

the
great
plains

Shenendehowa

Central Schools

Bullying...

Transforming plans into action

Some think that bullying is a normal right of passage. It's not. Bullying is intentional cruelty seriously affects millions of victims as well as the bully for the rest of their lives.

According to Dan Olweus, creator of the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program now being piloted by Shen "a person is bullied when he or she is exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more other persons, and he or she has difficulty defending himself or herself."

Bullying can be verbal or physical. It can also take

the form of social exclusion or isolation, lies and false rumors, damaging property or forcing specific actions. It can cause depression, low self-esteem, health problems and poor grades among those who are bullied.

According to Olweus, students who bully have strong needs for power and (negative) dominance. They

find satisfaction in causing injury and suffering to other students. And they are often rewarded in some way for their behavior with material or psychological rewards.

Dignity For All Students

The Dignity for All Students Act, "DASA", enacted by the New York State Assembly goes into effect on July 1, 2012 and protects students in New York public schools from harass-

Continued Page 2

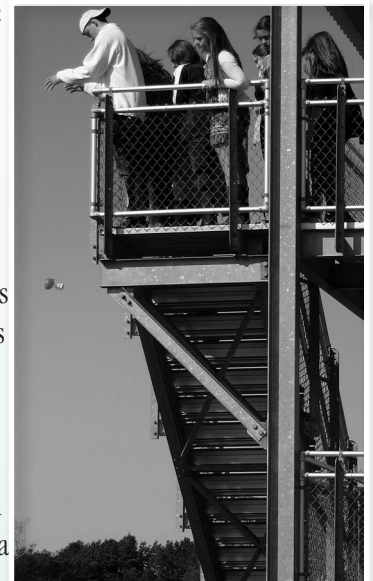
100 reasons or more to love Shen

Despite tough economic times, Shenendehowa still has a lot to be proud of and to celebrate. Over the course of the year, the district will be highlighting some of the tremendous services and resources this community has access to because it supports its schools.

- Shen nurses attend to students in more than 44,000 office visits in a year. Specifically, they treat more than 400 students with food allergies, 30 insulin dependent diabetics, 600 students with seasonal and/or environmental allergies, 1,000 with asthma and 136 with diagnosed headaches.
- In 2010-11, 545 advanced placement exams were given and 81% of Shen students scored a level 3 or higher.

- Shen's drop out rate is 1%.

- Shen students scored approximately 50 points higher than their peers in New York State on the reading, writing and math SAT.



Shen High School physics students calculate acceleration due to gravity by dropping water balloons, golf balls, and pumpkins from the top of the bleachers. Students measured the distance the objects fell, recorded the times for the falls, used their physics equations to calculate the acceleration due to gravity for each object, and then compared their calculated value to the accepted value.

Exactly how big of a problem is bullying?

It is estimated that 160,000 children miss school every day due to fear of attack or intimidation by other students. Source: National Education Association.

Nearly 1 in 3 students is involved in bullying. Studies have found that 15 to 25% of students in the U.S. are bullied, and 15 to 20% bully others. Source: the National Youth Violence Prevention Resource Center and the Health Resources and Services Administration.

The Dignity for All Students Act, "DASA", enacted by the New York State Assembly goes into effect on July 1, 2012 and protects students in New York public schools from harassment, discrimination and bullying by other students or school employees.

ment, discrimination and bullying by other students or school employees. It provides that no student shall be subjected to discrimination based on his or her actual or perceived race, color, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, weight, sexual orientation, sexual identity, or sex. DASA explicitly states that bullying, taunting and intimidation on these protected grounds are all forms of harassment.

Shenendehowa is in the forefront of proactively putting into place pieces of the legislation.

Okte and Orenda elementary will be implementing the OLWEUS Bullying Prevention Program. It is the most researched and best known bullying prevention program known today, entailing a school-wide systems change that has been proven to prevent or reduce rates of bullying throughout a school setting. Both schools are already implementing components of this model, including keeping accurate records of all reported incidents. Beginning this year, a team from each building will attend training and survey students to get a more comprehensive picture of what is needed to combat bullying.

