A Message From The Principal
by Corey Graves

It’s hard to believe that we are already two months into the school year. The weather might be turning a little colder, but I know the studies are heating up for our students. We cannot stress enough the importance of student engagement in both virtual and in-person learning. The content in our courses is progressing and it is imperative for students to keep up with their schoolwork. Parents, please be sure to check your child’s academic progress through their Google classroom and Schooltool.

We have started a tutoring program through our BEST grant. If your child needs additional academic help, this program is a great way for them to receive supplemental support. For more information please reach out to one of our SMS BEST Program directors, Mrs. Cole (Grades 5-6) mcole@solvayschools.org or Mr. Marshall (Grades 7-8) dmarshall@solvayschools.org.

Our students have also done a really great job maintaining health and safety measures while at school. We encourage everyone to practice handwashing, social distancing, wearing of masks and monitoring COVID symptoms while at home. The cooperation and support of our students, parents, and community has been amazing. We truly are one Bearcat Family!!!

As we enter the start of the holiday season, remember to take time to be thankful for the family and friends that support you throughout the year.

Sincerely,
SMS Principal
Mr. Graves

Spotlight

This month’s November Spotlight Students are Zeke Sensenich and Sylvia Whalen Sgroi. Read below to find out more about them and how they spend their fall!

What’s your favorite way to spend the fall?
Sylvia: The weather is nice to sit outside. Also Halloween so I can spend time with my friends.
Zeke: Watching leaves change color and the seasons change. Also spending time with family for Thanksgiving.

What’s your favorite Thanksgiving dessert?
Sylvia: Pumpkin pie made by my mom.
Zeke: Pumpkin pie from Wegmans.

What’s your favorite part of Thanksgiving?
Sylvia: Catching up with family and eating my grandma’s rolls.
Zeke: Talking to my family and eating food

What are you most excited about this year?
Sylvia: The ability to complete work at my own pace while I am at home. I also got a new dog named Odie!
Zeke: Trying new things and learning things. I also enjoy spending time with my family.

What’s your favorite book?
Sylvia: Tokyo Ghoul by Sui Ishida
Zeke: Diary of a Wimpy Kid by Jeff Kinney. I am currently reading True Legend by Mike Lupica

What does being a Bearcat mean to you?
Sylvia: Supporting our school and getting good grades.
Zeke: Having good grades and showing pride in my school.

IMPORTANT DATES

CALENDAR

11/3 – No School – Staff Development Day
11/10 – SMS PTO Meeting @ 7pm
11/11 – No School – Veteran’s Day
11/16 – Board of Education Meeting @ 7pm
11/17 & 11/19 – Picture Retake Day/Virtual Student Picture Day
11/18 – 5th Grade Virtual Parent/Teacher Conferences
11/23 – SMS Variety Showcase @ 7pm
11/25 – No School – Thanksgiving Recess
11/26 – District Closed – Thanksgiving Day
11/27 – District Closed – Thanksgiving Recess

GRADES

11/13 – End of 10-week Marking Period
11/20 – Report Cards available online
GRADE LEVEL TEAMS

5th Grade Team:
The fifth grade team would like to remind parents that the virtual Parent/Teacher conference Day is Wednesday, Nov. 18. Please check Parent Square for the sign-up sheet if you have not already done so. PARENTS: Students are coming to school with Chromebooks that have extremely low battery life. Please remember to charge them nightly.

6th Grade Team:
6th grade ELA students recently took a break from the Chromebooks to complete and sort evidence. They had to identify which opinion each evidence strip supported best. Look below to see them working!

7th Grade Team:
A glance into our 7th grade classrooms!
- Math students are finishing up exploring what proportional relationships look like in tables, graphs, and equations. Our next upcoming unit is percentages!
- ELA students are completing their poetry unit! Mrs. Medsger would like to remind parents to sign their child up for 10-minute conferences on Wednesdays. Sign-ups will be posted on ParentSquare Tuesday nights.
- Social Studies classes are studying the Age of Exploration!
- Science classes are wrapping up their Mentos Lab and are getting ready for the big competition! The next unit of study will be cells and microscopes.

