

Sebastian Middle School

Build your Mind, Explore your World, Create your Future

Message from the King.....

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Firstly, I want to wish you a safe and peaceful holiday season. It is incredible to think that we have reached the end of the semester, but we are all looking forward to the time with family and to recharge for the new year. We see students mature quite quickly at this level and it's exciting to be on this journey with them.

We have entered the Final/Mid-term Examination window and it is important that you are aware of the schedule. We are running an alternate schedule for the next two weeks and I ask that you refrain from picking students up early from school during this window. The mid-terms this year are formative in nature and the data will be used to guide instruction for the second semester.

We had two students, Liam Smith and Peyton Geer, speak at our Legislative Delegation Meeting last week. They did a wonderful job representing our school and their platform through SWAT (Students Working Against Tobacco).

Finally, we held both Spelling Bee and Science Fair contests within the last few weeks. Congratulation to 7th grader Mia Snyder who will represent SMS at the District Spelling Bee in January. Our 8th Grade Science Fair winners are Grace Brennan, Sanibel Cotton, Kaitlyn Rossi, Isabelle Shannon and Zoe Watson. Congratulations to all—we are so proud of you.

Thank you as always for your support.

Sincerely,

Wayne King, Principal

Mid-Term Exam Schedule: 12/17-21

12/17-18: Math and English Language Arts

12/19-21: Science, Social Studies, & Electives

All mid-terms will be given over 2 or 3 days during regularly scheduled classes.

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Wayne King, Principal
Angela Hensley, Asst. Principal

Pam Cooper, Instructional Literacy Coach
Kelvin Pruitt, Dean of Students

Leanne Fortune, Guidance Grade 8 / 7 M-Z
Darren Tagliarini, Guidance Grade 6 / 7 A-L

Important Dates:

December 10-14

Single Semester Course Exams (PE, Exploratory Spanish, Learning Strategies, STEAM)

December 11

PTO Meeting, 5:45pm@Villa Victor, 42 San Marco
Band Holiday Concert, 6:00pm@SMS

December 13

STEAM Exhibition Night, 5:30-7:00pm

December 14

Holiday Faire at the Colonial Quarter, Performance by SMS Guitar and String Orchestra students, 6:30pm, 33 St. George Street

December 17-21

Midterm Assessments

December 18

Guitar Holiday Concert, 6:00pm

December 20

String Orchestra Holiday Concert, 6:00pm

December 24-January 3

Winter Break—Happy Holidays!

January 4

Teacher Planning Day/Student Holiday

January 7

Classes Resume for Students

Final Exam Schedule: 12/10-13

For single semester courses only, including PE, STEAM, Exploratory Spanish, and Learning Strategies. Exams are given by period.

12/10: Periods 1 & 2

12/11: Periods 3 & 4

12/12: Period 5

12/13: Periods 6 & 7



Vote for SMS in the INK! Tree Decorating Contest

Old Town Trolley Tours and INK! (Investing in Kids!) have partnered to sponsor a holiday tree decorating contest this year. Thanks to SMS Art Teacher Ms. Hagy, our tree is decorated with origami

cranes made by students in her classes. Legend has it that if you make 1000 origami cranes, your wish will be granted; our school-wide wish is for peace. We think our tree is both the most beautiful and the most meaningful!

To vote, go to: trolleytours.com/holidaytreecontest and click on the photo of the SMS tree (fifth row down on the left). The tree with the most votes by 10am on Thursday, 12/20 wins \$1000 for its school! Second place wins \$500 and third place wins \$250. You can vote as many times as you want, even in a single day, so happy voting and thank you!



New Faculty Spotlight! Donna Gallo, Science Teacher

I grew up in Poughkeepsie, NY about 90 miles north of NYC and moved to Florida in July 2018. I have a Bachelor's degree in biology and adolescent education from Utica College at Syracuse University. I have a Master's degree in Adolescent Special Education from SUNY New Paltz. This is my 13th year of teaching middle school science. I have also taught high school biology courses as well as summer school, and remediated students for their biology regents exam.

