

The SMASHing Friday Letter



smash@smmusd.org

September 7, 2018

SCHOOL CLOSED
MONDAY, SEPT. 10 - AND WEDNESDAY, SEPT 19 - LOCAL HOLIDAYS

REMINDER: We need your child's 1st day packet!
Please return the completed forms to the office by Tuesday, Sept 11.

Dear SMASH Families,

SMASH was one of 4 US public schools selected, studied and featured in a written report and video by the Stanford Center for Opportunity Policy in Education (SCOPE) for the ways we “organize and structure teacher time and work so that teachers are encouraged to collaborate with one another in our efforts to enrich teaching and learning.” Stanford’s research team spent two different weeks observing in our classrooms, attending staff meetings, interviewing teachers, and filming. Below is the link to the 13 minute video (SMASH teachers begin speaking at the 3:49 marker and are threaded throughout the remainder of the video).

https://edpolicy.stanford.edu/library/publications/Teacher_Time_Study

SCOPE also published a written report just about SMASH entitled “The Kids Benefit From It, So It’s Worth It: Time for Teaching and Learning at SMASH.” Here is the conclusion from that report and then the link to the full 45 pages:

Conclusion

SMASH is an example of a small school whose innovative use of time disrupts the usual “grammar” of schooling. Starting with a vision of developing students who are active and engaged, with a voice in their learning, and a philosophy of teaching and learning that sees social and emotional learning as a foundation for academic success, SMASH has structured its use of time to allow for extended blocks for deeper, more project-based learning. This same philosophy is carried over into the organization of teachers’ time. The ascription to social learning theory is reflected in the different blocks of time in which teachers can interact and work together. There is intentionality in the use of time for personal relationship development that in turn supports professional collaboration. By creating their own schedules, teachers are able to exercise voice in how time is allocated. They are also empowered to use time flexibly to address challenges or try new approaches. Coupled with elements of the schedule changing from year to year, each core’s schedule is able to evolve, with teachers able to iterate and adapt it to support their students’ strengths, interests, and needs, as well as their own, across a wide range of developmental domains. The result is a school culture characterized by shared values, shared decision-making authority, and mutual support. This culture creates an “open-door” environment, where teachers have opportunities to collaborate, reflect on their students and their teaching practice, receive feedback, and engage in ongoing teacher learning. Although this looks different across different cores within the school, and carries eternal dilemmas, it is valued as a means to achieve cohesion across grades and support students in their learning. Teachers have dedicated time to discuss individual students, compare observations, get support, learn new instructional strategies, and ultimately, enhance learning opportunities that benefit students.

<https://edpolicy.stanford.edu/sites/default/files/SMASH%20Final.pdf>

The teachers and I are grateful to SMMUSD and our SMASH families for all the encouragement and support that makes all of the above possible!

DATES TO REMEMBER!

- Monday, Sept 10 - Local Holiday - **SCHOOL CLOSED**
- Wednesday, Sept 12 - PTSA Meeting - 8:30-10:00am General Meeting; (8:00am Executive Mtg)
Meet in the Music Room (next to the Cafeteria)

CORE FORUMS

- Wednesday, Sept 12 - Core 1 Forum 6-7:30pm
- Thursday, Sept 13 - Core 2 Forum 6-7:30pm

This is the night when teachers meet with parents to explain the curriculum for the year.
Childcare available. Suggested donation \$5 per child (funds go to student trip scholarships).

- Wednesday, Sept 19 - Local Holiday - **SCHOOL CLOSED**

CORE 1 NEWS

The first Friday of every month, every teacher will share about what is going on in their Circle Groups. These are multi-age groups that meet in the morning for Morning Meeting and Projects. The children attend these groups with their Family Group (Partners, Bigs, and Mentors). Please ask your child which Circle Group they are in. Your child will be with one teacher per season, and will get to be with all the teachers by the end of the school year.

Blue Dragon's (Graciela's Fall Circle Group)

The Blue Dragons began their Circle Group adventure by choosing a name for themselves. We discovered a large egg in the room and thought of all the possible animals that may have hatched from that egg, and of course, a blue dragon was considered a possibility. We collected a list of wonderings like *How do dragons breathe fire?* and *How long ago did dragons exist, if they ever existed?* We gathered books about dragons that may have answers to our questions. The first two books in M.P. Robertson's trilogy, *The Egg and The Great Dragon Rescue* have left us wondering *What would you do with a baby dragon?* It is very exciting to explore reality and fantasy in a multi-age community.

