

An Interview with Superintendent Dr. Streshly on Health & Wellness

Interview by Dana Schuster



Q: What health and wellness priorities do you have for SUHSD students, staff, and/or school community?

A: First and foremost, my main concerns for health and wellness come from my instructional

background, which directs that establishing a safe environment for learning is critical. Making sure that students are healthy, alert and fed is really ground zero for excellent academics. We should be up to date on what our students need to be healthy and well, and provide information and services pro-actively, as well as being prepared to react effectively to specific situations as they may arise.

The tiers of support that SUHSD appears to have are impressive - such as the presence of mental health coordinators at each school site. I'd like to see ongoing work with food services, and good robust wellness training for stakeholders at all levels. An early intervention and referral system should be in place; one that includes strong documentation and effective follow-up; not just a 'one shot' approach.

There are extensive resources in San Mateo County and I want our district to have an internal structure to provide follow-up and effective management for identified students, so we know when more help is needed before it manifests in a student's behavior. In particular, we need to look at alternatives to suspension and have health and wellness programs and follow-up available to address issues such as depression and anger management.

Q: How do you envision WAC best supporting these efforts?

A: I have not yet become fully familiar with the specific charter for WAC in this district. I would assume that a primary purpose is to bring together all stakeholders so there is a common language and agreement to make sure that students are best served in their health and wellness needs. I am a system-thinking leader, and who communicates with who is important. WAC should be a place to increase awareness and review the wellness priorities.

Q: What experiences have you had in recent years with wellness efforts, and what have you learned from these that you'd like the SUHSD community to know?

A: In my last position I oversaw Student Services, which included counseling services. Since all students have guidance counselors these individuals are the first line of intervention, and we need to make sure they can identify the social emotional needs of students. They truly are our Level 1 intervention and need to be part of the mental health team. Building relationships and communication between guidance and mental health staff, tracking, evaluating and sharing data, and surveying students on the effectiveness of services, are all important components that I found have great value in providing quality wellness services to students.

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Parent Education Raises

Awareness Around Adolescent Anxiety

Charlene Margot, Director, The Parent Education Series

What is causing the anxiety epidemic in our children and teens? One in five teens ages 13-18 have or will have a serious mental illness, according to NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness). Rates of adolescent depression and anxiety are rising nationwide, with anxiety now the #1 mental health concern among teenagers.



To highlight issues of adolescent mental health, The Parent Education Series recently offered a premier Bay Area screening of the new IndieFlix film, *ANGST: Raising Awareness Around Anxiety* on November 9 at Carlmont Performing Arts Center. The film screening was followed by a panel discussion with local mental health professionals and moderated by **Steve Smith**, PhD, professor of psychiatry at UC Santa Barbara.

The next Parent Education Series event will explore the topic of *Growth Mindset Parenting: The Myths, the Meanings, the Approaches* to be presented by Eduardo Briceño of Mindset Works on Thursday, November 16th at 7:00 p.m. at M-A. Register online at: <https://mindsetworks2017ma.eventbrite.com>.

As always, The Parent Education Series events are free of charge and open to parents, students, educators, and community members. To learn more, please visit our website at seq.org (<https://tinyurl.com/y9rgyzhn>).

Mental Health Intensive PD to Focus on Trauma-Informed Practices

"It is important to internalize that our problems are never invalidated by other's misfortunes. Each person's deepest, most gruesome pain has a different cause, be it abuse, stress, or a broken nail. Honor and validate both your smallest and largest endurance, and address them appropriately. This is one way to love yourself."

Lauren Chambers, Independent Studies Program student,
Woodside High senior

District Professional Development Day will take place on January 8th, 2018. The morning will consist of a bi-district collaboration between our district and the Ravenswood School District.

One of the day's featured topics will be Trauma Informed Practices. We are fortunate to host **Dr. Martha Merchant** from the UCSF HEARTS program—"Healthy Environments and Response to Trauma in Schools".

The goal of UCSF HEARTS is to create school environments that are more sensitive and supportive of the needs of traumatized children. Trauma-sensitive school environments will benefit not only targeted students, but also their peers and school personnel.