My newborn keeps me busy along with my 3 year old son. I enjoy family time, reading and traveling. I am excited to be an Eagle because I enjoy working with students and helping them overcome academic challenges that they previously thought were impossible.



Adopt an Angel from the SMS Giving Tree

As a Title 1 school, we have 30 SMS student "angels" to support this year through our annual Giving Tree, which is now up in the Front Office. Please visit the tree now through Friday to select an ornament with a gift idea on it to purchase for a deserving student. Please return your gift wrapped or in a holiday gift bag with your ornament attached **by noon on Monday, December 17**. Thank you in advance for your help in making the holidays brighter for all students in our SMS family!

Holiday Teacher and Staff Appreciation

Looking for a way to express your gratitude for our wonderful teachers and staff at SMS this holiday season? The PTO invites your support with donations of one or both of the following to make the Teacher/Staff Holiday Luncheon on Wednesday December 19 extra special:

- Gift certificates or items that will be used as prizes in a drawing during the luncheon
- Your favorite holiday sweet treat that will be part of a Dessert Buffet served during the luncheon

If you can contribute one or both of these items, please bring your donations to the SMS Front Office **by 12 Noon on Wednesday, 12/19**. Thank you so much for your help in appreciating our teachers and staff!!

SMS Holiday Shop Opens 12/20-21

After being closed all month, the SMS Eagle Store will re-open on Thursday 12/20 and Friday 12/21 as the SMS Holiday Shop! All students will have the opportunity to purchase one gift using 10 LiveSchool points and **additional gifts for just \$2 each**. Gifts come home with students already wrapped and ready to be given to a family member, friend, neighbor or other loved one. The holidays are all about giving, and the PTO is pleased to sponsor this Holiday Shop for students.



Winter Sports & Activities Calendar

- ◆ Dec 10-14—Final Exams (Single Semester Courses)
- ◆ Dec 11—Soccer vs. Fruit Cove @ SMS, 4:15pm
- ◆ Dec 11—PTO Meeting, 5:45pm, Villa Victor, 42 San Marco
- ◆ Dec 11—Band Holiday Concert, 6:00pm
- ◆ Dec 13—STEAM Exhibition Night, 5:30—7:00pm
- ◆ Dec 14—Holiday Faire at the Colonial Quarter, Performance by SMS Guitar and String Orchestra students, 6:30pm, 33 St. George Street
- ◆ Dec 17-21—Mid-Term Exams (Year-long Courses)
- ◆ Dec 18—Guitar Holiday Concert, 6:00pm
- ◆ Dec 20—String Orchestra Holiday Concert, 6:00pm
- ◆ Dec 24-Jan 3—Winter Break
- ◆ Jan 4—Teacher Planning Day/Student Holiday
- ◆ Jan 7—Classes resume for students
- ◆ Jan 11—Pep Rally/Faculty vs. Student Volleyball Game
- ◆ Jan 13-18—8th Grade Washington DC Trip
- ◆ Jan 15—SAC Meeting, 5:30pm; PTO Meeting, 6:00pm@SMS
- ◆ Jan 22—Basketball vs. Gamble Rogers, 5:30pm @ GRMS
- ◆ Jan 24—Basketball vs. Patriot Oaks, 5:30pm @ POA
- ◆ Jan 25—Magic Show PTO Fundraiser
- ◆ Jan 31—Basketball vs. Fruit Cove, 5:30pm @ SMS

Attention 8th Grade Parents!

High School Academy Registration Begins 1/24!

Parents of 8th grade students should mark their calendars now for the following dates:

Jan 24—High School Academy Showcase at World Golf Village Convention Center, 3:30 – 7:00 p.m.

Jan 24—Online Application opens 8:00 a.m. for newly applying 8th and 9th grade students. Click [here](#) for instructions on how to apply.

