A Message From The Principal by Corey Graves

Dear SMS Parents/Guardians:

We are super excited about the progress we have made with our return to school plans and are looking forward to welcoming most of our Bearcat students back into our building 4 days a week starting the week of April 12th. While there have been challenges, I feel confident that we are on a path toward a greater sense of normalcy. I would like to thank our students, parents, and community members for all of their support during these challenging times. As we continue to move forward, we encourage parents to continue monitoring their child’s academic progress through SchoolTool.

With the return of larger student groups, we ask you to remind your child to wear their mask properly covering both their mouth and nose, practice physical distancing, and wash/disinfect hands regularly. To help ensure students are healthy please complete the COVID screening questionnaire through parent square each morning. Safety is our top priority! We will keep you posted as these plans evolve.

After Spring break, there will only be 57 school days until the end of the year. As many of you know, the time after spring break goes by quickly. The planning of end of year celebrations are well under way but academics need to remain a top priority.

I want to again express my gratitude for your continued support and wish you and your family a happy, healthy start to Spring.

Sincerely,
Corey Graves

This month’s Spotlight Students are London Hameed and Alexander Grant. Learn more about them below!

What are you most excited about this spring?
London: Getting outside more and hanging out with friends.
Alexander: Celebrating all the spring birthdays, especially my own!

What’s your favorite thing to do outside when the weather’s nice?
London: Play basketball
Alexander: Go for a run

What’s your favorite book?
London: Wonder by RJ Palacio
Alexander: Missing Pieces (Hello Neighbor) by Carly Anne West

What’s one challenge you’ve overcome this year?
London: Having to spend so much time online and having to be more responsible and independent.
Alexander: Having to constantly change my sleeping schedule.

What’s your favorite dessert?
London: Cookie Cake
Alexander: Ice Cream

What does being a Bearcat mean to you?
London: Being able to accept peoples’ differences.
Alexander: Being responsible and a member of a great community
GRADE LEVEL TEAMS

5th Grade:
Math: Operations with fractions
Science: Students are using bromothymol blue (BTB) in Science class to detect the presence or absence of carbon dioxide. This gives them evidence that plants take in carbon dioxide just by looking at the color changes of the water.
ELA: Learning about the rainforest through the book, The Most Beautiful Roof in the World
Social Studies: Continuing our unit on the First Americans
Misc: Each month, Mrs. Barboni, her students, and the BEST program Pen Pals group make cards and write letters for the senior residents at St. Camillus. Here is an example of their St. Patrick’s Day greetings. Bearcats are making our seniors smile!

6th Grade:
Math: Students are currently beginning a new unit, which begins with understanding positive and negative numbers and how they are used together to describe quantities having opposite directions or values (e.g., temperature above/below zero, elevation above/below sea level, debits/credits, positive/negative electric charge). Students will use positive and negative numbers to represent quantities in real-world contexts, explaining the meaning of 0 in each situation. Sixth graders will have the opportunity to explore situations appropriately represented by positive, negative numbers, and graph points in all four quadrants of the coordinate plane. Using a number line, students learn about numbers and their “opposites”, and absolute value (distance from zero).
Science: Students are currently addressing this question; “How will hurricane risks and impacts change over the next 100 years?” The students are in module one of a five-activity module that helps students build an understanding of how hurricanes travel and grow, the risks that hurricanes bring to people and their communities, and the impact of climate change through focused case studies and interactions with the Hurricane Explorer Simulator Model. As students explore data about pressure systems, sea surface temperature, and storm surge potential, they make connections between hurricane intensity and an increase in global temperatures. Finally, they use their understanding of the hazards of hurricanes (wind and water damage) to make predictions about how climate change may affect future hurricane seasons. “NOW THAT’S A LOT OF DAMAGE!!!”-Phil Swift
ELA: Students have completed their video game projects and did a great job designing some fun games! For our next unit, we will be reading Ghost by Jason Reynolds!
Social Studies: We’re continuing our study of Ancient Greece by comparing and contrasting the two great city states of Athens and Sparta. We’ll spend time comparing Athenian democracy to the modern day democracy in our country as well as democratic governments around the world.
Health: Students are in the Health unit of Decision Making. In this unit, we will cover topics of Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drugs (including Electronic Cigarettes). We are focusing on healthy choices, while learning refusal skills for times we are faced with decisions that are less healthy.
7th Grade:
Math: Students will continue to manipulate and simplify algebraic expressions using algebra tiles, and begin exploring how to solve equations with them.
Science: Classes will be studying Punnett Squares and pedigrees.
ELA: Students will be applying their knowledge of their reading and writing skills to independently chosen texts and writing pieces.
Social Studies: Students are looking into the new nation after the American Revolution.
Italian: Students will be learning about animals and colors
Spanish: Students will learn about the verb “GUSTAR” and discuss their own likes and dislikes.

