Dear Smith Families,

I enjoy coming to school each day because the growth of our scholars is an amazing thing to observe. The frustrating thing about growth is that it's not easily seen daily or even weekly. It happens a little bit at a time every day, but the thousand little positive efforts that our learners and teachers have made over the course of the year so far have made this a great year.

February was started with a lot of fun with snow, our school talent show, and our school spelling bee--congratulations to our winners! Thank you Mrs. Sandy Lee for organizing this wonderful event at Smith! This month is also going to include our annual Faculty vs. Scholars Basketball Game. I’m predicting a victory for the veterans! We are older, but hopefully wiser! With interims being sent out at the beginning of this month as well, please be sure to check up on the homework hotlines and PowerSchool regularly to ensure you are up to date on all of your scholar's information and responsibilities. The third marking period actually comes to an end during the first week of April as well, which means that the state PSSA tests are upon us! The first week of testing will be the week of April 15th. The most important thing that we can ask of learners for the rest of the year is to be in school as much as possible. Attendance is so extremely important for a child’s success, and remember that scholars need to be in school 90% of the year in order to qualify for the Hershey Park incentive trip at the end of the year as well.

Lastly, I want to mention that with our political climate, there are many different concerns regarding safety. We have continued to implement our safety drills and procedures and plan to have another later this month. As always, if you have any concerns about your child’s well-being, in any capacity, please let us know so we can offer assistance. If learners’ social and emotional needs are not being met first, it’s difficult for them to focus on academics. We want to create an environment where children thrive, and we come to school every morning just for that purpose.

I have twin boys in first grade and a daughter that will start kindergarten this coming fall, and I know how badly I want for them to learn in an environment that protects them, challenges them, and leads them to be great people. That desire motives us to do what we can to help your children every day as well. Thank you for allowing us to get better with your scholars every day!

~Dave Beard
Assistant Principal
PTO Update:

This month our meeting will be on the 19th at 3:30pm at Smith. Our scholar faculty basketball game is on the 8th. We will also have bingo this month on the 16th. Buying your ticket early gets you extra cards! Also if you donate a basket your entry is free! We have donations from the Steelers, Flyers, Adventure Aquarium and more!!

6th Grade Team News

Language Arts- In March scholars will be writing a narrative story. Scholars will be required to use everything they learned about fictional text to develop their narrative.

LEAD- LEAD scholars will be working on their reading and writing skills as they identify evidence to support their writing.

Math- In math, we will be investigating and exploring aspects of geometry, including: area of regular and irregular shapes, volume, surface area, and working with the coordinate plane!

Science- In science we will be exploring the smallest unit of life – cells! Scholars will observe plant and animal cells to determine the structure and function of each organelle.

Social Studies- Confucianism, Han dynasty, Isolated by natural barriers, Nomads from the north, Army of terracotta soldiers- it all spells CHINA. Gods and goddesses, Rugged landscapes, Epic adventure tales, Entitled rights, City-states and Education for citizens spell the next stop on our ancient civilization tour.

Counselor’s Corner

In the month of March, Scholars will be participating in Attendance March Madness in their homerooms. For the first three weeks, the homerooms with the highest percentage of positive attendance will continue to the next round.

Parents, encourage your scholar to attend school and help their team:

- Talk about the importance of showing up to school every day, make attending the expectation.
- Help your child maintain daily routines…getting a good night’s sleep, going to bed at a consistent time and completing homework nightly.
- Schedule medical appointments after school hours when possible.
- Don’t let your child stay home unless truly sick, trying to come to school is better than not coming at all.

Stay tuned to see which homerooms come out on top and earn some prizes!

Dates to know:

Week of 3/4- week of 3/18- March Madness will be running 3/15-18 & 3/21-3/25- 7th graders will begin Smart Futures career lessons

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.

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

**Math/Math Extensions:** During the month of March, 7th grade math scholars will complete a unit on statistics including frequency graphs, central tendency and predictions.