Jan 29-Feb 5—Academy Nights (6:00-7:30pm unless noted)

1/29: St. Johns Technical, 5:30-6:30pm

1/29: St. Augustine High 2/4: Creekside

1/30: Allen D. Nease 2/5: Pedro Menendez

1/31: Bartram Trail 2/5: Ponte Vedra

Feb 15—Auditions for the Center for the Arts at SAHS

Feb 19—Registration Deadline! Online Registration will be closed at 5:00 p.m.

Questions? Please contact 8th Grade Guidance Counselor Leanne Fortune at Leanne.Fortune@stjohns.k12.fl.us.

Career Day Inspires Students



On Wednesday, December 5, SMS hosted 36 experts representing 29 different fields and/or organizations who shared their career paths and advice with our 7th and 8th grade students. Students had the opportunity to ask questions and learn more about the academic backgrounds needed to pursue a career in each of our presenters' fields. Our grateful thanks to each of the following for their gift of time and inspiration to our students:

Hazel Robinson—American Express Technology
Reidun Øvrebø—Art Professor/Artist
Jennifer Dourneaux—Artist/Dancer
Aubrey Cannata —Behavioral Health Specialist
Noel Griffin—Chief Investigator, FL State Attorney's Office
Charlie Judice—DSL Inventor

Lisa and Jamie Rowell—Industrial Hygiene/Animal Sanctuary
Jennifer Wills—First Coast Technical College
David Ramsey—Florida Fish & Wildlife Officer
R.J. Larizza—Florida State Attorney
Emma Hanson—GTM Research Reserve
Kavita Parikh—Hanson Professional Services Inc.
Joseph and Michele Blanco—ICI Homes
Robert Parker and Maggie Russell—Leonard's Studios
Katie Enkiri—Miller Electric Company
Amanda DuVal, Mansel Karafili, Russ Luker, Mohamed Mohamed, Kelly Repplier—Northrop Grumman
Peter Kenney—Purple Olive Restaurant
Liz Peak - Regional Mobility Group
Doug Gibson—Retired Pilot, UPS & US Navy
Mark Hastings—SalesForce
Chuck Meide—St. Augustine Lighthouse
Lt. Bill Shealey—St. Johns County Fire Department
Tara Dodson—St. Johns County Growth Management
Officer Jody Hull—St. Johns County Sheriff's Office
Brooke Elasi/Mikki Lea Johns—SJR State College
Jenny Harvey—United Way
Paul J. Linser—University of Florida Whitney Lab
Dr. Jack Schmidt—Veterinarian, St. Aug. Animal Clinic

Special thanks to Junior Achievement of Northeast Florida for their assistance in planning this event and for sponsoring lunch for all of our presenters. Thanks also to SMS parent Alberto Crespo and AXA Advisors for sponsoring the breakfast provided for presenters. Planning has already begun for a Career Event targeting 6th graders in the spring. Stay tuned!

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SWAT Students Speak at SJC Legislative Delegation Meeting

SMS students Peyton Geer and Liam Smith spoke to lawmakers last Friday about the vaping epidemic and policies that can be supported at the state level to prevent youth nicotine addiction.



St. Francis House Food Drive Ends 12/18

Sponsored by Ms. Pardo, the SMS Builders Club is collecting nonperishable items such as peanut butter, canned tuna, canned/boxed soups, boxed dinners such as mac & cheese/pasta, and snacks like nuts, crackers, and granola bars. Students should bring donations to their homeroom teacher on or before Tuesday, December 18. The homeroom with the most collected items will win a doughnut party! Thank you for your help in making our St. Francis House Food Drive a great success!

ESE Students Harvest!

Students in Mr. Barbers and Ms. Bradshaw's ESE classes recently harvested greens that they planted months ago and

have been tending throughout the fall. Art students from Ms. Hagy's class (pictured below) helped paint the planters. A wonderful project with delicious results!



SMS Yearbooks on Sale Now!

Order online at www.leonards.com/yearbooks

Access Code: C449655

Price Now: \$25; After 2/1/19: \$30