Morning and afternoon Trauma Informed sessions are scheduled for mental health, guidance, counselors, special education staff, nurses and health aides, SAAP leads, and specific administrative assistants. There will also be a teachers' choice option in the afternoon with Dr. Merchant. This introduction to Trauma Informed Practices will be one of several trainings that will be offered to SUHSD staff throughout the year.

Contact **Dr. Karen Li**: kli@seq.org with any questions about Dr. Merchant's upcoming training.



Maureen Raffertry, RN, District nurse extraordinaire and long-time WAC Executive member, retired at the end of the month. Her kind spirit, and sense of fun and adventure will be missed!

Did you know?

- **1 out of 5 US teens report being diagnosed with at least one concussion in their lifetime.**
- **6% have reported more than one concussion.**

Brainbook & ImPact Testing: Components of Comprehensive Concussion Education

The Dignity Health Concussion Network is a concussion education and prevention program that combines baseline and post-injury testing, e-learning, and telehealth consulting to champion the safety of young athletes. Dignity Health launched the initiative in 2015.

In 2014, **Marie Violet**, Director of Dignity Health Sequoia Hospital's Health and Wellness Center, collaborated with District Wellness Coordinator **Dr. Karen Li** to roll out the ImPact Test program to our district's over 3,000 student athletes. They first piloted the Impact Test program with Woodside High's lacrosse team. The pilot then expanded to Woodside and Carlmont High's fall sports teams. Today, all four comprehensive schools in the district have embedded ImPact's neurocognitive testing for student athletes year round. Additionally, the SUHSD has developed a district-wide sports injury protocol which has improved the lines of communication between our site concussion leads, coaches, athletic directors, athletic trainers, nurses, health aides, teachers, guidance counselors, and other staff as needed.

These programs could not have blossomed without other partnerships across the community. The Palo Alto Medical Foundation, with funding support from the SUHSD, provides certified athletic trainers who oversee the safety and training of our student athletes. Our district is also fortunate to have a commitment for annual funding from the Dignity Health Foundation for the **Barrow Brainbook** concussion education curriculum, which will be offered in all 9th grade PE classes starting this fall.

To read full **Daily Journal** article, please visit link:

<http://www.smdailyjournal.com/news/local/>.

Sequoia Healthcare District to Turn over Leadership



Sequoia Healthcare District's CEO **Lee Michelson** will be retiring at the end of December after serving as CEO for the past eight years.

Pamela Kurtzman will be stepping up to fill the CEO role. In 2010,

under her current leadership as Director of Grants & Programs, she launched the Healthy Schools Initiative, investing local tax dollars to provide innovative programs, services, and staff positions, aimed at improving the social and emotional health of students and their families. The annual investment now exceeds \$4million, of which SUHSD receives close to \$500,000 of these funds.



Applications are now being accepted for SHD's **Teacher Mini-grants**. This mini-grant program focuses on health and wellness to enable school staff and students to create their own health promotion programs. Eligible candidates can apply for up to \$1,500 for a single initiative. For more info, please visit the SHD's Healthy Schools Initiative webpage at www.sequoiahealthcaredistrict.com/hsi or email **Jenny Bratton** at jbratton@sequoiahealthcaredistrict.com.

WAC Executive Committee:

Becky Beacom (PAMF)
Jenny Bratton (Sequoia Healthcare District)
Tiffany Burkle (CTE Resource Teacher)
Kristin Coronado (District Nurse)
Nora DeCaro (Director of Food Services)
Gigi Kruse-Silva (CHS)
Dr. Karen Jackson (PAMF)
Dr. Karen Li (District Wellness Coordinator)
Charlene Margot (Parent Education Series Director)
Dana Schuster (Health and Fitness Instructor)
Jo-Ann Byrne Sockolov (Transform Collaborative LLC)
Marie Violet (Sequoia Hospital Health & Wellness Center)

Acknowledgment:

