

Vol. 1  
8.16.19

# The Eagle Eye

## Sebastian Middle School

Build your Mind, Explore your World, Create your Future

### Principal's Message

Dear Eagle Family,

It has been an exciting start to the school year. Whilst the summer is an integral part of the school year allowing for planning, hiring, and updating our school building, it is not until students return that the school feels alive again. The whole school has focused on continuing to develop our understanding of our school culture. This means we have been clearly setting expectations and outlining procedures in each classroom and throughout the school so that our students have the structure they need to succeed. If you have not yet had time to look at our Single School Culture Document, I encourage you to do so. It is available on our website and by clicking [here](#), and reflects months of work from community members, students, and faculty.

We continue to deepen our understanding of project-based learning and were excited to host a training from PBL Works during pre-planning. As we move forward, we will be using this to drive our Inquiry Hour Projects which will begin on September 25<sup>th</sup>. We continue to work with our students to develop critical thinking skills, teamwork and an understanding of the STEM process. I am excited to announce we have added a Mavic Pro Drone as a resource to our STEM students. This drone is capable of aerial photography, videography, and acrobatics. Our students will be able to learn all of the techniques associated with flying the drone and capturing images. We are planning projects involving tracking wildlife population growth, and surveying the wetlands that exist around our school. We are deeply grateful to Mr. Stephen Pauly, who so generously donated the drone to SMS.

Our first PTO and SAC meetings are on Tuesday August 20<sup>th</sup> beginning at 2:00pm. All parents and guardians are invited and I hope to see you there. The link between home and school is a vital one and these meetings provide an opportunity for us to review school improvement goals, envision our future, and discuss needs.

I thank you for your support as our school year begins!

Sincerely,

Kirstie Gabaldon, Principal

Sebastian Middle School  
2955 Lewis Speedway  
St. Augustine, FL  
32084



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[www.sms.stjohns.k12.fl.us](http://www.sms.stjohns.k12.fl.us)

Kirstie Gabaldon, Principal  
Angela Hensley, Asst. Principal

Matt Hodges, Instructional Literacy Coach  
Kevin Hayes, Dean of Students

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

### Important Dates:

#### August 20

SAC Kick-off Meeting, 2:00pm

PTO Kick-off Meeting, 3:00pm

#### August 21

Football vs. Liberty Pines, 7:00pm @ Plantation Park, 3100 Racetrack Road, St. Johns

#### August 23

Welcome Back Dance, 2:00—4:00pm @ SMS

#### August 26—30

Scholastic Book Fair, 7:30am-1:50pm @ SMS

#### August 27

Schoology Parent Training, 4:30—5:30pm

6th Grade Curriculum Night, 5:30-7:00pm

#### August 29

8th Grade Washington DC Trip Information Session, 5:00-5:30pm

7th/8th Grade Curriculum Night, 5:30-7:00pm

#### August 30

Deadline to turn in Summer Reading Assignments

### SMS ❤️ Our Volunteers!

Volunteers contributed over 2,000 hours of time last year at SMS! There will be many opportunities to help out this year, but before you volunteer, you MUST fill out a St. Johns County School District Volunteer Application, which includes a background check by the St. Johns County Sheriff's Office. You may fill out a volunteer application online by clicking [here](#). **Parents or other relatives who are not currently Approved Volunteers will NOT be allowed past the front office.** This policy is strictly enforced at all SJCS schools for the safety of our students. Thank you so much for your cooperation!



## Last Chance! Summer Reading Assignments Due 8/30!

All students who read the first two books in the Kingdom Keepers series and two SSYRA books over the summer and completed the corresponding projects should turn those into Ms. Barnard in the Media Center by Friday, August 30! **The first 50 students to do so will be invited to participate in a special field trip, "Kingdom Keeper's Quest at Walt Disney World's Magic Kingdom."** During this quest, students will work together to save the Magic Kingdom from the villainous Overtakers by solving clues during this interactive, self-guided tour based on the popular Kingdom Keepers book series. Students can download the summer reading assignment from the SMS website by clicking [here](#). Keep reading and get ready for some fun at Disney!

## School Advisory Council Invites New Members!

The SMS SAC invites you to attend our Kick-off Meeting on Tuesday, August 20 at 2:00pm in the SMS Multipurpose Room to learn more about SAC and consider becoming a member. The SAC provides essential input to our annual School Improvement Plan and assists the SMS administration with the disbursement of SAC funds. This year's SAC Co-Chairs are Ms. Tina Cullar and Mr. Matt Hodges. Please join us!



## Welcome Back Dance, 8/23, 2:00-4:00pm

All students are invited to join the fun at the first School Dance of the year! [Permission slips](#) and \$5 fee must be turned in by 8/22. Food and drinks available for purchase.