General Reminders:
- Charge Chromebooks the night before you come to school!
- Check-in with teachers often and use office hours for extra help!
- Contact teachers using Google Hangouts or Gmail if you need help!
- Read a little bit every day!

8th Grade Team:
The 8th grade class recently wrapped up their Ma and Pa’s Kettle Corn Fundraiser! Thank you to everyone who supported the Class of 2025 and bought some popcorn! Information will be available soon about pick up times!

The 8th grade team would like to encourage students to keep a schedule on virtual days, and remind students and parents that teachers host office hours each week! Students are encouraged to join to ask questions and get help! Keep checking google classroom daily for assignments and updates!
BEST PROGRAM

The 1st block of BEST programs are off to a wonderful start! It’s beautiful to see kids extend their day and enjoy programs that are offered by our staff. Here is the list of programs that students have enjoyed:

Braveheart
Minecraft
Math with Muller
Stranger Things
Basketball
Simple Crafts
Harry Potter
Mandalorian
Theater (Hamilton)
Dungeons and Dragons
Babysitting
Yoga.

The end date for Block 1 is 11/20/2020.

Academic Support Programs are beginning in all grade levels. Students are chosen to stay after with parent permission to make up assignments. Each cohort will have a designated day. One grade level teacher along with a teaching assistant will help 8-10 students who are in need. Students are chosen by their teachers and guidance counselors to attend. Parents will be contacted. Our goal is to help and assist students who are struggling and in danger of failing. Hopefully, students will rotate in and out of this program throughout the school year.

If any questions contact:

5th and 6th Graders - Mrs. Cole (mcole@solvayschools.org)
7th and 8th Graders - Mr. Marshall (dmarshall@solvayschools.org)

Block 2 Programs will begin 11/30/2020. Program offerings will be communicated at a later date. Teachers are currently planning in-person and virtual program. Parents will be notified by ParentSquare when our website forms are open for enrollment. Please remember, due to COVID-19, our class sizes are limited.
COUNSELOR’S CORNER

Marking period 1 ends on November 13th. You can view your child’s report card on the Schooltool Parent Portal beginning 11/20.

SchoolTool Refresher: Password and Login
First, go to the SchoolTool website. In the login box where it says “Username,” type in the e-mail address that you submitted to the school district. In the “Password” section, enter the password you received when you signed up for your SchoolTool account. Click “Login.”

Navigating the SchoolTool Parent Portal
Click on the “STUDENTS” tab, and then click the blue arrow in front of your child’s name to view their information. This will take you to several tabs where you can access your child’s information, such as Assignments, Attendance, Grades and Schedules.

Grades:
You will be able to see various items by clicking on the down arrows in the boxes. (If you see “None” next to a class, it indicates that the teacher does not maintain an online gradebook).

Become a Google Classroom Expert in 5 minutes!
Watch the YouTube video by searching “Cory Brooks Google Classroom Overview” and learn how to navigate your child’s google classroom.

Avoid focusing on the To Do List,
Look at each class individually by reviewing the stream and classwork tab. Make sure all instructional videos and directions are viewed before starting the assignment.

November 19th is National Parental Involvement Day
We would like to thank you for being partners in your child’s educational success especially during these trying times. Please do not hesitate to reach out via phone, email, or ParentSquare.

FINE ARTS

This month we are highlighting some of the amazing artwork our students have done! Check them out below!

“Creepy Critters” by Lila Law, 5th Grade

Self-Portrait 2020 Style by Shyla Cox, 8th Grade

“Harvest Scene” by Leland Reyes, 6th Grade

Graffiti Name Design By Emma Rutkowski 8th Grade, Studio in Art

“Summer” by Gretal Germakovski, 7th grade

Fall Leaves Painting by Nora Maroney, Pre-K