

SOUTHWEST

Connections

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Kindergarten student Maelyn Arroyo enjoys a break in the Choose Love Corner in Mrs. Baker's classroom.

Superintendent's Message

Welcome back! The 2019-2020 school year is off to a great start!



New and Improved: During the spring and summer, many improvements were made across the Southwest School Corporation. New bleachers and concrete walks were installed along the baseball, softball, and soccer fields at Sullivan High School. Also at SHS, all restrooms were completely renovated and new restrooms were created in the commons area, which allowed for the development of a new teachers' lounge and a shared band and choir area. At Carlisle Elementary and Middle School, the nearly 40 year-old internal HVAC piping was replaced throughout the entire building. Across the district, all parking lots and driveways were resealed and striped. Future improvement projects are being planned, and include new flooring at Sullivan Elementary and SHS, restroom renovations at Carlisle School, and renovations to the SHS science wing.

Academics: The Southwest School Corporation prides itself on being a leader in preparing students for the future. While we are proud to offer a wide-range of extra-curricular activities and sports, the priority of SWSC is academics! We continue to strive to look for ways to create more engaging academic opportunities for our students. We are the best. We are Southwest!

*Chris Stitzle, Superintendent
Southwest School Corporation*

SWSC Prepares Students to be Career and College Ready

In 2017, Lilly Endowment Inc. awarded the Comprehensive Counseling Initiative grant to Southwest School Corporation. As part of this grant, SWSC partnered with Ivy Tech Community College to provide a college connection coach who offers college and career services and support to SWSC students. Additionally, SWSC opened the Career Resource Center, located in Sullivan High School, to serve as the career and college resource hub for students and their families. It was a very successful year! Some of last year's highlights include:

- Fall and Spring business and industry meetings
- 38 college and industry professionals presented in the CRC during the ACT advisory period, plus 18 extended presentations offered
- Eight field trips to colleges and businesses
- 512 individual "check-ins" by students, some accompanied by parents or guardians
- "Connections to Success" career fair for juniors and seniors with more than 60 representatives from area businesses and organizations

In addition, 37 Sullivan High School seniors were eligible to participate in the Ivy Tech graduation ceremonies — 34 students earned the State-Wide Transfer General Education Core technical certificate and three students earned the Automotive Maintenance and Light Repair certificate.

The career coach and the CRC are not the only strategies



College and Careers teacher, Alice Trimble, works with freshman Lucas Copenhaver using the Naviance College and Career program.

SWSC is using to help students prepare for college and their futures. SWSC is also utilizing Naviance, an online college and career exploration program, in grades 6-10. Naviance is designed to create a personalized path to success for each student and enable students to self-search various college and career options. At the classroom level, teachers at all grade levels are incorporating career exploration and project-based experiences into their instruction as well.

According to Terri Roberts, SWSC Lilly Grant Coordinator, "We are focusing on a K-12 approach to college and career readiness. This not only is in line with Indiana's employability skills standards, but beneficial for our students. We want our students to be able to compete and prosper in the world in which they will live and work."

For more information on Indiana's employability standards, go to: <https://www.doe.in.gov/wf-stem/employability-skills>

Focus on Social-Emotional Well-Being Prompts SWSC to 'Choose Love'

On Dec. 14, 2012, Scarlett Lewis' life changed forever when her 6-year old son, Jesse Lewis, was murdered in his first grade classroom along with 19 classmates and six educators at Sandy Hook Elementary School. Before his funeral, Scarlett found a message Jesse had written on their kitchen chalkboard: "Nurturing Healing Love."

Those three words became the theme of the Jesse Lewis Choose Love Foundation and Scarlett's curriculum, Choose Love, which teaches children social-emotional skills, such as understanding and managing emotions, developing positive relationships, and showing compassion. Earlier this school year, Lewis herself spoke to Southwest School Corporation students and staff about her Choose Love curriculum and the story behind her work. The Choose Love Enrichment Program is being implemented as the social-emotional learning curriculum in grades K-8 at SWSC.

"Choose Love provides elementary school students with an innovative approach to student success by focusing on the child as a whole, specifically on his or her social and emotional needs. As early as kindergarten, students will learn skills to build resiliency and connectedness," explained Sullivan Elementary School Counselor Dani Hamilton. "The hope is that students can develop these skills throughout their education and carry them into their adult lives. Just as students learn to read starting at a young age and perfect the skill throughout their education, now our students can learn strategies to safeguard their mental wellness at a young age and work throughout their education to master these skills as well."