## Fall Sports & Activities Calendar

- ◆ Aug 20—SAC Meeting, 2:00pm; PTO Meeting 3:00pm, SMS Multipurpose Room
- ◆ Aug 21—Football vs. Liberty Pines, 7:00pm @ Plantation Park, 3100 Racetrack Road, St. Johns
- ◆ Aug 23—Welcome Back Student Dance, 2:00-4:00pm
- ◆ Aug 26-30—Scholastic Book Fair, 7:30am-1:50pm
- ◆ Aug 27—Schoology Parent Training, 4:30-5:30pm
- ◆ Aug 27—6th Grade Curriculum Night, 5:30-7:00pm
- ◆ Aug 28—Football vs. Murray, 5:00pm @ SAHS
- ◆ Aug 29—8th Grade DC Trip Info Session, 5:00-5:30pm
- ◆ Aug 29—7th/8th Grade Curriculum Night, 5:30-7:00pm
- ◆ Sep 2—Labor Day: Teacher/Student Holiday
- ◆ Sep 4—Football vs. Gamble Rogers, 5:00pm @ GRMS
- ◆ Sep 5—Parent Communication Cornerstone, 8:30am
- ◆ Sep 10—First Quarter Interims posted in HAC
- ◆ Sep 10—Volleyball vs. Freedom Crossing @ SMS
- ◆ Sep 11—Football vs. Fruit Cove, 7:00pm @ Plantation Park
- ◆ Sep 12—Picture Day at SMS!
- ◆ Sep 12—Volleyball vs. Swiss Point @SPMS
- ◆ Sep 13—STEAM Advisory Board Meeting, 8:00am
- ◆ Sep 17—SAC Meeting, 2:00pm
- ◆ Sep 17—Volleyball vs. Gamble Rogers @ SMS
- ◆ Sep 17—Chick-fil-A Spirit Night, 5:30—7:30pm
- ◆ Sep 18—Football vs. Swiss Point, 5:00pm @ Pomar Park, 1600



## New Eagle Spotlight: Kirstie Gabaldon, Principal

Originally hailing from England, Ms. Gabaldon has been a resident of St. Augustine for over twenty years and loves being part of this vibrant community. She has two elementary-aged children, and her whole family loves spending time swimming, playing board games, and baking – or at least eating the bread she bakes. Ms. Gabaldon has worked in numerous secondary schools across the county, and has participated in many district initiatives, most recently acting as the Over Chair for the SJCS Secondary Grading Committee.

Ms. Gabaldon is passionate about advocating for students. She was president of the Florida Association of School Administrators in 2016-17, and is currently president of the Florida Association of Elementary and Middle School Principals. Ms. Gabaldon was recognized for her contribution to education in 2016 when she was awarded the Governor's Shine Award for Outstanding Educators by then Governor Rick Scott. In the same year, she also received the St. Johns County Assistant Principal of the Year Award.

Ms Gabaldon was Principal of Switzerland Point Middle School, before returning to Sebastian where she had previously served as the Assistant Principal alongside Mr. King. She is thrilled to be in an environment that is focused on STEAM, and is excited for a great year!

**Please check the SMS Website often for updates!**

<http://www.sms.stjohns.k12.fl.us/>

- Masters Drive, St. Augustine
- ◆ Sep 19—Schoology Parent Training, 8:30—9:30am
- ◆ Sep 24—Volleyball vs. Pacetti Bay @ PBMS
- ◆ Sep 25—Football vs. Pacetti Bay, 5:00pm @ PBMS
- ◆ Sep 26—Volleyball vs. Patriot Oaks @ SMS
- ◆ Oct 1—Volleyball vs. Landrum @ SMS
- ◆ Oct 2—Football vs. Landrum, 5:00pm @ Cornerstone Park, 1046 Florida AIA, Ponte Vedra
- ◆ Oct 3—Volleyball vs. Fruit Cove @ FCMS
- ◆ Oct 8—PTO Meeting, 7:45am @ SMS
- ◆ Oct 8—Volleyball vs. Liberty Pines Academy @ LPA
- ◆ Oct 9—Football vs. Valley Ridge, 5:00pm @ Pomar Park
- ◆ Oct 10—Volleyball vs. Murray @ SMS
- ◆ Oct 11—First Quarter Ends
- ◆ Oct 14—Teacher Planning Day/Student Holiday
- ◆ Oct 15—SAC Meeting, 2:00pm
- ◆ Oct 15—Volleyball vs. Valley Ridge Academy @ VRA
- ◆ Oct 16—Football vs. Patriot Oaks, 5:00pm @ Pomar Park
- ◆ Oct 17—Volleyball vs. Mill Creek Academy @ SMS
- ◆ Oct 22—Volleyball vs. Palm Valley Academy @ PVA
- ◆ Oct 12—First Quarter Ends
- ◆ Oct 15—Teacher Planning Day/Student Holiday
- ◆ Oct 17—Football vs. Swiss Point @ Pomar Park
- ◆ Oct 29—First Quarter Report Cards posted in HAC

*Note: All Volleyball Games begin at 5:30pm Girls; 6:30pm Boys*



## Sports at SMS: Go Eagles!

As your student considers participating in a sport at SMS this year, the following general timeline may be helpful. Please note that **all**

**students must have a current physical on file at SMS before trying out for a sport.** Try-out dates and times will be posted in this newsletter and on the SMS website, so keep an eye out!

