

Syosset Pride

A Publication of the Syosset Central School District

www.syossetschools.org

A Summer of Progress

SECURITY UPDATE

AN IMPORTANT UPDATE ON DISTRICT-WIDE INITIATIVES

This summer, the District has been hard at work on several initiatives with a strong focus on security-related enhancements, as well as important updates to the curriculum, facilities and student services. This special edition of Syosset Pride was added to the newsletter schedule in order to update the community on the progress made this summer and explain some new procedures implemented for the 2018-19 school year.

The District has recently shared a lot of information on the work being done to enhance the safety and security of the school environment by way of newsletters, the District website and Board of Education meetings. While there are many ongoing projects, the District has committed to take a measured, holistic approach to ensuring the safety and well-being of the students, staff and community. The numerous

security initiatives undertaken by the District are all interwoven and designed to support and enhance each other as part of a comprehensive security plan. The District commissioned a security audit in 2015 to identify areas for improvement. This summer, many of the projects identified after the audit have come to fruition. In today's environment, enhancing security is a continual, ongoing process. While great strides have been made this summer, work will continue throughout the school year and into the summer of 2019.

This newsletter is meant to provide an overview of the work that has been done this summer, and to highlight changes in procedures being implemented with the start of the 2018-19 school year. Although there are many initiatives covered, this is not an exhaustive list of the security-related projects underway by the District. There is both covert and

overt work being done. While the covert work cannot be disclosed so as not to compromise the security measures, presentations have been given at recent Board of Education meetings providing an overview of the overt work being done in both the short and long term. The presentations were given at the March and June 2018 meetings and can be found on the District website on the Board of Education – Board Discussions page.

An important resource for the community is the District school calendar, which was recently mailed home to the community. This calendar contains very important information, including key contacts at the District, as well as policies and regulations, including the Code of Conduct and the Dignity for All Students Act Policy. It is important to review and understand this information, as maintaining a positive, supportive climate for the students is imperative to their success.

The District would like to thank the community for its continued support in enhancing

school safety, with a special thank-you to the members of the Citizen's Security Advisory Committee, who took time out of their summer schedules to provide input and feedback on security measures. Some of the procedural changes implemented for this school year may result in some inconveniences, such as longer wait times to enter the buildings. Your patience is valued while protocols are refined and work continues to maintain a safe and secure environment for the students and staff. The ultimate goal is to provide as secure an environment as possible for the students, staff and community, while still maintaining the warm and welcoming atmosphere that Syosset prides itself on.

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Syosset, New York 11791

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PLEASE NOTE: A special Board of Education meeting has been scheduled for August 28th at 8 p.m. in the South Woods Middle School auditorium to review the District's comments prepared in response to the Syosset Park DEIS.

Security Vestibules

Upon entrance, a visitor must provide identification before being permitted to pass through a second set of doors.

With the 2017-18 school district budget vote, the community approved the use of capital reserve fund monies for Phase 1 construction projects to make necessary health and safety upgrades throughout the District. Included in the scope of work presented to the community was the installation of security vestibules. The vestibules allow for enhanced control of visitors by creating a secured space for screening before visitors are permitted to enter the building. Upon entrance, a visitor must provide identification that will be

scanned through the new electronic visitor management system (outlined below) before being permitted to pass through a second set of doors.

Security vestibules are now in place at the main entrance in all elementary schools and both the middle schools. Although work has begun on the high school vestibule, it requires more extensive work than the other buildings and therefore the project will require more time to complete. There will be a temporary solution in place until the permanent vestibule is complete.



Visitor Management System

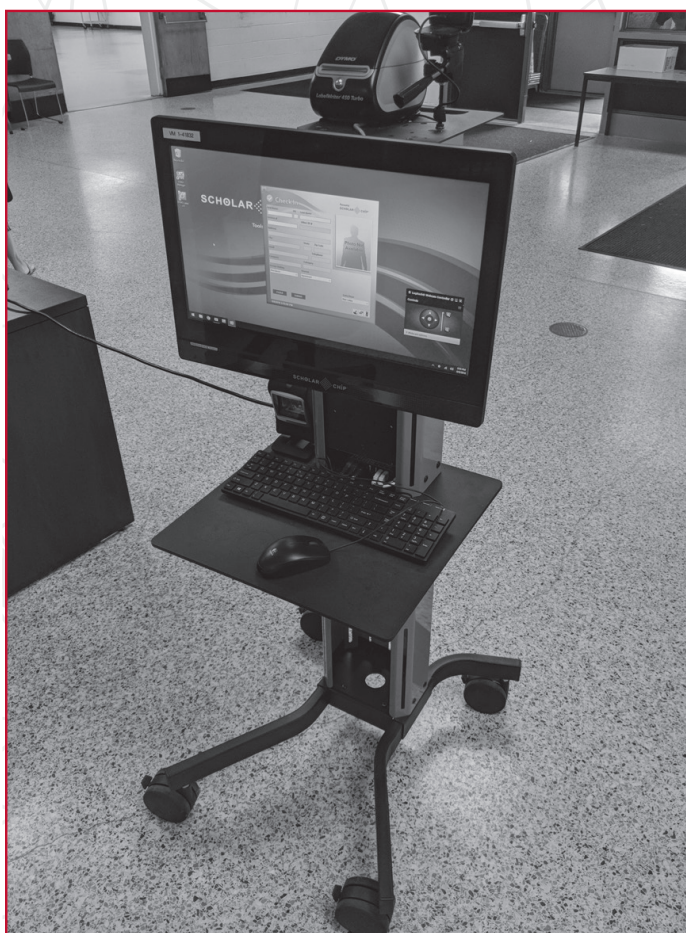
All visitors, including alumni and parents, must have an appointment prior to arrival at any school building during school hours.