**LEAD:** Scholars will continue to brush up on during/after reading strategies as they prepare for the upcoming PSSA testing. Scholars will continue to maintain organized binders and effective use of the agenda book.

**Social Studies:** Scholars will learn how the Puritan experience has deeply influenced the America that they live in today. The early colonies would be as diverse as the folks who lived in them.

**Language Arts:** Scholars will continue to work on their non-fiction exploration through literary non-fiction with works written by Roald Dahl. Eventually we are segueing into a personal narrative writing unit stemming from information garnered throughout the non-fiction unit.

8th Grade Team News

**Language Arts:** The scholars will read and analyze Across Five Aprils.

**LEAD III:** We will continue using reading strategies while encountering difficult texts as we prepare for the PSSA tests.

**Algebra:** In March, Algebra scholars will be solving algebraic problems based on exponents, radical square roots and powers. Then the scholars will begin preparation for the PSSA exams in Mathematics. Intro to Algebra scholars will be solving systems of equations using various methods. Then these scholars will also begin preparation for the PSSA exams in Mathematics.

**Integrated Geography:** Scholars will be digging deep into the countries of Canada, Mexico and the United States. A key part of the U.S. unit will be scholars memorizing the 50 states/capitals. For Canada, a travel itinerary through Canadian provinces. Mexico will present scholars with a dose of past and present topics.

**Science:** In March in Science the scholars will be finishing the ‘Atmosphere’ unit and beginning learning about Genetics and Cellular Reproduction.
Unified Arts Team News

**Upcoming Dates:**
- March 14, NJHS Induction
- March 15, PTO Bingo
- March 28, End of 3rd marking Period
- March 29, Leukemia Lock-in

**MUSIC** - Scholars in grade 6 will be learning about the parts of the music staff and continue learning about American Composers. Scholars in grade 7 will begin their unit on music composition. Scholars in grade 8 will finish learning about the Baroque Time Period.

**HEALTH** - Students are finishing up the Substance Abuse unit and we will begin Human Growth and Development. Human Growth and Development will cover issues and facts surrounding adolescence, anatomy and human reproduction.

**FITNESS** - Students are currently wrapping up the volleyball unit. We will then begin a short recreational games unit that includes Ping Pong, Shuffleboard, Badminton, and other small lawn games. Also, students will begin their spring round of Presidential Fitness Testing as the weather improves and we transition back to outside PE.

**COMPUTER TECH** - The 7th and 8th graders will be adding formulas and formats to Excel spreadsheets. The 6th graders will be creating and presenting their PowerPoint presentations.

**ART** - This month scholars in all grades will begin their color theory unit. 6th graders will be exploring principles of mixing tints and tones by painting recycled record color wheels. 7th grade scholars will be applying their knowledge of color to a watercolor typography portrait, and 8th grade scholars will learn about various color schemes through the creation of canvas paintings.

**MEDIA CENTER** – All grades will continue their book exchanges to provide scholars with leisure reading materials. Scholars may check out two library books at a time. However, if a scholar has any materials overdue, he/she will not be able to check out new materials, until all books are returned. Scholars were recently notified of any materials which are long overdue and the cost to replace the materials, if necessary.

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

**STEM** - 6th graders will build and test a structure, and will then switch gears to explore buoyancy. 7th graders will explore clean energy and environmental issues within their own community. 8th graders will explore genetics and genetic engineering with a variety of activities.

**TECH ED** - 6th Grade is beginning work on the Mousetrap Cars, which will be “raced” for distance at the end of the unit. 7th Grade is learning about Manufacturing by building a Digital Media Center woodworking project. 8th Grade is learning about Electronics by building experimental circuits, examining the results, and forming conclusions about the function of basic Electronics components.

**Lock In for Leukemia**

March 29th 9:30 pm to March 30th 7:30 am
Permission slips and Money due March 18th
Luau Theme – costumes encouraged (school dress code applies)
School Goal: $15,000 – all proceeds go to LLS