Arongen, Shatekon and Orenda will be implementing the Peaceful School Bus Program to create a climate of cooperation and respect on the school bus and to decrease inappropriate behavior. Students, staff and the bus driver meet several times per year to discuss bus rules and how to make the bus ride more peaceful. "The key to this program is empowering the students to play a larger role in maintaining a positive



In line with the district's goal to: Commit to the physical, social and emotional safety of our students and staff and reinforce that the entire community has a responsibility to ensure that safety: Chango students participate in activities during Bullying Prevention Week.

For more on district goals see http://www.shenet.org/2011_12Goals.pdf

environment on the bus by building strong relationships with the bus drivers." said Orenda Principal Michael Smith.

Tesago uses the Building Esteem in Students Today (BEST) program as a platform to promote positive character in school. The monthly themes encompass respect, including tolerance of differences, as well as using manners and being considerate of others' feelings. Tesago has also integrated conflict resolution instruction "We create student videos on solving conflicts peacefully, which are presented during the BEST assembly," said Tesago Principal Greg Pace. Tesago also used the The Netsmartz Personal Safety Program to teach students to be cautious and safe while on the internet and social networking sites.

The Bucket Filling philosophy has been adopted the elementary schools and is based on the idea that everyone has an invisible bucket and some people are fillers and others are dippers in our buckets. The program promotes students to value themselves and each other.

The middle schools are implementing CAPE (Coalition for Achieving a Positive Environment) to make the middle school a safer, more positive place to learn and work. The success of the CAPE initiative hinges on the continued participation of all stake holders (faculty, staff, administrators, bus drivers parents and students).

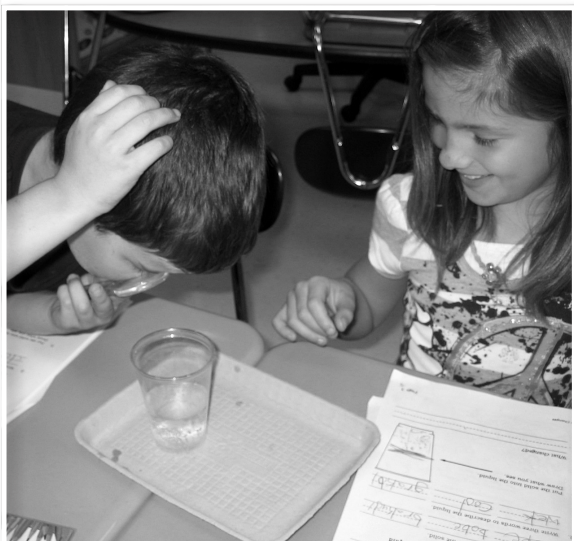
The High School PBIS (Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports) is a program to prevent and respond to school and classroom discipline problems. It is a framework to identify expectations for student behaviors and provide feedback to students when they are unable or unwilling to meet the expectations. It supports staff in teaching by identifying consistent discipline for poor behavior and rewards for positive behaviors.

The High School will also continue to provide students with motivational stories words during the homeroom period that focus on character education and building a positive school culture and climate.

In line with the district's goal to: foster innovative 21st century learning and teaching that is aligned with the Profile of a Shen Student, common core standards and national core standards.:



Karigon 4th-grade students enjoy hands-on math with Base 10 blocks funded through DonorsChoose.org!



Second-grade students at Shatekon explore the properties of liquid with magnifying glasses.

