

# Sebastian Sentinel



## Principal's Message

Dear Parents and Guardians:

At the beginning of this year, we introduced the concept of Single School Culture to our students and teachers. We aim to develop on that this semester in order to provide all students with a pathway to be successful. The concept will also focus on student accountability and ultimately lead us to create characteristics we hope every Sebastian 8th grader will access upon graduation. It is an exciting adventure and we will seek your support and input as parents as we move forward. You will see information relative to Single School Culture in this publication and students will be exposed through homeroom classes.

You will also find an article on "The Dangers of Juuling" in this issue. Although juuling has not been a major issue at Sebastian as of yet, we want you as parents to be aware of it and to talk with your students about the serious health risks associated with juuling.

Our after-school clubs and activities resumed this month, and I encourage you to have your son/daughter participate. We will also run two Super Saturdays in February designed to help with Math and Language Arts. Students will be invited to these sessions based on mid-term data; it's a wonderful opportunity to get some one-on-one time with teachers.

Finally, this month we celebrate our teachers of the year, Mrs. Brown and Mrs. Lavallee. It is so rewarding to work in an environment with such creative and dedicated instructors.

Thank you as always for your support. Go Eagles!



Wayne King  
Principal

## Sebastian Middle School

2955 Lewis Speedway  
St. Augustine, FL 32084

**904-547-3840**

**Wayne King**

*Principal*

**Angela Hensley**

*Assistant Principal*

**Kevin Hayes**

*Dean*

**Pam Cooper**

*Instructional Literacy Coach*

### **Vision**

At Sebastian Middle School, all students will achieve personal success in their learning and become responsible and productive citizens.

### **Mission**

In order to prepare our students to live in and contribute to a changing world, Sebastian will provide a balanced, varied school curriculum designed to meet the academic, cultural and social needs of individuals from the diverse backgrounds of our community.

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St. Augustine, FL 32084

Issue 1

# The Dangers of Juuling

By John-Anthony Fraga, National Center for Health Research ([www.center4research.org](http://www.center4research.org))

## What is Juuling? Is it Safer Than Smoking?

A new type of e-cigarette called “juul” has become so popular that it is now about 68% of the \$2 billion e-cigarette market. The “juul” is especially popular among children and young adults due to its sleek and discreet design, its ability to be recharged on a laptop or wall charger within one hour, and its liquid-filled cartridges that come in popular flavors like cool mint, creme brulee, and fruit medley.

As a result, “juuling” is now very common at teenage hangouts and even at school. Medical professionals are very concerned because juul delivers higher concentrations of nicotine than other e-cigarettes. Not only is nicotine highly addictive, but it is also toxic to fetuses and is known to impair brain and lung development if used during adolescence.

<sup>[1]</sup> It is not replacing cigarette smoking but rather encouraging it: A 2017 study found that non-smoking adults were four times more likely to start smoking traditional cigarettes after only 18 months of vaping, which includes “juuling.”



## How Does the Juul Work?

According to Juul Labs, the company that owns and sells the juul e-cigarette, the device uses an internal, regulated heating mechanism that creates an easily inhaled aerosol. This mechanism prevents the batteries in the juul from overheating and exploding, which has been a problem for other brands of e-cigarettes. Juul is easy to use because there are no settings to adjust or control. All that is required is a non-refillable juul pod cartridge that clicks into the top of the juul and contains a nicotine e-liquid formula. This e-liquid is heated and converted into vapors that are inhaled by the user. One of the reasons it is so popular among youth is that it is so easy to use – no prior experience or knowledge required. All they have to do to intake nicotine is to put a juul to their mouth and inhale.

