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Periodic Newsletter for Sesser-Valier Community Unit School District No. 196  
Issue 1, November, 2012



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## SVWW Devils advance to IHSA playoffs.

For the fourth straight year, the SVWW Red Devil Football Team advanced to the IHSA Class 3A State Playoff series. The Devils were paired against the Vienna-Goreville Eagles, another Black Diamond Conference football cooperative program, for the first round game of the playoff series. The game was held on Saturday, October 27, 2012, at Vienna. The Eagles won the hard-fought battle 14-6 following a 6-6 halftime score.

After the game, SVWW first-year head coach Johnny Hollis credited the Eagles' second-half defense for advancing the Eagles into the second round of the series. This was the Eagles' first playoff appearance in its young program history.

Hollis was quick to give credit to his players and coaching staff for a successful and memorable season. "I've tried to surround myself with character guys who know what's important," Hollis said. "Our successful season is a result of our players going against the culture and forgetting about themselves. They worked toward TEAM goals and not individual accolades. I believe these young men are winners not only because of what they have done on the field, but because of the life lessons that were instilled in them by our staff throughout the season. This group of young men have unlimited potential, and I look forward to seeing their successes in life."

Congratulations to the SVWW Red Devil Football Team for an outstanding 2012 season!

## SEASON HIGHLIGHTS

"The highlight of the season was probably the shift from 'me-ism' to team-play following our Week 4 loss at Vienna," Hollis said. "The men realized that playing as a team was more than a catch-phrase—it was required to win games." Following a heart-to-heart team meeting after that loss, the team "won-out" in the regular season schedule.

## LOOKING FORWARD

"I'm looking for two things from our players and coaches as we prepare for next year's season. First, we need off-season dedication to our strength-training program to enhance our physicality on the field. Second, we need off-season commitment to maintaining good character, high moral integrity, and keeping our priorities in order. Playing football is secondary to living like we should, keeping our school work in order, and valuing our families."

# Preparing for the future.

## Basic remodeling and long-term capital projects completed during past two summers outfit district buildings for future

Receiving compliments about the school district and its employees are a regular, enjoyable part of the superintendent's job. One frequent compliment that is offered is about the high quality of cleanliness and maintenance of our main K-12 school building and grounds. District Maintenance Supervisor Terry Witcher and his five-man team of custodians pride themselves in keeping the school building in optimum shape for our main mission, teaching and learning.

Maintaining a large, commercial facility like a school campus is not easy or inexpensive, but rather, a long-term investment into the education of children and the community at large. During the past two summers, the district has invested over \$1 million in facility improvements designed to enhance the school environment and preserve the excellence that our community has come to expect in its school facility.

One such upgrade, a 90,000+ sq. ft. roof replacement project, was completed in Summer, 2011. This \$621,984 project was funded, in part, by a \$245,000 school energy efficiency grant that the district applied for during Fiscal Year 2011. The new roof system replaced a ballasted-roof system that had "outlived" its expected life by more than 4 years. The new roof has a 20-year warranty, and corrected more than 50 roof leaks that existed prior to its installation. This improvement, a major undertaking, was the only major project completed during Summer, 2011.

Three major remodeling jobs were tackled during Summer, 2012. First, the district completed a major flooring replacement project in the high school and junior high school areas, removing original carpet and

tile that had been installed in 1977. Two heavy-traffic hallway areas were outfitted with porcelain tile with a predicted lifespan of 50 years. Two other heavy-use areas were covered with a quartz-type, epoxy floor that will withstand the rigors of school & public foot traffic. This long-term investment is already paying dividends in reduced annual maintenance costs and improved school appearance.

Second, the district completed a major electrical upgrade to address necessary long-term maintenance to the football/track stadium facilities. Electrical service to the football field press box was significantly improved to allow for future expansion to this section of our facility/grounds, and the football field lighting system was replaced with brighter, more energy-efficient lighting. This \$243,000 endeavor addressed a long-standing district desire to improve light levels on the football & track playing surfaces. When completing this work, district officials also acted to increase the level of security lighting on the high school parking lot by adding three, broad-coverage lights to flood the high school parking area (and extracurricular bus unloading area) with light at key pick-up/drop-off times. This added benefit of the electrical upgrade has been the subject of several positive comments and compliments.

Finally, the district completed a roof-replacement on the "Old Gym" facility located at 111 East Murray Street in Sesser. This "half-barrel" roof was replaced for just under \$62,500, a relatively small price to pay to avoid even one leak that could irreparably damage the underlying all-wood floor and significantly hamper the ability of athletic teams to schedule practices and games.



## How were these projects funded?

The remodeling and capital projects highlighted in this newsletter were funded through a state school energy efficiency grant and by the proceeds of a bond sale that was completed on September 1, 2010.