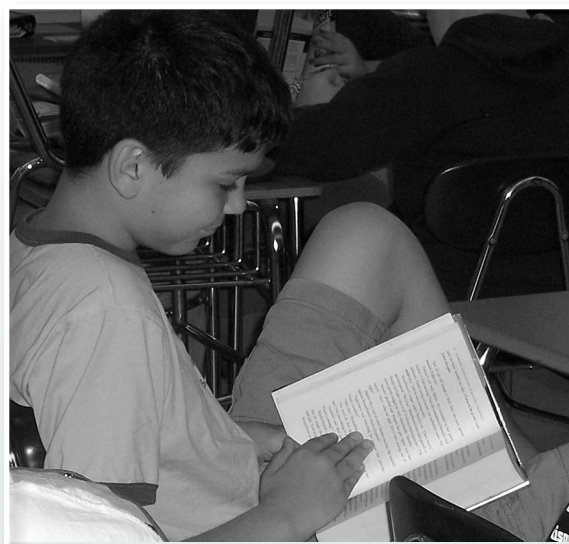


Acadia students from team 7-1 go outside to study plant insect habitats during their life science class.

College prep just got easier

Managing the college application process just got easier through Naviance Family Connection. This program provides students and parents with an efficient and seamless method to monitor their college information and post-high school plans in a timely and effective manner. The Counselors will host drop-in sessions to assist students during lunch periods on Mondays and Wednesdays from October through the end of December in the High School East Counseling Center. Specific Information about the College Application Process along with College Planning Resources is posted on the Counseling Center Web-site.

PAGE
3



In line with the district's goal to: Implement a balanced literacy approach using best practices across the content areas.
7th grade students at Gowana Drop Everything and Read (D.E.A.R.)

For more on district goals see http://www.shenet.org/2011_12Goals.pdf

William Acker 5 Chelsea Place, Clifton Park, NY

Mary Blaauboer

Gary DiLallo

Janet Grey

Andrew McCarty

Richard Mincher

Mary Wiggins

Superintendent

Dr. L. Oliver Robinson

What is known to date about ...

the property tax cap, mandate relief and state funding

PAGE
4

For the past year, there has been so much talk about the property tax cap, mandate relief and state funding it is easy to see how people could feel overwhelmed with information. Here is a quick summary of what is known to date on these three areas.

In this first year of New York's property tax cap, information about its provisions and implementation continues to evolve. The district continues to receive further clarifications from the Office of the State Comptroller, Department of Taxation and Finance, State Education Department, Division of the Budget and the Governor's office. Here is what is known to date:

- While the law is commonly referred to as a "2 percent tax cap," it actually caps to the overall tax LEVY, not the tax RATE. Tax levies are the total amount of dollars collected by the school district. Tax rates are used to compute an individual tax bill. The law does not cap an individual's school tax bill. Increases in individual tax bills are often different from increases in the tax levy due to a variety of factors outside a school district's control (such as equalization rates), and this will continue to be true.
- The capped tax levy amount, called the "tax levy limit," will be calculated by each district according to a very complicated formula outlined in the law. The law exempts expenditures related to certain items, including some court orders, some pension costs and local capital expenditures.
- In reality, the law does not actually limit the tax levy at all. What it requires is that a proposed budget that carries a tax levy above the "limit" must have a supermajority (60 percent or more of voters) for approval.
- The new law further restricts contingent budgets. If a district fails to gain voter approval it must adopt a contingent budget with NO increase in the tax levy.
- New York's elected officials have yet to provide schools with meaningful solutions to address the biggest cost drivers in school budgets nor facilitate any significant systemic changes to help school districts rein in costs. The Mandate Relief Committee created by the governor made no significant recommendations to save schools money. So although districts may be restricted as to how much revenue can be raised through taxes, expenses will continue to increase significantly with no real mandate relief in sight.
- Property taxes and state aid are the two biggest sources of revenue that fund our educational programs. State aid has been reduced the last two years. As of yet, there is no word on what will happen with state aid to schools for the 2012-13 school year.

"As with any new and complex education legislation, we expect our understanding of this to evolve as it is implemented," said Dr. L. Oliver Robinson. "We will do our best to keep you informed. Please stay tuned and stay involved."