Dear Smith Families,

Happy New Year! With the beginning of the calendar year, it’s normal for people to set new goals. Rather than setting new goals, our building is going to reconfirm what we already have in place. We will continue to try to focus on helping every individual grow every day!

Throughout the holiday season, scholars and staff have continued to work extremely hard. Ms. Wasilius put on a successful book fair, Mrs. Gagliaiardi (chorus and Smith Singers)/Miss Martin (jazz band)/Mrs. Linde (orchestra) did an excellent job with the Holiday Concert, and Mrs. Lee got the spelling bee preliminary rounds completed and ready for the competition. In December we ran our second intruder drill for the building this year as well. We will continue to have these discussions and drills regularly to help all of our scholars and staff remain prepared to stay safe for any unpredictable situations.

I want to remind our learners to dress warmly for the cold weather. We recommend that learners wear long pants to stay warm, and be sure they have something warm on when outside as well. As we near the halfway mark of the year, we want attendance to stay a large focus. When scholars attend, they perform well! Keeping them healthy helps us meet that goal.

This month will bring a PTO event (Mother-Son Night of Fun), our annual spelling bee, the 8th grade Winter Formal, and our second round of CDI testing. CDI testing serves as our baseline tests to measure how our scholars are developing this year in math, language arts, and science. From these tests, and the 2nd marking period report cards that will come out at the end of the month, please reach out to the teachers, Mrs. DeSimone, or the administration should you have any academic concerns. Our building does as good of a job as I’ve seen meeting learning needs for scholars, and we can only stay successful with this through great communication with you, as parents and guardians. Ask about information regarding our Mother-Son Night of Fun at the end of January as well! This event is a PTO fundraiser.

If you ever need anything, feel your scholar is having difficulties socially, emotionally, or academically, or feel the need to update us on things that could help serve your scholar, please contact us. We truly enjoy working with you to make your scholars successful and are extremely proud of what they’ve already accomplished this year. Thank you for all you do as parents!

~Dave Beard
Assistant Principal
PTO Update:

We at the PTO hope you have all had a great break! Our next meeting is on January 8th, 7PM at The Daily Grind. Come have some coffee with us and find out about all of the exciting things happening the rest of the school year. We hope to see you there!

Counselor’s Corner

Happy New Year! If you and your child are working on creating a new year’s resolution, talk to your scholars about SMART goals!

Specific- what exactly are you going to do?
Measurable- I will know when I have reached my goal when…
Attainable- with hard work, is it possible to reach this goal?
Realistic- is my goal important enough to me to put it into action?
Time-bound- I will reach my goal by…

8th Grade Career and Course Selection Lessons are about halfway done. Here are some important dates to keep in mind:

- December-February 2: Lessons in the Classrooms
- Week of January 10: Electives Presentations
- February 7 @ 6 PM: Course Selection Parent Meeting at the High School
- February 11-February 13: Individual Meetings, Call to Schedule
- February 14-18: Student/School Counselor meetings to Review Educational Plan
- Week of February 18-25, 2018: 9th Grade Student Registration

Please feel free to contact me at any time. I can be reached by email: Caitlin_desimone@solancosd.org, or by phone: (717) 786-2244.

Language Arts- In January, students will be continuing with the fictional text *The True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle*. Students will analyze the text for plot and character development.

LEAD- LEAD students will be completing their first TDA, evaluating it and making improvements. We will also work on more vocabulary strategies that go along with LA.

Math- In math, students will be working with the order of operations to solve problems, as well as investigating the various uses of algebraic expressions and how to solve them. We will also be discussing the use of formulas to solve problems.

Science- In January, 6th grade science will be investigating the parts and processes of the water cycle and rock cycle. Scholars will learn about each through stations, labs, and notes.

Social Studies – After a short Nile, scholars will bid "maessalama" and pharaoh to Egypt, then journey Harappa and down the Indus Valley. Nothing will Hindu us in our caste. But Buddha-ware of the karma as we soon will reincarnate to China.

Left to right: Matt Himmelberger; Eric Pontius; Chad McDowell; Sandy Lee; Amber Long; Ally Pruskowski; Lauren Weikert
7th Grade Team News

Math/Math Extensions: Scholars will be evaluating multiple step equations involving all operations, distributive property, and real-world problems.

