

Principal's Message – September, 2018

With the start of a new school year, we have several important topics to make everyone aware of. We always have exciting things happening, but this year's start also has some systems changes, ensuring a safer and more effective learning environment for our students.

First, I will explain some of our safety procedures. For more than a decade, we have continuously looked to make our campus a safer space for our students and staff. This year, we identified that we needed to keep our buildings secure not only during the student day, but before and after the student day as well. Barre City Elementary and Barre Town Elementary were able to implement some of these changes last spring. We, at SHS, were only able to implement this at the start of this school year. What this looks like is that visitors and parents will need to enter at the CVCC Main Office entrance or SHS Main Office entrance, so that they can be signed in. Visitors should also expect to be escorted from or greeted at the office. Students will also enter through these two areas, as well as have the ability to enter through the auditorium entrance between 7:15 AM to 8:15 AM. Students that arrive to campus early in the morning will continue to have a warm, safe space in either of the main entrances, which open at 5:30 AM, although the main building will not be open until 7 AM. We are still working on our afternoon measures, to allow after school programs to be accessed while keeping the building secure. These measures require some door changes, which coincide with some of our fire code renovations.

The second significant change is around how we cover classrooms when teachers are absent. We know that all academic time is incredibly important and that relationships between students and adults are a key component. So, we have been working to hire full time staff for our substitute positions. These Permanent Substitutes will promote consistency, as well as be better informed of our school initiatives than daily substitutes have been in the past. We also are using a team approach in our new model, where two staff members will be working with multiple classes simultaneously. Although this will be a new experience for students, we believe that having the consistency of staff will help them, especially when it is already a challenge not having their regularly assigned teachers. On days that we have a larger number of staff absences, we will still need to hire daily substitutes, but we are looking to have them paired up with our Permanent Substitutes to optimize the consistency for our students.

We understand changes are difficult at times, and although we have put a great deal of thought into these changes, we recognize that some tweaks may need to happen. If anyone has questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to reach out to Principal Brenda Waterhouse at bwateshs@u61.net, so that we can be aware of these matters. Additional safety topics are highlighted further in this newsletter.

Tip Line

As part of Spaulding's commitment to the safety of our school community, we have contracted with Vector Solutions to provide another way for students, staff, parents, and community members to let us know if they have heard or seen anything which might harm our students or school community. This includes comments, online posts, or other actions. Reports can be made via email, text, or on the website by visiting:

shsu61-vt.safeschoolsalert.com

Also, be on the lookout for a special link on the school's web page, which will be available shortly! *See Something, Say Something!* If you would like more information, please contact Assistant Principal Luke Aither at laithshs@u61.net.

Community Forum

The third Wednesday of each month is dedicated to a community forum. These are great opportunities for students, parents, guardians and community members to meet at the school and not only hear what is going on, but provide input of some of the happenings within our school community. The agendas will be published on our webpage and Facebook page in advance, so people can plan ahead of time.

September 19th is our first Community Forum of the year. The agenda will be discussing the safety response of the ALICE program. The forums will begin at 5:30 PM in the cafeteria.

If you have questions or can not make the forum, please contact Assistant Principal Luke Aither at laithshs@u61.net or Assistant Principal Jim Ferland at jferlshs@u61.net.

ALICE

You may have been hearing the term ALICE, but not quite sure what that means. ALICE is an acronym that stands for Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter and Evacuate, and is a program that emphasizes options in a threatening situation, regardless of the location. ALICE has worked with multiple state and federal law enforcement agencies to develop the concepts and components it teaches. Last year, the Barre Supervisory Union school board endorsed and approved this program for district-wide implementation, and since then, about eight staff have been certified as instructors. Before school started this year, all teachers were trained. Through the year, students will be thoughtfully introduced to the different components of ALICE during our month emergency preparedness exercises. More information about ALICE can be found at:

<https://www.alicetraining.com/>.

Cafeteria & Food Offerings

Aladdin, formally known as Fitz Vogt, has been providing wonderful options for breakfast and lunch. And, now, we have a few new things to offer!

During our lunch service, there is one station that is focused on food allergies – this station not only promotes options for those with specific needs, but also the importance of making sure that there isn't cross contamination of other foods. We encourage students to speak with administration, the school nurses or Craig Locarno, Aladdin Manager, to help us be most aware of their dietary needs.

Additionally, we will be offering after school snacks Mondays – Thursdays. These snacks are offered to all students free of charge. Additional items are available for purchase. Students should stop by the cafeteria from 3:05 – 3:30 to grab some afternoon sustenance.

Questions about our food service, please contact Craig Locarno at bsu@aladdinfood.com.

Important Date to Remember:

October 10th is our Parent - Teacher Conference Day. Freshmen, Sophomores and Juniors will take the appropriate form of the PSAT test, which we administer to all students. Seniors, who typically take SATs, are not expected to attend on this day. Students will be dismissed at noon, after the testing is complete. Breakfast and lunch is available for all students. Parent-Teacher conferences will be scheduled from 12:30 – 7:00 PM. The information to schedule your conferences will be coming soon.