

SLCSE NEWSLETTER

November Issue 5

UPCOMING EVENTS

November 21-25

- Thanksgiving Break

December 7

- First Friday in the CASA

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CONGRATULATIONS



Molly Chien won first place in the McCarthy Family Foundation's tenth annual Essay Competition: In Praise of Independent Journalism. Molly won \$2,500, was interviewed on the radio, and featured in an article from the Salt Lake Tribune.

FIRST FRIDAYS

Please join us on the first Friday of every month for coffee and a breakfast treat in the CASA right before school. It is a wonderful opportunity to meet other parents, talk to teachers, counselors and the administrators.



SLCSE IS HOLDING THEIR ANNUAL FOOD DRIVE THROUGH THE END OF NOVEMBER. PLEASE CONSIDER DONATING HIGHLY NUTRITIOUS FOOD ITEMS TO SLCSE'S SAA.

LIKE A HAWK

Salem! My name is Aidana, and I am an exchange student from Kazakhstan. I am one of the luckiest students, living in a great state of great mountains—Utah. My school is Salt Lake Center for Science Education, which is very unique from other high schools. It is a place with funny teachers, a friendly community, and a good educational system.

For many years our school has cooperated with an international organization called HawkWatch. Every year, a group of students has a chance to experience their work. This year, I'm fortunate enough to be among those lucky students.



After several hours of the hardest hiking of my life, we reached the top of mountain where the crew had camped. “The best view comes after hardest climb,” it is said, and it was true. I have never seen such breathtaking views before. I felt proud, happy, and a little bit tired, but the best part was still to come.

After our arrival, we started to look for different kind of raptors with the help of binoculars. At first it seems easy, but it is hard to find these birds when they are far away from you. My favorite part of this experience was working in a banding station, where people marked our feathered friends with special leg bracelets used to follow migration. In a blind, we waited in silence to capture one of the sky predators. After

marking the bird with a bracelet, my friends and I got to release the raptor. We really enjoyed the crew, who were scientists and have worked with HawkWatch for years. As a curious person, I had a million questions about these incredible creatures. For example, did you know that you can tell the age of some raptors from their eye color or the color of feathers on their back?

The golden eagle is one of the symbols of my country and also pictured on the flag of Kazakhstan. From ancient times, Kazakh culture was known for hunting with eagles. That's why I thought about my home while on this trip. I shared my culture with the crew and as a gift gave them the flag of Kazakhstan, which they really liked. It was an amazing time with my classmates and teacher. Sometimes, it is very important to leave the city, relax, and think about the beautiful wild nature that surrounds us. I will always have memories of shining stars, a fascinating sunrise, and lovely birds.

Dear SLCSE Parents,

As the school year has been progressing, faculties at both Bryant and SLCSE have been developing and refining plans to make the upcoming merger successful. We have had two professional developments with combined faculties from both campuses. We have teams of teachers with representatives from both campuses working on a variety of collaborative opportunities: book study, national board certification, and math/science professional developments. Soon, collaborative planning committees will begin work around the upcoming school year.

While working through the logistics of the merger, an alternative proposal has been put forth and approved by the faculty and received support from the School Community Council. It has been proposed that rather than moving next year's SLCSE 7th and 8th grade students to the Bryant site, we instead "phase out" the current middle school grade levels. Phasing out SLCSE middle school would mean that for the 2019-2020 school year, SLCSE would maintain 7th and 8th grade at the current SLCSE location and we would begin expanding 9th grade. In 2020-2021 SLCSE would maintain 8th grade at the current SLCSE location and we would continue expanding the high school. The 2021-2022 school year would be the first year that the current SLCSE site would be exclusively high school (grades 9-12) and SLCSE middle school will be located at the Bryant campus. We are still working on 6th grade possibilities but do not have any solutions as of now.

There are many benefits to the middle school phase out proposal. 1) The new model is less disruptive for current SLCSE middle school students. 2) The challenges of transporting current SLCSE middle school students will be mitigated. 3) The phase out model will prevent an artificial increase in the Bryant student population and allow SLCSE time to gradually increase the high school population over time. 4) The phase out model will allow thoughtful vigilance in cultivating the desired school climate and culture at both SLCSE campuses.

In preparation for the upcoming merger with Bryant, a teacher swap was implemented this year. Two teachers from Bryant are currently teaching at SLCSE and two teachers from SLCSE are currently teaching at Bryant. Teachers at both sites have found this opportunity to be valuable so we will continue this next year. A new School Improvement Council composed of administrators, teachers, and staff from both campuses will oversee both sites beginning this winter. Compatible schedules across both campuses will be created for next year. This will allow more fluidity between campuses and allow teachers to teach at both sites.

Thank you to all of the parents who have shared your feedback about the merger, as it has helped guide a more successful transition plan. Please let me know if you have any questions about this phase-out model.

Larry Madden and Britnie Powell
Salt Lake Center for Science Education