Volleyball: August—October

Football: August—October (tryouts in spring)

Cheerleading: August—October (tryouts in spring)

Cross Country: September—November

Soccer: September—December

Dance Team: October—February

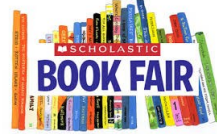
Basketball: December—February

Tennis: February—April

Baseball/Softball: February—April

Track: March—April

*Note: All sports in ITALICS are organized and coached by the St. Johns Middle School Athletic Association. Registration and tryout information is available on their website at [www.sjmsaa.com](http://www.sjmsaa.com).*



## The Book Fair is Coming!

A Scholastic Book Fair will be held August 26-30 in the Media Center from 7:30 am – 1:50 pm. We will also be open during Curriculum Nights 5:00-7:30 on Tuesday, 8/27 and Thursday, 8/29. Online sales will run from 8/21—9/3. Students can go cash-free this year by setting up an e-wallet online for use during the Book Fair. We also accept cash, checks, and credit cards. Please visit our Book Fair Homepage for more information by clicking [here](#). You can also email Ms. Barnard at [Rowena.barnard@stjohns.k12.fl.us](mailto:Rowena.barnard@stjohns.k12.fl.us) with any questions. Additionally, a representative from the St. Johns County Public Library will be available to sign families up for public library cards on both Curriculum Nights.

We also need volunteer help to make our Book Fair a success! Please click [here](#) to sign up for one or more shifts during the week of 8/26-30. Thank you in advance for your gift of time!

## Volunteer Coaches Needed!

If you have a passion for volleyball or soccer, we need you at SMS this season! Coaches are needed for both girls and boys volleyball and soccer teams. Stipends are available. Please contact SMS Athletic Director Chad Razey for more information at [Chad.Razey@stjohns.k12.fl.us](mailto:Chad.Razey@stjohns.k12.fl.us).

Hola Familias! Ms. DeCastro requests donations of beanbag chairs, ottomans, stools, oversized pillows and stability balls to use as alternative seating in her Spanish classroom. Please email

[Avilette.DeCastro@stjohns.k12.fl.us](mailto:Avilette.DeCastro@stjohns.k12.fl.us) with questions!



## WEB: Where Everyone Belongs!

We had a fabulous 6<sup>th</sup> grade Orientation Assembly on Wed. 8/14 to welcome our 6<sup>th</sup> graders into the Sebastian family. Each was paired with an awesome 8<sup>th</sup> grader who will continue to lead them throughout the year.

## PTO News & Notes

Our PTO has a great year planned for 2019-20! The PTO's mission is to encourage parent involvement and raise much-needed funds to support activities like guest speakers, student incentive reward events, and teacher appreciation that may otherwise go unfunded. Since parents (and grandparents!) are the **P in our PTO**, we need you to make this year a great success! Here's how you can help:

- Mark your calendar and plan to attend our **Kick-off PTO Meeting on Tuesday, August 20 at 3:00pm** in the Multi-purpose Room at SMS (immediately following SAC).
- **Join PTO** by returning our Membership Form or simply emailing your name and your student's name and grade level to [PTOSebastian@gmail.com](mailto:PTOSebastian@gmail.com). Membership is free!
- Purchase **SMS Spiritwear** for your student or yourself!
- Become an **SMS Business Partner** or recruit businesses that you frequent to become Business Partners.
- Participate in our **Alternative Fundraiser**—see below!
- Save the date to attend our inaugural Dodgeball Tournament on November 21, 6:00pm.

Thank you in advance for your support of the SMS PTO!!

## SEBASTIAN MIDDLE SCHOOL PTO ALTERNATIVE FUNDRAISER

We know how busy this time of year is for families with children in school. Figuring out how to make the soccer schedule fit with the dance schedule and setting up carpools for everything, along with getting our Eagles settled down and back in the habit of homework and studying, all takes time! This is why the Sebastian PTO chooses this alternative to bake sales, fun runs and fall catalog sales. There will be no holding the relatives hostage to buy wrapping paper this year. No, sir. We ask that you simply choose the amount that reflects your feeling and ability to help at this time. Thank you for supporting the students of Sebastian Middle School with your donation!

\_\_\_\_\_ \$10 I do not want to bake, so here is the money I would have spent on cupcakes.

\_\_\_\_\_ \$25 I do not want to hit up friends, family or co-workers, so here is the money I would have spent on wrapping paper.

\_\_\_\_\_ \$50 I do not want to walk, swim or run in any activity that has the word "THON" in it. Here is the money I would have spent on my child's "FREE" t-shirt.

\_\_\_\_\_ \$100 I really wouldn't have helped anyway, so here is a \$100 donation to forgive me for not showing up at PTO meetings or events.

\_\_\_\_\_ \$ I am making this donation to express my appreciation for having nothing to buy, sell, or do except fill out this form.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Student(s) \_\_\_\_\_ Grade(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

Please return this form with payment attached **by September 6** to your student's homeroom teacher. Please note: Just because you're not selling them wrapping paper doesn't mean you can't hand them this form! Also note: If we don't succeed in meeting our goal of raising \$2,000 this Fall, you may see this sheet again 2nd Quarter. Nobody wants that. Let's do this!