## What Makes Juuls Different from Other E-Cigarettes?

The increased harm of juuls compared to other e-cigarettes is due to the concentration and contents of its juul pods. The e-liquid is 5% nicotine by volume, which is more than twice the concentration of nicotine in similar devices like the Blu e-cig cartridge (2.4% nicotine). This increases the risk of addiction; in fact, a study done by the UK's Royal College of Psychiatrists showed that nicotine is about as addictive as cocaine and even more addictive than alcohol and barbiturates (anti-anxiety drugs).<sup>[3]</sup>

The impact on the developing brain is also of great concern. **Brain imaging studies of adolescents who began smoking at a young age had markedly reduced activity in the prefrontal cortex of the brain, an area critical for a person's cognitive behavior and decision making, leading to increased sensitivity to other drugs and greater impulsivity.**<sup>[4]</sup> While cigarettes include numerous other toxic chemicals that may contribute to these effects, other research on nicotine and brain development demonstrate that the nicotine is probably the main cause.<sup>[1][5]</sup>

The amount of nicotine in one juul pod is equivalent to a pack of cigarettes. Since teens often use multiple pods in one sitting, they can unknowingly become exposed to unsafe levels of nicotine that can have immediate and long-term health consequences. In 2016, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) was given the authority to regulate e-cigarettes such as juul but has allowed e-cigarette manufacturers to postpone their applications for FDA approval until August 2022.

Meanwhile, these harmful devices can remain on the market and continue influencing adolescents to become addicted to nicotine.<sup>[6]</sup>

Another reason why the juul is a unique threat to teens is its patented formula of nicotine. While other brands use a chemically modified form called “freebase nicotine,” juuls use “nicotine salts” that more closely resemble the natural structure of nicotine found in tobacco leaves. This makes the nicotine more readily absorbed into the bloodstream and makes the vapor less harsh so that it is easier to inhale more nicotine for longer periods of time.

In addition to this patented formula, juul pods contain a greater amount of benzoic acid, 44.8 mg/mL, compared to other e-cigarette brands, which are in the range of 0.2 to 2 mg/mL. According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), benzoic acid is known to cause coughs, sore throat, abdominal pain, nausea, and vomiting if exposure is constant, which is the case when using a juul.<sup>[7]</sup> This is due to how juuls utilize the properties of benzoic acid to increase the potency of the nicotine salts in its e-liquid.

## What Makes Juuls Popular Among Children and Teens?

Since juuls are small, discreet, and closely resemble a USB drive, they can be easily hidden and used in a wide variety of settings, such as the classroom. Teachers and school administrators across the nation are finding students juuling when their backs are turned: Students can take a hit, blow the small, odorless puff of smoke into their jacket or backpack, and continue their school work in a matter of seconds. Compared to other forms of teenage rebellion, juuling is especially dangerous as middle and high school students are unknowingly becoming addicted to nicotine at an alarming rate.

Because a person must be at least 21 to purchase a juul or juul pod, a juul black market is the source for many teens, through eBay or Craigslist. In response, the FDA contacted eBay to raise concerns about listings of juul products on its website, resulting in the removal of the listings and the creation of measures to prevent new listings from being posted.<sup>[8]</sup>

In April 2018, FDA Commissioner Scott Gottlieb announced that he was creating a Youth Tobacco Prevention Plan aimed at stopping the dramatic rise in the use of e-cigarette and tobacco products among youth. The FDA specifically asked Juul Labs for documents related to product marketing and research on the health, toxicological, behavioral, or physiological effects of their products in order to understand why youth are so attracted to them.<sup>[9]</sup> Additionally, Juul Labs is currently facing lawsuits in several states claiming that its products were deceptively marketed to youth under the legal smoking age. The FDA now plans to create enforcement policies for e-cigarette manufacturers, including juul, that are marketing their products to children and teenagers.

## The Bottom Line:

The popularity of juuls among adolescents exposes them to large amounts of nicotine that can have adverse health risks for their physical and emotional development. While juuls are called e-cigarettes, they look nothing like them, making it easy for children and teens to secretly use them without a parent, guardian, or teacher noticing. This may be just a temporary trend, but if the FDA does not quickly do more to restrict flavors that appeal to adolescents and to educate the public about the risks, it is likely to create an enormous increase in young people addicted to nicotine.



