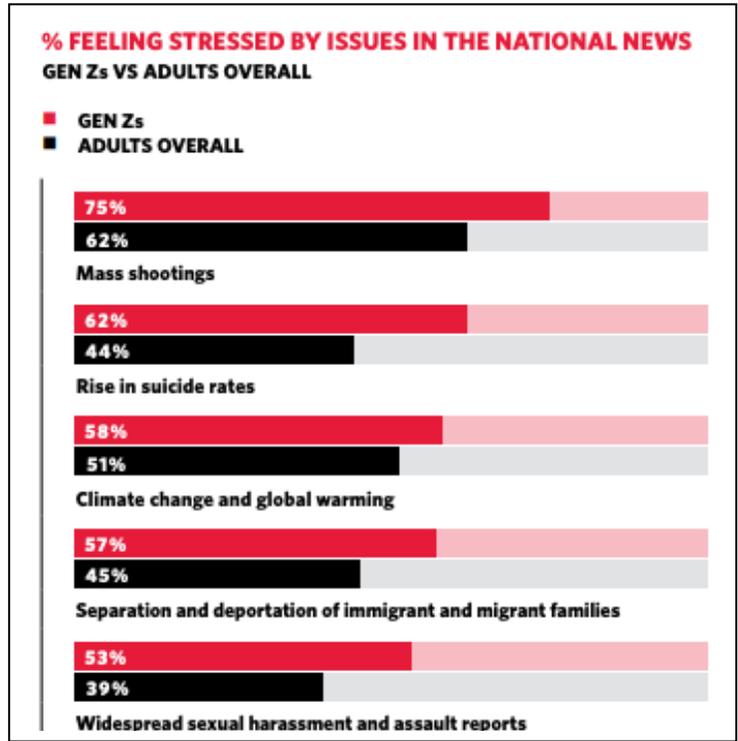
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counseling offerings to students and families. Mental health counseling is not a form of counseling that educators or school counselors have been trained to offer through their educational studies. Mental health counseling is a specific type of counseling that requires specialized training. Through the partnership with Oasis Counseling International out of Norfolk, we will be able to offer students and families with some unique counseling opportunities.

Stanton Community Schools and Oasis Counseling International's goal is to link schools and families with much-needed mental health and counseling services. Oasis Counseling will provide services

two half days each week at the school. We recognize that time and money is always a factor when seeking some counseling services and this cooperation should minimize both. The parent's insurance or grant funding provides payment for services.

A referral by the guidance counselor or principal would be made to the family and Oasis Counseling. Oasis Counseling would then contact the family for an initial meeting to set up a plan. A parent can also recommend their child. If a parent believes their child could benefit from visiting with a mental health counselor, please contact the principal or counselor for a referral form.



No School

on January 20, 2020 for ESU #8 Mid-Winter Workshop for Teachers.

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1007 Kingwood Street
P.O. Box 749
Stanton, NE 68779