



Signals

The Newsletter of the
Signal Hill Education Foundation

SPRING 2014

Our Mission:

To insure continuing financial support for the Signal Hill School to enhance the strength of the region by providing exceptional opportunities for intellectual discovery for all members of the Signal Hill community.

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¡Habras Español!

By Garen Vartanian
SHEF Board Member

Early success in Signal Hill School's Spanish program leads to Signal Hill Education Foundation (SHEF) funding expansion to intermediate grades. While other schools continue cutting programs, Signal Hill School remains steadfast in expanding its academic prowess.

Last April, SHEF supported and funded a pilot program to create and deliver a Spanish language curriculum to the SHS Junior High grades beginning with the 2013-2014 school year. Coupled with a Leadership program, these classes replace recess and have received rave reviews.

Given the success and interest in the Junior High Spanish offering, SHEF agreed to further fund the program and expand the reach to the intermediate grades in an after-school setting.

Justine Schulte, who serves as Junior High Spanish Teacher, Intermediate After-School Spanish Teacher and Program Aid, teaches the language daily to grades 6th, 7th and 8th and once weekly to 5th graders. Due to booming interest, Schulte said an after-school program was created for intermediate grade levels (3rd and 4th), also supported by SHEF.

"The students have been so accepting of the program," Schulte said. "And the program has really opened the eyes of many students. In general, I believe the program has produced a very positive response from students and parents."

SHS Superintendent Suzette Lambert lauded the program, noting that it exposes students to another culture/language, presents an opportunity for a higher-level education and helps prepare them for high school foreign language classes.

Lambert also has seen major decreases in office discipline referrals since the program's inception.

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"This program sets Signal Hill School above other elementary schools, as it contains a specialized curriculum," Lambert said. "We are excited when parents tell us how interactive their child was when ordering off the menu in Spanish or conversing with a sibling in Spanish. Parents have given positive feedback about the program and want to see it sustain and grow in the future, with SHEF's assistance."

Schulte's teaching begins with the basics, such as learning days of the week. She also instructs telling time in Spanish, while incorporating songs to help students retain basic information. That leads directly into more in-depth instruction of Spanish by using Teaching Proficiency through Reading and Storytelling (TPRS).

The students have taken to Schulte's instruction, as they frequently approach her in the SHS hallways with Spanish greetings such as, "Hola, Senorita Schulte! Como Estas?" (Hello, Miss Schulte! How are you?).

"Students have been so enthusiastic to learn the language," Schulte said. "I hear the students talking about taking Spanish in high school. Students are no longer bothered by 'losing recess' because they are able to gain so much more in the classroom. These students truly are amazing in the way they can open up to diversity and welcome it."

Schulte and Lambert both expressed appreciation for the support from SHEF. For more information about the program, please go to the SHEF Website, <http://shefinfo.org>.



You're Invited To Attend The

South Pacific

HAPPY HOUR
PREVIEW PARTY

Come connect with your neighbors, learn more about the Signal Hill Education Foundation, and enjoy a preview of "South Pacific" – the 49th Annual SHS 8th Grade Play.



www.SHEFinfo.org



Saturday, April 26
Starting @ 6:00pm

The Abbey
5801 W Main St. • Belleville, IL 62226
\$25 Per Guest
Includes Hor d'oeuvres and 2 drink tickets

RSVP By April 18:
Signal Hill Education Foundation
40 Signal Hill Place - Belleville, IL 62223
618.397.0325



*Giving a **High Five** to the school means more than just a donation...it means our community supports the good work we do for the kids and families.*

High Five's and Donations can also be made online at SHEFINFO.ORG