During the spring of 2010, the district reviewed project funding options and identified a federally-subsidized bond program (Qualified Zone Academy Bonds or "QZAB") that would, if approved, offset almost all of the interest costs associated with selling bonds. The district completed this process on September 1st of that same year and, through careful analysis of the bond market with bond counsel, "locked-in" a net effective interest rate of 0.51% for a 12-year bond issue. The payback timeline was intentionally structured to be prepared to address any necessary upgrades determined during the district's next scheduled architect's safety survey.

Future capital projects may be eligible for funding using the district's share of the proceeds of the 1% County School Facility Tax. The district anticipates receiving almost \$250,000 in annual revenue as a result of this funding source, which is restricted for use for certain types of capital projects.

Parents and community members who are interested in personally seeing the completed projects are welcome to do so. If anyone is interested in a building tour, please contact the superintendent's office to schedule a guided tour.



## District Procedure 101.

As the Christmas season approaches, parents sometimes consider age-appropriate technology devices as useful gifts. Here are some Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) regarding school use of personal technology devices:

Q: Can my child utilize a personal iPad or other tablet-type computer at school?

A: Yes, under certain circumstances. Students in grades 6-12 may utilize an iPad or other tablet-type device at school for a legitimate educational purpose (e.g. reading a previously-downloaded book, using a scientific calculator application, etc.) after specific, individual approval of the Building Principal.

Q: How can my child obtain the Building Principal's approval to utilize a tablet-type device?

A: Students in grades 6-12 may complete and submit a specific application form to the Building Principal to seek approval to use a tablet-type device. The Building Principal may approve or deny such an application at his or her discretion. The use of a personal technology device is considered a privilege, and that privilege may be suspended if the device is used for any purpose other than that approved by the Building Principal. Students must provide the 1) type of device to be used (iPad, Kindle, etc.); and 2) the serial number of the device to be used (the Building Principal may use the serial number

to determine ownership in the case of an alleged theft).

Q: Who is responsible for the care and security of the device?

A: When a student receives permission to utilize a technology device at school, the student must acknowledge that 1) he/she understands that no other student is an authorized user of the device; 2) the device is his/her personal property; and 3) he/she is responsible for taking care of his/her personal property. The school is not responsible for the device if it is misplaced, stolen, or damaged.

Q: Who should I call if I have a specific question about this topic?

A: Contact your child's Building Principal.

### FOCUS

#### District Policy Development

Public school districts in Illinois are required to develop policies that are aligned with the Illinois School Code, state laws that govern schools. School policies are also developed as a result of established case law and generally agreed best-practice for schools. While a local school board has some limited authority to develop district-specific policy, many school policies are implemented as a result of legislative action or judicial decisions.

### FUTURE TOPIC

#### Student Registration

In the next issue of *red.devil.details*, a Question/Answer section will address the most Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) regarding student registration, district residency, and student health/immunization requirements. These FAQs are sometimes the most confusing issues that we encounter when enrolling students, and, sometimes, student enrollment requires some advance preparation for parents. The next edition of the district newsletter will address this issue in detail.

## Recommended Research for Parents

Q: Does the school recommend a certain type of mobile technology device for home use that can support my child's education?

The district does not recommend any one brand or type of technology device. However, there are three guiding principles for parents to consider if they are contemplating a purchase of a technology device.

1. The device needs to be durable enough for children to use safely without significant risk of breakage;
2. The device needs to have legitimate, educational applications that are research-based.
3. A child's use of any mobile technology device should be closely supervised.



## Help Us Help You!

We want your feedback! If you like reading about school district activities, education topics, or special features of students' activities, please let us know. Your suggestions and constructive feedback are necessary to help us keep you informed about the issues that matter the most. Please call (618) 625-5105, Ext. 105 (Superintendent's Office) or e-mail [jdhenry@sv196.org](mailto:jdhenry@sv196.org) with your feedback.

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## Upcoming Events

### Parent/Teacher Conferences

Parent/Teacher conferences will be held on Thursday, November 1st (evening meetings), and Friday, November 2nd (morning meetings). Please call the school office for more information.

### Outdoorsmen Club Deer Banquet

The annual Outdoorsmen Club Deer Banquet will be held on Thursday, November 15th, at 5:00 PM (doors open). The general public meal will be served at 6:00 PM. The banquet program will begin at 7:00 PM.

### Thanksgiving Holiday

District schools will be closed on Thursday, November 22nd, and Friday, November 23rd, for the traditional Thanksgiving Holiday.

### Winter Break

District schools will be closed on Monday, December 24th, through Tuesday, January 1st, for the annual winter break. Student attendance will resume on Thursday, January 3, 2013.

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