## Spring Semester Extracurricular Activities

Studies show that students who get involved in sports, clubs or other after-school activities do better academically and enjoy school more. If your student hasn't yet gotten involved with an extracurricular activity at SMS, it's never too late! Students may join anything listed here this semester. Students should see the Teacher Sponsor for a permission slip which must be signed by a parent prior to staying after school for the activity.

Sport/Club/Activity	Teacher Sponsor	Meeting date(s) and times
Chorus Club	Rogers	Tuesdays, 2:00 - 3:30pm
National Jr. Honor Society	Reese	Thursdays, 2:00 - 3:30pm. Must have 3.5 GPA or higher and apply to join.
Softball	St. Johns Middle School Athletic Association	Tryouts: February; Season: March-April
String Orchestra	Rogers	Thursdays, 2:00 - 3:30pm
Student Council	Mathis	Last Tuesday of Every Month, 2:00 - 3:00pm
Students Working Against Tobacco (SWAT)	Fortune	Last Tuesday of Every Month, 2:00 - 3:30pm
Tennis	St. Johns Middle School Athletic Association	Tryouts: January 28 - February 1; Season: March - April
Textile Art Club	Hagy/King	Thursdays, 2:00 - 3:30pm, January 17 - February 28
Theatre Club	Hodges	Tuesdays/Thursdays, 2:10 - 3:30 starting January 15
Track	Hayes/Mathis	Tuesdays, 2:00 - 3:30pm; Practices begin in February; Meets held March/April
VEX IQ Robotics	Bennett/Harvey	Thursdays, 2:00-3:30pm

*Note: Many of our after-school activities are offered on Tuesdays and Thursdays because the district provides transportation home on those days for our students. An "Activities Bus" picks up students at SMS at 3:30pm on Tuesdays/Thursdays and transports them to St. Augustine High School, where students transfer to their regular bus route home. An SMS administrator rides the Activities Bus to SAHS with our students to ensure that they get on the correct bus home.*

## New Faculty Spotlights!

The start of our second semester at SMS brought several new faculty changes:

- History teacher Kevin Hayes was promoted to the position of Dean, taking over the reins from Kelvin Pruitt who relocated with his family to Tampa, FL at the end of December.
- Math teacher Bernie Huffman moved into the Electives Department and is now teaching the ICT class. Mr. Huffman was recently selected as a Teacher Fellow by the 2019 Northrop Grumman Foundation Teachers Academy and will receive extensive training in STEM education through the National Science Teachers Association and Northrop Grumman.
- Ms. Vicky T aylor joins the SMS Math Department, taking over Mr. Huffman's classes.
- Ms. Kathryn Vollenweider joins the SMS Social Studies Department, taking over Mr. Hayes' classes.
- Ms. Donna Manning has joined our ESE team, and will support many of our Elective classes this spring.



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## SMS Single School Culture

### What is Single School Culture?

It is not a program, but a way of organizing and running a school. It begins with shared norms, beliefs, values, and goals and results in agreed upon processes and procedures that produce consistency in practice.

### What is the goal of Single School Culture?

To create self-regulated, socially responsible, and intrinsically motivated students that share in a "We are the SMS Eagles!" identity with adults on campus and feel bonded with the school.

### How do we achieve these goals?

There are three aspects of Single School Culture:

- Behavior
- Academics
- Climate

By focusing on these three aspects, we create a sense of "community" in classrooms and within the school building, have clear standards for rules and appropriate behavior, as well as increased participation, involvement, and responsibility in school tasks.

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## Thank you to our 2018-19 SMS Business Partners in Education!

As of January 1, 2019, the following businesses and organizations have generously donated to support educational opportunities for our students at Sebastian Middle School. Please patronize these businesses and thank them for their support of our School!