Super Sea Turtles (Chrysta's Fall Circle Group)

This year my Circle Group will engage in a Social Justice Unit, based on the District adopted Social Justice Standards (K-1-2) written by Teaching Tolerance. This week The Super Sea Turtles and I read and discussed several books including *Let's Talk about Race* by Julius Lester and *Mixed Me* by Taye Diggs. All books we will be reading are vetted for 4 to 8 year old children. We have been sharing (by choice, when and if comfortable, at this time) the meaning of our names, languages we know or are learning, and our racial and ethnic backgrounds. These conversations will deepen over time after we build more community and trust. You are invited to send a photograph of your family for your child to share. This photograph will not be returned, so please let us know if you would like us to make a color copy.

Galactic Gummy Bears (Ale's Fall Circle Group)

The Galactic Gummy Bears have traveled the galaxies to find their name! We have been exploring treasures (colored pencils, markers, felt tip pens, charcoal, etc.) to see how they can help us in our adventures of learning. We are getting to know each other, falling in love with books, and finding common interests for inquiry processes. Stay tuned for our future news!

Upcoming Events:

Sept. 10: SCHOOL CLOSED local holiday

Sept. 12: Core 1 Forum 6-8pm - Childcare for school age children will be available on-site.
Hope to see you all there!

Sept. 19: SCHOOL CLOSED local holiday

Core 1 Team

Graciela, Nadja, Chrysta, Alex, Alejandra, Juana, Marcus, Coach Angel

Graciela: gbarba-castro@smmusd.org Chrysta: cpowell@smmusd.org Alejandra: asantini@smmusd.org

CORE 2 NEWS

Over the past couple of weeks, we have created numerous opportunities for the students to work together (in different configurations) in order to strengthen our Core 2 community. Team building games, role-playing, Morning Meetings, Community Building (formerly known as Choice Choices), and conversations about C.A.R.E.S. (Cooperation, Assertion, Responsibility, Empathy, and Self-Control) are just some examples of how we've tried to come together in positive ways.

In addition, at this time, our work during our Project Based Learning is designed to help our students learn more about each other – their interests, values, and identities. At the same time, we've been using the time to investigate possible ways to maximize the potential of our classroom materials in preparation for future, large-scale projects. We've been able to use this unit as a way to model how to go through the Writing/Project Cycle and we're excited to share their work with you at Core 2 's Forum.

After spending some time getting to know about our students' mathematical identities, we launched our first official maths units. The third graders are exploring subtraction (and its relationship with addition) using an open number-line. The fourth graders are revisiting multiplication with an eye toward creating their own multiplication games that display their understanding of the introduced mathematical concepts.

Since we consider our students' social and emotional well-being to be the foundation of a healthy and happy classroom, we're trying to find ways to address it in multiple ways and throughout the day. While it is especially important to pay attention to at the beginning of the year, we will try to make an ongoing effort to incorporate community-building language, activities, and rituals every day and throughout the year.

Important Info.:

- No school on 9/10, and 9/19.
- Please be on the lookout for and remember to return Friday Folders (clear plastic envelopes with important papers).
- 4th graders need to have instruments by Tuesday, 9/11.

See you on September 13th at 6pm for our Core 2 Forum!

Warmly, Christian, Malaika, and Sarah

Christian: ccarter@smmusd.org

Malaika: mboyer@smmusd.org

Sarah: sdaunis@smmusd.org

CORE 3 NEWS

Hi Core 3 Families!

It was so great to see all the families at Forum this week! We hope you feel informed about our curriculum, routines, and expectations in Core 3 this year. If you have further questions, feel free to email Erin (ehaendel@smmusd.org) and Jayme (jwoldflorian@smmusd.org). Remember to include BOTH of us in emails so that we can discuss and respond as a team. We're excited for this year in Core 3 and hope you are too!

Upcoming Dates

Monday, Sept. 10th - NO SCHOOL - Local Holiday

Wednesday, Sept. 14th - NO SCHOOL - Local Holiday

Happy New Year to those celebrating!

5th Grade Math

We've been continuing to work on finding factors and multiples, yet now we're using our knowledge of smaller numbers to help us find factors of larger numbers. For example, if we know the factors of 18, how does that help us find the factors of 180? If we know the factors of 36, how does that help us find the factors of 72? Ask your child what strategy they use to make sure they've found ALL the factors of a number.

