Our annual Festival of Arts & Student Achievement was held on May 20. It was wonderful to welcome our wider community back to school and celebrate and revel in our students' creativity and expression. Just in case you were not able to join us for this year’s FAA, we offer to you this slideshow of photos from the night's festivities.

Thank you to Mass Cultural Council for the continued support with our festival.

View the FAA Slideshow

Every May, 8th graders deliver their Sankofa Swan Songs, our form of graduation speeches, to the School. Sankofa is an African word from the Akan tribe in Ghana. The literal translation of the word and the symbol is “it is not taboo to fetch what is at risk of being left behind.” Sankofa symbolizes the Akan people’s quest for knowledge among the Akan with the implication that the quest is based on critical examination, and intelligent and patient investigation.

Here is one excerpt from this year's songs.

"I had such a competitive mindset, I never really branched out because I had this internalized distorted image of everyone I thought was successful... I eventually realized what's on the
surface isn’t what it seems. I got out of the mindset of being better and got into learning how to do MY best, not beat others’ best. It sorta started when I really started to grasp what the Community Core tools meant and I did a lot of activities through OSS which gave me opportunities to venture out to new people...OSS is like a gem-making machine. I went in like a rock and under all that pressure I'm coming out like a diamond.” - Anyis '22

If you want to see even more excerpts from the eighth grade Swan Songs, click here.

A Fond Farewell

The 2021-2022 school year has been a whirlwind and we want to thank all of our staff for their hard work and contributions to our mission. Some are moving on to new adventures.

We wish them good tides and fair winds. May they continue to make a positive impact on the world.

Emma York has added much to our community in her time here, first as an Americorps in 2019-2020, and then as the 7th and 8th grade Humanities teacher, returning to OSS for the 2021-2022 school year after earning her Masters of Teaching at Brown University. In addition to her being a talented educator, Emma has used her experience as someone who grew up in New Bedford to further connect OSS to the community, giving her students authentic opportunities to share their writing and making local connections to national history. For example, through the Art is Everywhere grant, Emma and her friend Sawyer led a student group in installing a lending library at Riverside park. Furthermore, it is because of Emma that Anyis '22 and Duyen '22 connected with the Communal Space and are able to travel, fully funded, to England this summer for cultural and environmental studies.

"Ms. York is the definition of a community connector," praises Ms. Herman, "and although she is moving on, we recognize all she has accomplished for and with OSS. We look forward to hearing about what she does next!"

It isn’t really possible to summarize all Ariana Wohl has done for OSS. Her title these past few years has been Academic Dean, but any member of the OSS community will tell you that her contributions to OSS go far beyond what that title conveys. Since 2015, Ariana has brought her love for teaching and learning to all that she does. Among other things, she has served as Humanities Department Head, Librarian, and Public Speaking teacher. She constructed and led an annual 2-3 week staff orientation that aligns, inspires and educates our entire staff. She created and taught a school-wide homeroom concept, built our Sustained Silent Reading program, and supervised and coaxed our Social Emotional Learning program and Restorative Behavior Initiatives. As you can see, Ariana is a dynamic, dedicated and inspiring educator who understands the importance of teamwork and has a clear and focused vision of what it takes to cultivate an inclusive and vibrant community.

Ms. Herman summarized Ariana’s impact on our community perfectly when she said, "Ariana, you catch and help hold all of us – students and teachers alike...You are a CHAMPION for kids, a beautiful writer, a master teacher and a masterful facilitator...We thank you for everything you have so generously given to our school these past seven years, and we are counting on your continued friendship and connection. Good luck on your next adventure. You deserve the best!"

Did You Know?

(Opposite everyday awesomeness at OSS.)

OSS is not off for the summer. In fact, in the summer months, OSS has a wide variety of programming available.
for its students, both at the School and in partnership with community organizations. This summer programming includes a range of different activities such as biking around the south-end peninsula, building robots and trellising tomatoes in the Outdoor Classroom – all providing students with opportunities for adventure, discovering passions, and challenging themselves in new and exciting ways. Our students are able to select week-long experiences with diverse concentrations, such as ukulele club, comic book making, sailing at the Community Boating Center, biking with Youth Opportunities Unlimited, farm exploration at Round the Bend, and clay work with the New Bedford Art Museum.

Beyond this programming, OSS also works with local day and sleepaway camps to facilitate scholarships for our students. This past summer, over 90% of OSS students participated in at least one program, with many students participating in multiple offerings.

See the Upcoming Events Calendar below for the dates for all OSS Summer Programming.

**Upcoming Events**

- **June 20-23** - OSS at Community Boating Center
- **June 20-23** - Circus Up - OSS Summer Programming
- **June 28-July 1** – OSS at Round the Bend Farm
- **July 11-15** - OSS at New Bedford Rowing Center
- **July 16** - OSS Open House from 11am to noon
- **July 18-22** – New Bedford Art Museum & Play and Fitness - OSS Summer Programming
- **July 25-29** – Creative Suite: Art and Steam - OSS Summer Programming
- **July 31-August 3** – Drop In Coalition - OSS Summer Programming
- **August 8-12** – OSS at Youth Opportunities Unlimited
- **September 6** – School starts for the 2022-2023 school year

[Link to OSS Calendar]

**Stay Connected:**

- Volunteer at OSS
- Donate to OSS
- Like OSS on Facebook
- Follow OSS on Instagram

[Visit our Website]

**Connecting with Graduates:**

- Visit our Graduate Page on our Website
- Join our Graduate Group on Facebook

© 2022 Our Sisters' School, All rights reserved.

Photography by Virginia Sutherland and OSS staff.