### Premium Partners

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Gordon Dental  
St. Augustine Animal Clinic

### Red Partners

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Computer Doctors  
Growers Alliance Cafe  
Old City Hammocks  
Panera Bread  
Ripple Effect EcoTours  
Sonny's BBQ  
The Sports Corner

## Reminders from Dean Hayes

Dean Hayes invites parents to remind their students of the following expectations regarding attire, ear phones, and cell phones. A violation of any of these rules will result in items being confiscated and possibly a referral.

1. Hoods and hats are not to be worn on heads at any time inside the school building. Both are safety issues that hinder the identification process.
2. Ear phones, Ear buds, Ear pods are not to be used anywhere inside the school building, except in classrooms with prior Teacher approval. These items are also safety hazards as they hinder communication in the hallways.
3. Cell phones are to be turned off and stored away during the school day. At no time are Cell phones to be out and visible inside the school building. Teachers may at their discretion continue to allow the use of cell phones in classrooms for both educational and reward purposes.

Questions regarding disciplinary matters at SMS may be directed to Dean Hayes at Kevin.C.Hayes@stjohns.k12.fl.us. Thank you for your help in keeping our students safe and focused on learning!

## Word of the Week

In August 2018, SMS instituted a "Word of the Week" to expand both student and adult vocabularies. A new word is posted on the marquee in the front of the school each week. Test your own knowledge and see if you can correctly match the following words to their definition before checking your answers against the key at the bottom. Good luck!

- |                       |   |
|-----------------------|---|
| 1. _____ Loquacious   | a. Amusingly odd or whimsically comical.  |
| 2. _____ Drole        | b. The customary code of polite behavior in society or among members of a particular profession or group. |
| 3. _____ Taciturn     | c. Well-meaning and kindly.   |
| 4. _____ Maverick     | d. A harsh, discordant mixture of sounds.   |
| 5. _____ Indigenous   | e. Cheerful and full of energy.   |
| 6. _____ Doppelganger | f. A commotion or a fuss, especially one caused by conflicting views.                                     |
| 7. _____ Ebullient    | g. Conforming to or following what is currently popular and fashionable.                                  |
| 8. _____ Kerfuffle    | h. Very talkative; garrulous.   |
| 9. _____ Cacophony    | i. Originating or occurring naturally in a particular place; native.                                      |
| 10. _____ Benevolent  | j. Habitually untalkative.  |
| 11. _____ Gallimaufry | k. Amusement, especially as expressed in laughter.  |
| 12. _____ Etiquette   | l. A confused jumble or medley of things.   |
| 13. _____ Affable     | m. An apparition or double of a living person.  |
| 14. _____ Modish      | n. An unorthodox or independent-minded person.  |
| 15. _____ Mirth       | o. Friendly, good-natured, easy to talk to.   |

Answer Key: 1. h; 2. a; 3. j; 4. n; 5. i; 6. m; 7. e; 8. f; 9. d; 10. c; 11. l; 12. b; 13. o; 14. g; 15. k

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## School Calendar

Jan 30	Parent Book Study/Discussion Group, 5:00-6:00pm @ Growers Alliance Café, 322 Anastasia Blvd.
Feb 5	Communication Cornerstone, 8:30-9:30am @ SMS. Topic: "Single School Culture & Growth Mindset Grading Policies"
Feb 7	Rising 6th Grade Night for current 5th graders and parents, 5:30-7:00pm
Feb 9	Super Saturday, 8:30-11:30am @ SMS. Focus on Math! Details forthcoming.
Feb 12	SAC Meeting, 2:15pm @ SMS
Feb 13	Parent Book Study/Discussion Group, 5:00-6:00pm @ Growers Alliance Café, 322 Anastasia Blvd.
Feb 23	Super Saturday, 8:30-11:30am @ SMS. Focus on English Language Arts! Details forthcoming.
Feb 27	Parent Book Study/Discussion Group, 5:00-6:00pm @ Growers Alliance Café, 322 Anastasia Blvd.
Feb 28	Social Media Safety Workshop for Parents, 6:00-7:30pm @ SMS
Mar 5	Communication Cornerstone, 8:30-9:30am @ SMS. Topic: TBD
Mar 12	SAC Meeting, 2:15pm @ SMS; PTO Meeting, 5:45pm @ Café 11
Mar 14	Spring Fling at SMS; Third Quarter Ends
Mar 15	Teacher Planning Day/Student Holiday
Mar 18-22	Spring Break
Apr 4	Communication Cornerstone, 8:30-9:30am @ SMS. Topic: TBD
Apr 16	SAC Meeting, 2:15pm @ SMS
Apr 19	Student/Teacher Holiday
May 6-10	Teacher/Staff Appreciation Week
May 10	8th Grade GradVenture Trip to Universal Theme Parks, Orlando
May 14	PTO Meeting, 5:45pm @ SMS
May 22	8th Grade Graduation Ceremony, 6:00pm @ SMS
May 23	7th Grade Awards Ceremony, 8:30am @ SMS
May 24	6th Grade Awards Ceremony, 8:30am @ SMS; Last Day of School for Students!

