January 2016 Principal’s Newsletter

Dear Sangster Community,

I am proud to work in a public school. Public schools have been around for quite some time. For those of you who are history buffs, we can trace America’s public schools back to the year 1640. The Massachusetts Puritans established schools to:

1. Teach reading, some writing and arithmetic skills and
2. Cultivate values that serve a democratic society

The Founders of these schools assumed that families and churches bore the major responsibility for raising a child. Gradually, some science and geography were added, but the curriculum was limited and remained focused for 260 years. At the beginning of the 20th Century, society began to assign additional responsibilities to the schools. Politicians and business leaders saw the schools as a logical site for both the assimilation of immigrants and the social engineering of citizens of the “Industrial Age.” Below is a list of what was added to public schools:

FROM 1900 TO 1910 WE ADDED

- Nutrition
- Immunization
- Health to the list of school responsibilities

FROM 1910 TO 1930 WE ADDED

- Physical Education, including athletics
- The practical arts
- Vocational education, including home economics and agricultural education, and school transportation began to be mandated.

IN THE 1940s WE ADDED

- Business education
- Art and music
- Speech and drama
- Half day kindergarten, and
- School lunch programs appeared (We take this for granted today. It was however, a significant step to shift to the schools the job of feeding America’s children 1/3 of their daily meals.)

IN THE 1950s WE ADDED

- Expanded science and math education
- Safety education
- Driver’s education
- Expanded music and art education
- Foreign language requirements were strengthened, and
- Sex education was introduced (Topics continue to escalate)

IN THE 1960s WE ADDED

- Advanced Placement programs
- Head Start
- Title I
- Adult education
- Consumer education
- Peace, leisure, and recreation education

**IN THE 1970s WE ADDED**
- Special education (mandated by federal government)
- Title IX programs (greatly expanded athletic programs for women)
- Drug and alcohol abuse education
- Parent education
- Behavior adjustment classes
- Character education
- Environmental education
- Women’s studies
- African-American heritage education
- School breakfast programs

**IN THE 1980s WE ADDED**
- Keyboarding and computer education
- Global education
- Ethnic education
- Multicultural/non-sexist education
- English-as-a-second language, and bilingual education
- Teen pregnancy awareness
- Hispanic heritage awareness
- Early childhood education
- Jump start, Early start, Prime Start
- Full day Kindergarten
- Pre-school programs for children at-risk
- Alternative education in all its forms
- Anti-smoking education
- Sexual abuse prevention education
- Health and psychological services expanded, and
- Child abuse monitoring became a legal requirement for all teachers

**IN THE 1990s WE ADDED**
- Conflict resolution
- HIV/AIDS education
- CPR Training
- Bus safety, bicycle safety, gun safety, and water safety education
- Death education and gang education
- Expanded computer and Internet education
- Inclusion
- Tech Prep and school to work programs

**IN THE FIRST YEARS OF THE 21ST CENTURY, WE HAVE SUPERIMPOSED UPON EVERYTHING ELSE:**
- A layer of high-stakes standardized tests
All of these added items have merit and have ardent supporters. Public schools are the best hope for our children and our community. If you Google “public education” there are 826 million results. If you Google “positive about public education” there are 26.1 million results. If you Google “negative about public education” there are currently 23.1 million results. That is a gap of 3 million that we want to grow, and that our best work can affect.

Public education is often politicized today. The teachers at Sangster are working hard to ensure your children are successful. Thank you for all you do to support Sangster and your child’s education. As always, please feel free to contact me or your child’s teacher throughout the school year. Take good care.

Your partner in education,

Lisa M. Reddel
Principal