Carlisle School Installs Sensory Path to Support Student Well-Being

Thanks to the support of the Carlisle PTO, students are benefitting from a new sensory support at Carlisle Elementary and Middle School.

The Sensory Path at CEMS is a specially-created path that engages students in a series of movements, patterns and activities that are designed to provide brain breaks, reduce sensory seeking behaviors and increase cognitive functions. Activities include hopscotch and brightly colored lily pads and footprints to hop on. The Sensory Path is beneficial to all students by providing them with a chance to reset, take a body break, and return to their academic learning with a clear focus.

"There was not discussion on if we needed this, but a question of how do we make this happen for our students," CES teacher, Jennifer Simpson, explained. "That answer was simple, PTO. We have an amazing PTO at Carlisle and they saw the benefits and need for this with our students."

"The Sensory Path has already become a fun tool that supports the emotional well-being of our students," Simpson said.

She added, "Students have been enjoying using the space as a break during the day and have even requested to use it during indoor recess!"



Scarlett Lewis displays an item from the Choose Love Corner in Mrs. Moody's fourth grade classroom. The Choose Love Corner is a designated area in the classroom set aside for students to retreat to for a few minutes to rest, relax, and reset their emotions.

The Choose Love program ties into SWSC's vision to prepare all students to be career-ready, responsible citizens who are academically, socially and emotionally equipped to compete and prosper in an ever-changing global society.

Choose Love lessons are divided into four categories: courage, gratitude, forgiveness and compassion in action. Each quarter, student lessons focus on one of these four categories. Choose Love lessons have been added to the weekly schedule for all students in grades K-8 at SWSC. At the K-5 level, lessons are taught in each classroom every Monday morning. At the 6-8 grade level, lessons are taught during the advisory period every Monday, with a follow up session each Tuesday.

Each classroom is also encouraged to create a Choose Love Corner, which is a designated area in the classroom set aside for students to retreat to for a few minutes if they need to rest, relax and/or reset their emotions. Additionally, all elementary school teachers have access to a "Choose Love library" from which they can select SEL-focused books to read in their classrooms and tie into their existing curriculum.

"Although we can't always choose what happens to us, we can always choose how to respond. Children can learn to choose a loving thought over an angry one. When a child realizes that they have the power to positively impact themselves as well as those around them, it is empowering and perpetuates their positive actions and interactions." — Scarlett Lewis, Founder of the Jesse Lewis Choose Love Movement

The goal of SWSC is to take a more proactive approach in addressing students' social and emotional learning needs. Implementing an evidence-based social-emotional curriculum like Choose Love will help meet that goal.

"After researching various social-emotional programs, SWSC selected the Choose Love Enrichment Program," said Krista Wells, Sullivan Middle School counselor. "Decades of research has shown that social-emotional learning can have a major positive impact on school climate and student achievement. SEL promotes a wide variety of academic, social, and emotional benefits for students." For more information on social emotional learning, please visit <https://www.doe.in.gov/sebw>.



Carlisle Elementary students enjoy taking turns on the Sensory Path! Pictured are Kysen Helms and Keaton Knotts.



The Sensory Path allows students to take a "brain break," and prepares them to go back to the classroom ready to learn! Pictured is Lyndee Stearley.

You're Invited

The Southwest School Corporation School Board meets at 6 p.m. on the third Wednesday of each month at the SWSC Central Office at 1502 N. Section St., Sullivan, IN. You are invited to attend these meetings. Please contact the office in advance at (812) 268-6311 for verification.

School Board

Jerry WilsonPresident
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Contact Us

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Our Website Address

www.swest.k12.in.us



Carlisle Elementary teacher, Jessica Springer, teaches a Choose Love lesson on "Courage" and leads her students in taking a "brave breath."

SOUTHWEST *Connections*

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Students at Sullivan Elementary Choose Love every day!



SHS students Kaleb Edmondson, Collier Elliott and Luke Padgett work on programming a microcontroller for use in a robot frame in Mr. LeDune's Computer Science class.

All School Calendar, 2019-20

Nov 27-29Thanksgiving Break (no school)
 Dec.23-Jan. 3..... Christmas Break (no school)
 Feb. 14..... No School or Possible Make-up/eLearning Day
 Feb 17 No School or Possible Make-up/eLearning Day
 March 20..... No School or Possible Make-up/eLearning Day
 March 23-27.....Spring Break (no school)
 April 10 No School or Possible Make-up/eLearning Day
 May 22..... Last Day of School
 May 23..... Graduation