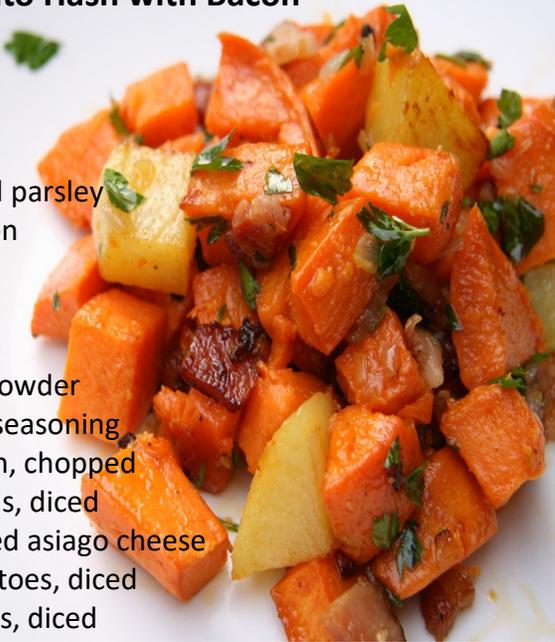
This newsletter was printed by a generous gift from
Dignity Health Sequoia Hospital.

Sweet Potato Hash with Bacon

Yields: 4

Ingredients:

1 T. chopped parsley
slices of bacon
Salt
Black pepper
¼ tsp paprika
¼ tsp garlic powder
¼ tsp Italian seasoning
2 green onion, chopped
2 small onions, diced
1/2 cup grated asiago cheese
4 sweet potatoes, diced
2 bell peppers, diced



Instructions

1. Place a large non-stick saute pan over medium-high heat; once warm, cook bacon until completely cooked on both sides. remove bacon from pan and place on paper towels. once cooled, chop into small pieces.
2. Next, add into the pan the onion and the red bell pepper, and saute those for a few minutes until golden-brown (if a little more oil is needed, add in a drizzle of olive oil)
3. Add in all spices including salt and pepper and stir to combine.
4. Add in the diced sweet potato, stir, and cook everything until it starts to caramelize and soften a bit, covered, for about 10-12 minutes, stirring occasionally.
5. Finish the hash by adding the chopped bacon, chopped parsley and green onion, and fold those in.
6. Spoon the hash into bowls or plates, and top with the grated asiago cheese; serve with a fried egg, if desired.

Recipe compliments of Woodside HS Foods Teacher Erin Kilty.

Fall Recipes

Vegan Pumpkin Cheesecake

Yields: 8

Ingredients:

1 1/2 cups raw cashews (soaked in hot water for 1 hour)
3/4 tsp pumpkin pie spice;
1/4 cup + 1 Tbsp coconut milk
3 Tbsp olive oil
1/2 cup grade A maple syrup or light agave nectar
1/4 cup + 1 Tbsp pumpkin puree

1 lemon, juiced (2 Tbsp)
Pinch sea salt



CRUST

1 cup packed medjool dates, pitted
1 1/2 cups raw walnuts
Pinch sea salt

FOR SERVING *optional*

Coconut whipped cream and brown sugar pecans

Instructions

1. Cover cashews with boiling-hot water. Let rest, uncovered, at room temperature for 1 hour. Then drain thoroughly and set aside.
2. In the meantime, add dates to a blender and blend until small bits remain, or it forms a ball. Remove and set aside.
3. Add walnuts and salt to blender and process into a meal. Then add dates back in and blend until a loose dough forms. Set aside.
4. Line pan with parchment paper. (If using ramekins or muffin tins, cut parchment paper into circles.)
5. Press down crust with fingers to evenly distribute. Set in freezer.
6. Once cashews are soaked and drained, add to blender with remaining filling ingredients and puree until very smooth for 2-3 minutes.
7. Divide filling evenly. Tap a few times to release any air bubbles, then cover loosely with plastic wrap and freeze until firm - about 4-6 hours, depending on size of dish.
8. Once set, run a butter knife along the edge and gently remove by tugging on the tabs in an upward motion.
9. Serve with a touch of coconut whipped cream and brown sugar pecans (optional).
10. Store leftovers in the freezer. Let thaw at room temperature 15-20 minutes before serving .

Recipe compliments of Minimalistbaker.com.