A new electronic visitor management system has been implemented at all school buildings. This visitor management system allows security personnel to electronically check all visitors against registered sexual offender databases, ensure parental custody rights are accurately enforced, produce visitor badges and monitor visitor hours. All visitors will be required to present a valid government-issued ID, which will be scanned into the system. A photo of the visitor will also be taken. Once the ID is cleared, a visitor pass with the photo will be generated that must be worn by the visitor for the duration of their time in the building.

In addition to the electronic visitor

management system, the District has implemented procedural changes to the process by which visitors are admitted to the buildings. All visitors, including alumni and parents, must have an appointment prior to arrival at any school building during school hours. After the appointment is verified by security personnel and the visitor is screened by the visitor management system, a visitor pass will be produced, and the visitor will be escorted to their destination within the building.

As always, parents and community members are welcomed and encouraged to attend public events (such as concerts and evening meetings).



Exterior Keypad Access

In all buildings, select exterior doors are now controlled by an access card reader. This enhanced safety feature integrates with smart-chip staff badges and allows for improved control over who enters the building, as well as allows the District to instantly disable access to the exterior doors in the event of an emergency.

● Identification Badges

For Staff

As you may have noticed this past school year, all District employees now wear photo identification badges, which are chip-enabled smart badges. This initiative accomplishes two objectives. The first is the ability to visually identify school employees. The second is that it provides

another method of controlling access to the buildings. The badges integrate with the newly installed exterior keypad access system. Permissions are configured for each employee based on building assignment. The badges can also be disabled remotely if necessary, such as upon separation of service.

For Students

Beginning with the 2018-19 school year, high school students will be required to wear photo identification badges as well. Like the staff ID badges, this initiative accomplishes multiple objectives. The badges will provide a visual identification of Syosset High School students. The badges also integrate with the

electronic visitor management system, and attendance will be taken as students scan their IDs. In addition, card readers will be installed in rooms within the high school, which will allow for census during emergencies. Unlike the staff ID badges, the student ID badges do not integrate with the electronic door locking system.

● Corridor Wall Glazing

Another safety initiative included as a Phase 1 construction project in the 2017-18 school district budget vote was corridor wall glazing. Many interior walls within the buildings were originally partially constructed of glass, which provide visibility into classrooms and other areas. This material no longer meets fire and safety codes; therefore, the glass has been removed and replaced to meet updated building codes.



● Surveillance

The District is continuing to increase the number of surveillance cameras throughout the buildings. This summer, blind spots were identified and addressed with additional cameras. The infrastructure is also being upgraded. Conversion to digital security cameras and to a new security video management system took place at the high school this summer.

● Perimeter Fencing

The District has been engaged in a multiyear initiative to enclose school perimeters and close any gaps with fencing. Several schools have been completed and work continued this summer on others. When perimeter fencing is installed, multiple large gates are integrated to allow access for first responders if necessary.

● Plans and Drills

The District has updated all safety plans in conjunction with the Director of Security and the District's school security consultant. Faculty and staff will be trained on all new procedures and protocols prior to the start of the school year. There will be new drill procedures and schedules. Some drills are being planned to occur at "inconvenient times," such as during lunch periods, afterschool, or during arrival and dismissal.

District News and Notes

Excellence, Innovation, Advancement

Libraries Redesigned for Collaboration, Innovation

To support the continued enhancement of the curriculum, including the Next Generation Science Standards and the 1:1 Chromebook initiative, the District is redesigning school libraries to create more modern, collaborative learning environments. Spaces will be refreshed with new flooring and shelving. Flexible seating allows for a myriad of configurations to best support varying types of curriculum. At the high school, an innovation lab has been created, complete with various technologies to support students in their work and encourage a creative approach to learning. Interactive SMART boards are being installed, in addition to an interactive bulletin board.

Improved Communication With a Redesigned Elementary Report Card

The District has undertaken the substantial task of designing a new elementary level report card, with the goals of better communicating with parents and students, measuring learning against a standard, and helping teachers refine their instruction to match the learning of their students. A task force made up of teachers and administrators has put significant work into accomplishing these important goals, with input from PTA representatives. The result of the work that has been done is a report card that is easier to understand, aligned with the daily learning in the classroom, and tailored to the grade level. Specific details on the report cards will be shared with elementary school parents in September.

A Chromebook for Every Secondary Student

Beginning with the 2018-2019 school year, the District will expand its 1:1 Chromebook initiative, providing every secondary student access to a Chromebook. This will empower all students with critical digital learning resources, while enabling them to engage with global information and participate in a connected and digital world.

Upgrades to District Facilities

Nearly all the square footage of District buildings was constructed in the 1950s, and therefore it is important to perform upgrades and maintenance regularly. This summer, the roofing and flooring at Robbins Lane and H.B. Thompson were replaced. Repairs to the tennis courts at H.B. Thompson were also completed.

A New Food Service Provider With a Focus on Healthy Meals

The District is pleased to announce a new food service provider, Whitsons School Nutrition, has been selected for the 2018-19 school year. Whitsons provides a wide range of customized dining services to public schools, with a strong focus on nutritious, high-quality meals made from wholesome, fresh ingredients. Online menus will be available that will include school lunch ingredients to better inform parents of any potential food allergens.



No more plastic straws! Thanks to the efforts of the environmentally conscious Berry Hill and Village students, the district will no longer use plastic straws. Village students celebrated with a “selfie” with Superintendent Dr. Rogers and Assistant Superintendent for Business Dr. Rufo.

BACK TO SCHOOL 2018

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