6th Grade Math

This week we continued working on Factors and Multiples. Students learned about prime factorization and factor strings. Next week we will work on investigations 4.2, 4.3, and 4.4. Students will learn about the order of operations and the distributive property. We will take our first math assessment on this unit on Tuesday, September 18th. I will hand out practice assessments next Friday to review in class the following Monday.

6th Grade Family Math Problems

Tuesday (9/11) - Pg. 75, Numbers 7 and 8

Wednesday (9/12) - Pg. 76, Numbers 10 and 11

Thursday (9/13) - Pg. 82, Number 62

Narrative Writing

Writers have been thinking about moments in their life that they'd like to write about for our Personal Narrative stories. This week, we thought of moments that made us feel happy. For each idea, we wrote a quick paragraph to get all the details down. Next week, we'll think of people, places, and objects that have significance to us and write quick paragraphs about those. We'll use these ideas to choose from when we commit to one story to stretch and write it long.

Social Studies/Literacy

This week students worked on their note taking skills as we learned about basic geography and early humans. On Tuesday students practiced taking notes as we talked about different types of maps, latitude and longitude, and different geographic and political areas. Students also learned about landforms and drew their own landform designs. On Thursday and Friday students learned about early humans and how humans evolved over time from apes. We talked about how early humans slowly began using language, learned to make fire and shelters, and learned how to grow food and domesticate animals. Next week we will talk about Mesopotamia.

Jayne and Erin

jwoldflorian@smmusd.org

ehaendel@smmusd.org

CORE 4 NEWS

Announcements

- **Coastal Cleanup Day - Sept. 15, 2018** Darwin will be at the Malibu Lagoon site from 9:00 - 12:00 helping coordinate the clean up. Please stop by would like to be part of Coastal Clean Up Day. See the link below.
<https://healthebay.org/event/coastal-cleanup-day-2018/>
- **We want to thank everyone who made it to the Forum on Thursday. We are looking forward to your continued support throughout the year. An email was sent out today with the link to the slides in the presentation.**
- **Heal the Bay Aquarium visit for 7th grade students on Friday, Sept. 28. Parent chaperones are not needed, but are welcomed.**

Math

Core 8/Algebra: We started our unit on Expressions and Equations. Topics include: Modeling general situations - writing expressions, evaluating expressions, simplifying expressions, properties of arithmetic, and binary operations.

Core 7: We are in our first unit of 2D Geometry that reviews angles and polygons (quadrilaterals and triangles), complementary, supplementary angles, parallel lines, transversal lines, etc. We also started circles which is a newer concept as we remember the vocabulary words circumference, diameter, radius and will learn how to find the area of a circle. Our first Math Unit test is scheduled for 9/20 after we finish this unit and review it. Please remember homework is the necessary practice needed to learn and develop concepts and skills. Students know that they should do math homework regularly and work on it for 30-45 min a day and if they don't complete the assigned homework as long as they tried and put forth effort and time, they have accomplished their math homework.

Science - We started The Nature of Science unit. Topics include: Defining Science, The work of a scientist, science misconceptions, illusions in nature, the process of science inquiry, claim - evidence - reasoning, designing an inquiry investigation, and creating a testable question.

Humanities - We have started *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* by Sherman Alexie. We have been looking at interesting words that come up as one of our Core's focus is words--word choice, vocabulary, parts of words, parts of speech, how to spell words, context of words. We also have discussed this year's theme: Intention and Impact as it comes up in the book and in our lives and the world around us. Your child is getting regular Humanities homework in the form of reading, notebook entries, and current events assignments. We also started note-taking in Social Studies in paper form (we will also take electronic notes) as we take a look at the first people in North America.

Reminders

1. School does not open until 8:15 am, therefore there is no supervision before then. For your child's safety, the Patio where the students gather in the morning will not be open until 8:15.
2. Google Classroom is a place where you can check assignments.
3. Letter of Recommendations for private high schools - Please get any letters to us as soon as possible. We will write them between now and Thanksgiving. After that, we will be shifting our focus on writing narratives.

Darwin Mendinueto - dmendinueto@smmusd.org

Genie Hwang - ghwang@smmusd.org

Fall SMASH BASH - Hosts Wanted!

