

# BOBCAT TALES

AUTUMN 2016

## Superintendent's Message

Dear Parents/Guardians:

I'm taking this opportunity to update you on some recent policy changes at our school.

There are many people who experience unpleasant physical effects from scented products, such as perfumes and colognes. It might be a headache or nausea when passing by a department store's fragrance counter or riding in an elevator with someone wearing a certain fragrance. However, the number of people who suffer more severe reactions to these and many other types of products and chemicals is growing. This condition is known as multiple chemical sensitivities (MCS) and affects people who have developed an acute sensitivity to various chemicals in the environment. People with MCS experience a range of debilitating physical reactions, some even life-threatening, to chemicals used in a variety of products, including fragrances and colognes. To keep our students and staff healthy from the unpleasant physical effects of scented products, we ask visitors to refrain from applying any perfume, cologne or other scent products (especially spray products) prior to visiting or during your visit to our school.

Tobacco products are prohibited on the campus of the New York State School for the Blind. Tobacco includes all tobacco and tobacco-derived products intended for human consumption, including, but not limited to: cigarettes (e.g., clove, bidis, kreteks), electronic cigarettes, cigars, cigarillos, hookah-smoked products, oral and smokeless tobacco (e.g., dip, chew, snuff, spit). This definition does not include any product that has been approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration as a tobacco cessation product.

I want to thank you for keeping the best interest of our students in mind when you visit our campus.



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**ANNOUNCEMENTS****WELCOME ALL NEW STAFF**

In addition to the growing student population, we would like to recognize the new staff, also joining the NYSSB family. They include:

Zachary Virgilio-Laborer

Sara Olivani- Child Care Aide 1 Substitute

Constance Kohlhagen- Child Care Aide 1 Substitute

Jenna Sallome- Child Care Aide 1 Substitute

Ashley Wagner- Special Education Assistant Substitute

Danyelle Worthington- Special Education Assistant Substitute

**APH CONFERENCE**

**2016 VISION CONFERENCE** - The NYS School for the Blind is pleased to sponsor the American Printing House for the Blind (APH) product demonstration conference on Monday, October 24th from 8am-4pm. The morning session will consist of information and training and the afternoon session will be hands-on interaction with APH Products. We are hoping to have around 100 visitors from across NYS, space is still available. Contact Bethany Burgess at 585-343-5384 x214 to register.

**HOME COMING 2016**

Homecoming will take place on Monday, October 3rd at 6:30. Refreshments including snacks, cake and beverages will be provided.

**SCHOOL PORTRAITS**

School portraits will take place on Monday, October 24th. Order forms will be coming home with students in the next couple of weeks. If for some reason a student is absent on this day,, Tuesday, November 29th is the make up day for portraits.

# STUDENT HIGHLIGHT

Justin Ruhland has spent several years at NYSSB learning and growing. He made new friends, joined school clubs and created many lasting memories. During his time here he was a patrol leader in his Boy Scout troop, he helped in the student store, and had multiple summer work experiences. In the last few years, Justin focused his attention and energy on his academics. He worked in class toward gaining his



JUSTIN

GED/TASC and never gave up. His perseverance and motivation kept him studying hard and ultimately lead to his goal of achieving his high school equivalency diploma. Justin is a mentor and leader for his fellow classmates as well as others in his life. He is sure to succeed in his life goals and dreams. Due to achieving his goals and the completion of his diploma, Justin has left NYSSB as a graduate! We will miss him dearly and we are very proud of the man he has become!

## RESIDENTIAL NEWS

This past spring, the students worked hard getting the garden and greenhouse ready for planting. They also worked hard all summer making sure everything looked good. Between watering, weeding and harvesting, the students did a fantastic job. Much of what was harvested went to the kitchen at NYSSB and was prepared as part of student lunches and dinners. A very special thanks goes to Carmen Del Plato and Linda Johnston for all their hard work in making this years garden such a success!!



The NYSSB Bowling league has begun and Bobcat Village has opened up with the early lead. It looks to be another exciting season. Who will have the bragging rights this year?

On October 25, the Halloween/Mitten Party will take place in the gym. Students will have an opportunity to pick out hats, gloves and other items to keep warm this winter. They will also be dressed up in their Halloween costumes. It should be a great time for all!

# HEALTH CENTER NEWS

## FLU SEASON

In the Northeast area of our country, winter is the time for the flu season. However, outbreaks can happen as early as October, peaking in January and lasting till the month of April. Here is some general information regarding the flu and how we can protect ourselves and our children and prevent its spread.

The flu is a contagious viral respiratory infection that is easily spread to others mainly by droplets made when people with the flu cough, sneeze, or even talk. These droplets can land in the mouth or noses of people nearby or possibly inhaled into the lungs. A person can also get the flu by touching a surface or object that has the flu virus on it and then by touching their mouth, nose, or eyes.

The flu is different from a cold in that the flu usually comes on suddenly. It can cause mild to severe illness, and at times, can lead to death with high risk individuals. High risk individuals include young children, people over 65, and people with chronic medical conditions such as asthma, diabetes, or heart disease. Symptoms of the flu may include:

Fever or feeling feverish/chills

Cough

Sore throat

Runny or stuffy nose

Muscle or body aches

Headaches

Fatigue (tiredness)

Some people may have vomiting and diarrhea (more common in children than adults)

Preventative actions can be taken to reduce your risk of getting the flu and to protect others from the infection. These actions should be taught to your children and their use encouraged. These actions include:

- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. If none available, cough or sneeze into the inside of your elbow or into your sleeve, not your hands.
- Wash your hands often with soap and warm water. If soap and water are not available, use alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Avoid touching your eyes, mouth, and nose because germs can spread in this way.
- **\*MOST IMPORTANTLY\*** If your child gets sick with a respiratory illness such as the flu, **DO NOT** send them to school and limit their contact with others. They should not return to school for at least 24 hours after fever is gone without use of fever reducing medicine or if any of the flu symptoms are present. Students at our school spend much time in close proximity with each other in the classrooms and in the dorms.