LEAD: Scholars will be enhancing our before, during, and after reading strategies with our independent novel of choice.

Social Studies: Scholars will create their own graphic organizer which tells the story of the conquering of the regions of North America. European’s will begin to realize that settling in America is a viable option. Scholars will also prepare for, and take the midterm.

Language Arts: Scholars will be completing a fiction unit by analyzing several short stories including “The Tell-Tale Heart” and “The Necklace.” They will also be reading The Island of the Blue Dolphins simultaneously while analyzing the historical perspective of the story.

Science: Scholars will be finishing their Earth Systems Unit, and then will begin a unit on Life Structure and Functions.

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8th Grade Team News

Language Arts: In January, scholars will finish up their short story unit in which they are studying literary devices as well as historical and cultural significance in literature. Scholars will then begin studying poetry.

LEAD III: This month scholars will continue to explore reading strategies to use before reading a text, and we will move on to during reading strategies.

Algebra: In January, Algebra scholars will finish the SLOPE chapter in Algebra. Then, the scholars will have a tough chapter on patterns and sequences. The Introduction to Algebra scholars will finish a chapter on Geometry and Probability in Algebra. Then, the scholars also will do the SLOPE of a line in Algebra.

Integrated Geography: Scholars will begin focusing on the natural resources found in PA and how they have affected the past and present industries in PA. Scholars will also look at the demographics of PA.

Science: In January in Science the scholars will be finishing the Forces and Motion unit. They will then learn about different types of energy, and how energy is converted and transferred to other types. Finally they will begin the unit on ‘The Atmosphere’.

Social Studies: In January the scholars will be learning about Western Expansion with a focus on the Oregon Trail and the California Gold Rush. Then our focus will switch to the events that led to the Civil War.
**Unified Arts Team News**

**MUSIC** - Scholars in Grade 8 will be learning about the 1960’s. 7th Grade Music scholars will be learning about the music of Edvard Grieg. Scholars in grade 6 music will be learning the history of the Star Spangled Banner.

**HEALTH** - The 7th grade health scholars will continue learning about tobacco. Next, scholars will be learning about alcohol and illicit drugs in relation to substance abuse.

**FITNESS** - All scholars have just finished our dance and yoga unit. Scholars will begin basketball next, focusing on skills such as dribbling, passing, layups, and shooting.

**COMPUTER TECH** - The 8th grade scholars will be working in Smart Futures to identify career interests and prepare to select high school courses. The 7th graders will be creating outlines. The 6th graders will be creating documents with columns and creating the Word final project.

**ART** - As the semester comes to a close, all scholars will begin to bring their artwork home. Artwork will be sent home in personal portfolios, with the exception of art that is being held for the art show in May! Looking forward, music and art switch mid-January and we will be reviewing classroom procedures and the class syllabus.

**MEDIA CENTER** - All grades will continue book exchanges through their language arts or LEAD classes. As a reminder, all scholars are able to check out two books at a time, as long as they do not have any books overdue. Scholars are always allowed to renew books. We will spend the next few months researching various topics while reinforcing the research process. Scholars will be encouraged to use different software and technologies to produce an end product for their research.

**FACS** - see you in the Spring!

**STEM** - 6th graders will wrap up their newspaper chair projects and will transition into a second unit on buoyancy. 7th graders will explore inexhaustible energy sources such as solar, hydro, and wind power. 8th graders will wrap up the Great Grow Along, which will involve analyzing data from our experiment with the rats.

**TECH ED** - 6th Grade will be finishing up their Mousetrap Cars and racing them for distance. 7th Grade will continue learning about programming robots, culminating the unit with a Sumo Wrestling activity. 8th Grade will wrap up their middle school Technology Education experience while finishing up their Independent Study projects.

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**Upcoming Dates:**

- **8th grade Winter Formal** - January 11
- **End of Second Marking period** - January 18
- **Breakfast Club** - January 28
- **Spelling Bee** - January 31
- **Mother/Son Date Night** - January 26
- **Parent/Teacher Conferences** - January 31

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Front: Mr. Silimperi, Mrs. Gagliardi, Ms. Martin, Ms. Bender
Back: Ms. Sellers, Ms. Wasilius, Mrs. Falduts, Mr. Jansen, Mrs. Almoney
Not pictured: Mrs. Linde, Mr. Childs