Dear SMASH Families,

SMASH BASH is one of our biggest community-building fundraisers supporting our PTSA and we need you!

WHAT: IS “SMASH BASH”?

A series of family-sponsored, parties and events throughout the school year. Every dollar collected from these events goes straight to SMASH.

WHAT KIND OF “BASHES” ARE WE TALKING ABOUT?

Anything goes! Some will be just for kids, others for families, and others just for us SMASHing grown-ups. Popular themes include: Backyard Movie Nights, Dinner Parties, Craft Parties at the Park, Baking Parties, Adult Beverage Tasting Parties, Game Parties, etc. Bottom line – SMASH BASH is about having fun with friends while raising \$\$ for our school.

WANT TO HOST A “SMASH BASH”?

We are setting the “SMASH BASH Fall/Winter” calendar in the next two weeks and would love to invite families (both new and old) to host an event. See the attached worksheet to help you plan. We can help you choose a theme, a date, how much to charge, how many guests, etc. All event costs are covered by the hosts, but are 100% tax deductible. You don't need a large home or backyard to host – you can host an event at a park, beach, or even a third-party venue (many of which will sponsor all or part of the cost). You can also co-host an event with another family OR with a local business. Have an idea but you aren't sure? Let's chat.

Signups begin October 5th. Contact “SMASH BASH” Chair Meredith at mmc-carthy314@gmail.com by September 30, if you are interested in hosting an event this fall or winter.

Thanks for supporting your PTSA!

Meredith McCarthy
SMASH Bash Chair
mmccarthy314@gmail.com

SMASH BASH HOST WORKSHEET

Host(s) Name:

Name of Party/Event:

Event location:

Phone Number (for me to contact, if needed):

Email (for participants to contact, if needed):

Date: Please check the school [calendar](#): Please avoid three day weekends.

option 1:

option 2:

Time (starting, and approx ending)

Please choose a category:

Kids Only_____

Core Specific (e.g., Core 4 Students Only)_____

Family:(adult beverages may not be served.)_____

Drop offs okay? Y or N

Adults Only_____

Recommended age" (if any)?

Can siblings attend/participate?

Brief description of party/event (A few enticing sentences for the catalog.)

Total number of "spots" we can sell to this event? (TOTAL for Adults AND children – don't include your own family in this number. Make sure you leave out enough spots for them!).

NOTE: Must be "Per Person," "Per Child" and/or "Per adult."

Minimum number of spots needed to be sold in order for event to take place:

Recommended price per attendee:



Spanish Adventure Immersion (3 - 12 y/o)

This class is designed for kids who are just starting to learn Spanish, as well as for the advanced Spanish speakers. Children will explore the language through games, songs, dancing, reading, painting, and more! Children who are new to the Spanish language will be supported by fellow students who have already acquired certain knowledge. Plus, they will learn to gain confidence while being in a new environment, thus learning new language skills such as word structure, vocabulary, and pronunciation. Children who have basic knowledge of the Spanish language will make progress with fluency, reading and writing. Please bring a snack. **\$25 material fee. Euclid Park.**

SESSION 1

1011.315	Mon	9/10 - 10/15	6 wks	3.45 to 5.45 pm	5 - 8 yrs
1011.316	Tue	9/11 - 10/16	6 wks	3.45 to 5.45 pm	3 - 5 yrs
1011.317	Wed	9/12 - 10/17	6 wks	3.45 to 5.45 pm	5 - 8 yrs
1011.318	Thu	9/13 - 10/18	6 wks	3.45 to 5.45 pm	3 - 5 yrs
1011.319	Fri	9/14 - 10/19	6 wks	3.45 to 5.45 pm	8 - 12 yrs

SMRes \$183 / Non-Res \$210

SESSION 2

1011.340	Mon	10/22- 11/26	6 wks	3.45 to 5.45 pm	5 - 8 yrs
1011.341	Tue	10/23 - 11/27	6 wks	3.45 to 5.45 pm	3 - 5 yrs
1011.342	Wed	10/24 - 11/28	6 wks	3.45 to 5.45 pm	5 - 8 yrs
1011.343	Thu	10/25 - 12/6 *	6 wks	3.45 to 5.45 pm	3 - 5 yrs
1011.344	Fri	10/26 - 11/30	6 wks	3:45 to 5:45 pm	8 - 12 yrs

SMRes \$183 / Non-Res \$210

***(NO CLASS 11/22 or 11/23)**



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