If symptoms persist and don't respond to over the counter treatments or worsen, seek care from your medical provider.

**In conclusion, it is important to note that the single best way to protect yourselves and your children from the seasonal flu is for you and them to receive the seasonal flu vaccine.**

# EDUCATIONAL NEWS

We are very pleased to announce a new and exciting program that is starting its second year at NYSSB. This program will better prepare our students for the job field. The PAES (Practical Assessment Exploration System) Lab is a vocational and life skills program where students are given the chance to try a variety of vocational activities in a simulated work environment to determine their aptitude for specific entry level skills.

The PAES examines the student's skills strengths, and interests to help guide them toward career and work placement options after graduation. The vocational areas include:

1. Construction/Industrial
2. Computer Technology
3. Consumer/Service
4. Business/Marketing
5. Processing/Production

This is truly a unique opportunity for our students and staff who are dedicated to the success of each student.



THOMAS BAKING



PAES LAB

# STAFF PROFILE INTERVIEW

Shelbi Stefaniak from Mrs. Kahn's class interviewed Carmen DelPlato.

Shelbi: How many years have you worked here?

Mr. DelPlato: My first summer here was in 1986, I worked mostly part-time and some full-time.

Shelbi: What types of jobs have you had

While working here? Favorite?



Mr. DelPlato and Shelbi

Mr. DelPlato: I've worked as a Dorm Parent, Instructor Assistant, Phys Ed Teacher, O&M Instructor, Classroom Instructor, and this year, I am a PAES Lab Instructor. I really enjoyed the PAES lab, classroom, and O&M the best.

Shelbi: Why do you like coming back?

Mr. DelPlato: I love coming back every year to see the students and staff. It is like a family reunion for me.

Shelbi: Where do you work when you are not working here?

Mr. DelPlato: I teach elementary Phys Ed at John Kennedy School in Batavia.

Shelbi: What do you like to do when you are not working?

Mr. DelPlato: I always enjoy spending time with my family, playing hockey, and watching Seinfeld.

Shelbi: What are your plans for summer break?

Mr. DelPlato: I plan on doing some lawn work, playing hockey, and I also have work to do for John Kennedy for a few days. I'm always practicing my Italian as well!

# STAFF PROFILE INTERVIEW

Alexis Peresi from Mrs. Kahn's class interviewed Steve Kocher.

**Alexis: Where do you work during the school year?**

Mr. Kocher: I work at Cal-Mum Middle School 6th through 8th grade self-contained classroom.

**Alexis: How long have you worked at NYSSB?**

Mr. Kocher: Every year I count, and this is my 22nd summer. I'm trying to break Pamela Wentworth's record.

**Alexis: What is your favorite thing about NYSSB?**

Mr. Kocher: Well, what I like best are the students. I love coming back and seeing how much the students have grown. I love coming back and working with my friends too.

**Alexis: What do you like to do for fun?**

Mr. Kocher: For fun I really like to spend time with my family. I have a 10 year old daughter, and my new 3 month old granddaughter.

**Alexis: Do you have any vacations planned?**

Mr. Kocher: Yes, we are going to the NYS Fair and we are going to do some work around the house.



Mr. Kocher and Alexis

# HAPPENINGS AROUND CAMPUS



Taekwondo



# HAPPENINGS AROUND CAMPUS



2016 FUN IN THE SUN "OLYMPICS"

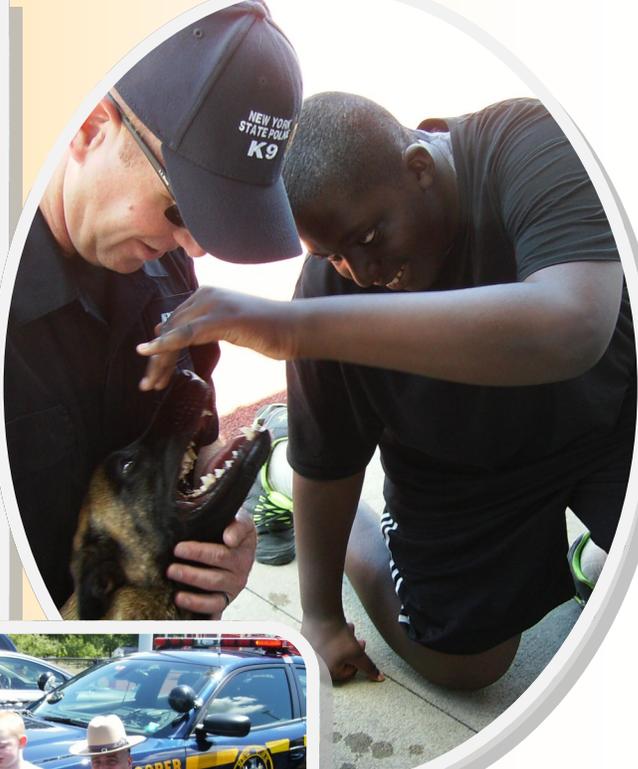
# HAPPENINGS AROUND CAMPUS



2016 FUN IN THE SUN "OLYMPICS"



# HAPPENINGS AROUND CAMPUS



STATE TROOPER ICE CREAM SOCIAL



# HAPPENINGS AROUND CAMPUS



NYSSB  
VEGETABLE GARDEN