8th Grade:
Math: Students who are in person will be sent a new Google Classroom invitation for when we are back to 4 days a week, on April 12th. This is a fresh start for all students, and will begin the grading for Marking Period 4 in Math.
Algebra: The Algebra Regents is scheduled for June 23rd. After break, students will begin learning about the System of Equations, which is connected to the Linear Equations unit that students are currently wrapping up.
Physical Science: 8th grade students conducted experiments with a ball and ramp to learn about potential and kinetic energy. Students collected and analyzed data after launching balls down ramps of varying inclines.
ELA: The grade book for marking period 3 will close on April 9th for ELA 8. On April 9th, students will be invited to new Google Classrooms for a fresh start. We will be starting to write short stories that connect to the vacations they planned in their Vacation Project these past few weeks.
Advanced ELA: We are currently in the middle of To Kill A Mockingbird and have been looking at how Jem and Scout have developed as characters.
Social Studies: 8th Graders will be learning about World War II, including the causes of the war, the role of the United States, and will study the Holocaust.
Italian: Students are learning about food in Italian as well as finishing up their learning of “ire” verbs.
Spanish: Students are working on using the verb “GUSTAR” to talk about things and activities they like and do not like. They are combining many vocabulary terms from past units as well as this unit’s vocabulary terms to help them talk about this.
Physical Education: Students in all grades have finished the skills and fundamentals of floor hockey. To begin April, we will be participating in Volleyball and Racket activities. The department continues to follow sanitization and socially distant protocols.

MUSICAL
Congratulations to the cast and crew of Dear Edwina Virtual Edition on a successful musical season. The cast and crew spent hours rehearsing after school and recording on the weekends to put together a great show for the community to view online. Thanks to the SHS Drama Department the show was available free of charge. You should be extremely proud of what you accomplished!
COUNSELOR’S CORNER

We are approaching the 4th Quarter of this Covid-19 School year. As we transition to 4 days of in-person learning, it is important to stay focused on your goals and not allow the nice weather to distract you from finishing the year strong! Make the most of this year by taking advantage of all the support that is in place; Synchronized instruction, Google Meets with Teachers, B.E.S.T Academic Support.

Don’t forget our Tips to Thrive in the Hybrid/Virtual Model
1. Create a learning place for your child
2. Make a schedule and stick to it
3. Reduce distractions
4. Use a calendar
5. Take movement breaks or exercise.
6. See which accessibility features help your child. For example, read aloud or speech to text
7. Reach out to your child’s teacher.
8. Look for ways to remove learning barriers such as utilizing teacher office hours or asking questions while in person.

FINE ARTS

Students in 6th and 7th grade created art pieces from Google Earth landscapes.

Davin Kaszubinski
7th Grade
“Central Park, NY”

Sawyer Stewart
6th Grade
“Cooperstown, NY”

Carson Rolince
6th Grade
“Cape Farewell, New Zealand”