## Attention 8th Graders! High School Career Academy Information

A Career Academy is a school within a high school that ties what you're learning in class to the high-demand careers that interests you. Career Academies provide students with fun, interesting, and unique learning experiences whether you're headed off to college after high school or plan to start employment right away. Different Career Academies are offered at every high school throughout St. Johns County and 8th grade students may apply to attend any Career Academy in the district. If accepted, you must provide your own transportation if out of zone however.

January 24	High School Academy Showcase at World Golf Village Convention Center – <b>3:30 – 7:00 p.m.</b>
January 24	Online Application OPENS 8:00 a.m. for newly applying 5th, 8th and 9th grade students.
Jan. 29- Feb. 5	Academy Nights at each High School, 6:00-7:30pm except where noted
Jan 29	St. Johns Technical, 5:30 – 6:30pm
Jan 30	St. Augustine High School
Jan 31	Allen D. Nease High School
Feb 4	Bartram Trail High School
Feb 5	Creekside High School
Feb 5	Pedro Menendez High School
Feb 5	Ponte Vedra High School
February 15	St. Johns County Center for the Arts AUDITIONS at St. Augustine High School.
February 19	Registration Deadline – Online Registration will be closed at 5:00 p.m.



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Engineers Mohamed Mohamed and Amanda Duval from Northrop Grumman are familiar faces to students in our STEAM elective, as both often volunteer in class helping students with projects.



Students wait patiently for chicken and cauliflower tacos prepared by Peter Kenney, SMS parent and owner of Purple Olive Restaurant. Cooking is an Art—the A in STEAM!

## 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 Dourneau—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 Karafli, 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 Elask and Mikki Lea Johns—St. Johns River State College
- Jenny Harvey—United Way
- Paul J. Linser—University of Florida Whitney Lab
- Dr. Jack Schmidt—Veterinarian, St. Augustine 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. If you are interested in participating as a presenter and sharing your career path with our students, please contact Parent Liaison Susan Connor at [susan.connor@stjohns.k12.fl.us](mailto:susan.connor@stjohns.k12.fl.us).

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# Literacy Week: January 28 – February 1



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JANUARY 28-FEBRUARY 1, 2019

## CELEBRATE LITERACY WEEK

### MONDAY, JANUARY 28

HUNT FOR A GOOD BOOK  
WEAR CAMOUFLAGE IN SUPPORT  
OF A GOOD BOOK

### TUESDAY, JANUARY 29

"OH, THE PLACES YOU'LL GO!"  
WHAT BOOK TAKES YOU TO  
ANOTHER PLACE?  
TACKY TOURIST TUESDAY--  
DRESS AS A TACKY TOURIST  
(SCHOOL APPROPRIATE)

### WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 30

POEM IN YOUR POCKET  
PRINT OUT AND RECITE YOUR  
POEM TO YOUR ELA TEACHER  
FOR 5 LIVESCHOOL POINTS

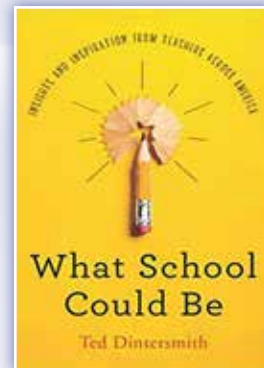
### THURSDAY, JANUARY 31

HATS OFF TO AUTHORS  
PAY \$1 TO WEAR A HAT TO  
SUPPORT LITERACY WEEK--  
PROCEEDS GO TO THE MEDIA  
CENTER (SEE MEDIA CENTER)

AUTHOR VISIT: DERON HICKS,  
AUTHOR OF *THE VAN GOGH  
DECEPTION* (PARTICIPATION BY  
INVITATION ONLY--SEE MEDIA  
CENTER)

### FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 1

FAVORITE LITERARY  
CHARACTER  
DRESS UP AS YOUR FAVORITE  
LITERARY CHARACTER (SCHOOL  
APPROPRIATE)



## Parent Book Study & Discussion Group

Hosted by Principal Wayne King, a 3-session Book Study/Discussion Group will be held this semester on *"What School Could Be"* by Ted Dintersmith. Copies of the book are available at SMS; email Parent Liaison Susan Connor at [susan.connor@stjohns.k12.fl.us](mailto:susan.connor@stjohns.k12.fl.us) to reserve your copy of the book today!

### Meeting Dates:

Wednesdays – January 30, February 13,  
February 27

### Time:

5:00—6:00pm

### Location:

Growers Alliance Café, 322 Anastasia  
Boulevard, St. Augustine

Reading the book is helpful but not mandatory to participate. Mr. King is hosting these sessions to facilitate parent involvement in their student's education and solicit feedback. Please plan to join us for one or more of these sessions!

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# Sebastian Sentinel

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## Eagle Athletics



With Fall sports—Football, Volleyball, Cheerleading, Soccer and Cross Country—now concluded, our Winter and Spring sports are gearing up! Mark your calendars for the following tryouts and/or plan to come out to a game this season to cheer on our teams. Go Eagles!

### Basketball

Girls play at 5:30pm and Boys immediately after (approximately 6:30pm).

Jan 22	Gamble Rodgers @ GRMS
Jan 24	Patriot Oaks @ POA
Jan 31	Fruit Cove @ SMS
Feb 5	Valley Ridge @ SMS
Feb 7	Swiss Point @ SPMS
Feb 11	Landrum @ LMS
Feb 14	Liberty Pines @ SMS
Feb 22	Murray @ SAHS
Feb 26	Pacetti Bay @ SMS
Mar 5	Round 1 Playoffs
Mar 7	Championship



### Baseball/Softball

Boys Baseball and Girls Softball teams are organized and coached by volunteers with the St. Johns Middle School Athletic Association. Boys Baseball tryouts were held January 15 – 17, and games will begin in March. Details on tryouts for Softball had not been announced as of this publication date (1/14) but please visit the SJMSAA website for more information and to register at <https://www.sjmsaa.com/>. General questions regarding softball may be directed to SJMSAA Softball Commissioner Chris Strub at [csstrub@aol.com](mailto:csstrub@aol.com).

### Tennis

Boys and Girls Tennis tryouts will be held the week of January 28 - February 1 at Marsh Creek Country Club, 169 Marshside Drive, St. Augustine. Tennis is also organized and coached by the St. Johns Middle School Athletic Association, so please check their website for additional information. General questions regarding tennis may be directed to SJMSAA Tennis Commissioner Ashley Miller at [sjmsaatennis@gmail.com](mailto:sjmsaatennis@gmail.com).

### Track

Like Cross Country, Track is a club sport at SMS, welcoming all students with an interest and willingness to work hard. Practices will begin mid-February, and meets begin in March. There is no fee to participate; interested students should see Coach Rachel Mathis or Coach Kevin Hayes for a permission slip and more information.