

May 1, 2021 • District Newsletter

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Important Dates

- 5/3 - School Committee Meeting
- 5/3-5/7 - Teacher Appreciation
- 5/20 - Building Comm. Meeting
- 5/17 - School Committee Mtg
- 5/31 - Memorial Day - No School

Connect with Us

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District Twitter feed



Judy Paolucci's Twitter feed

Find us on 

Greetings

Though traditions fade as others emerge, traditions define us as a culture. May Day traditions have included dancing around the maypole, crowning a "Queen of May" and having May breakfasts. It's too bad that the tradition of anonymously leaving May baskets, small baskets of sweets or flowers, on neighbors' doorsteps has been lost. Our world could benefit from such acts of kindness! Take time out this month to share thoughtfulness, enjoy nature, and become reacquainted with friends and family.



Happy May Day!

~Judy Paolucci

Smithfield Establishes an Equity Task Force

Through the establishment of the Smithfield Equity Task Force, the Smithfield Town Council has expressed a commitment to making Smithfield a welcoming, inclusive, and safe community for everyone to live, work and learn; and to promoting free thought and speech, while condemning racism, hate speech, bigotry, violence, and discrimination. This Task Force will consist of eleven (11) members: a Town Council member, a School Committee member (Ben Caisse), the Town Manager, the Superintendent, the Assistant Superintendent, the Police Chief, the Director of Parks and Recreation, one (1) school administrator, and three (3) town residents to be selected by the Town Council.

The goals of the Smithfield Equity Task Force are to engage with Smithfield residents, interest groups, and businesses to seek feedback on their experiences that can improve life in our community; identify strategies that help the town to be more inclusive in engaging residents and businesses that will better

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Equity Task Force, continued from page 1

promote unity, equality and understanding in Smithfield; work with a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Consultant to develop a comprehensive plan and long-term vision of diversity, equity and inclusion goals for the community; and present recommendations to the Smithfield Town Council on how to achieve these goals.

Subcommittees may be formed to focus on issues or subjects meriting more detailed discussion. Updates for this work will be included in subsequent newsletters.

All Course Network

The All Course Network ([ACN](#)) is a RIDE initiative (hosted on EnrollIRI, RIDE's student registration platform) that allows students to take advantage of supplemental coursework outside of the traditional school day at no cost to a district or student. There are different types of courses available on the ACN: Enrichment, Work-based learning, Dual enrollment, Advanced Placement, and Career Credential courses. All students in Rhode Island can participate in these opportunities. Students may begin pre-registering for ACN courses on May 3rd for summer 2021 and AY 2021-2022 courses.

District Improvement Team

The District Improvement Team (DIT) will meet again on May 24th at 4:30pm. We will be returning to in-person meetings, held in the administration building. The DIT meets three times per year to monitor district progress on improvement goals. Anyone interested in joining this group can contact Lisa Petrone at lpetrone@smithfield-ps.org.

Secondary ELA Curriculum Adoption Update

A team, consisting of 15 educators and administrators, has been meeting monthly to prepare for the adoption of a new English program for grades 6-12. The selection team began by studying high-quality instruction, reviewing and refining curriculum adoption rubrics, and developing a vision for literacy instruction:

We believe that all students deserve strong, engaging literacy instruction that makes them excited about learning while developing skills that help them reach their personal and academic aspirations. Along with high expectations, we commit to providing our students authentic learning experiences through curricular materials that reflect the diversity of our students as well as diverse cultures and perspectives.

In Smithfield Public Schools, we engage students in high-quality, thoughtful instruction grounded in rich texts and media by diverse thinkers and writers. Our ultimate goal is to develop literate, critical thinking citizens who are able to empathize as well as effectively and compellingly communicate their ideas, engage in the world around them, and solve problems.

In preparation for the selection, the team also read *Cultivating Genius* by Gholdy Muhammad which presents an equity framework for culturally responsive literacy instruction. After a thorough review of the [state-approved programs](#), the team has chosen 2 finalists: [American Reading Company](#) and [StudySync](#). This fall, select teachers will field test a unit from each of the programs to determine which aligns best with the vision that was created at the beginning of the process. A final decision will be made by January 2022

which will allow the district to procure the instructional materials in the spring, and implement them in the fall of 2022. The instructional materials and professional development, including the adoption process this year, are being funded through a Rhode Island Comprehensive Literacy Grant.



Elementary Renovations Update

Crews at McCabe have hit several important milestones last month, with interior mechanical, electrical, plumbing, and fire protection (MEP) all attaining substantial completion. Exterior masonry, windows, and metal panel insulation have also wrapped up in the last few days. Interior masonry in the gym, painting, floor tile, and lighting fixtures are underway. The GC took advantage of the April break to mobilize for courtyard improvements, existing roof replacement, kitchen demolition, and new electrical service switchover.

The project was happy to welcome back several pairings of Killdeer to the jobsite. Crews have placed cones and temporary protection around several nests and are sequencing work as to not interrupt them.

At LaPerche, work in the new addition is shifting focus to the interior in the month of April with the installation of flooring, casework, lighting, and temperature controls. Rooftop HVAC installation, exterior doors installation, and concrete pad placement are all anticipated to be completed this month. In the existing school, boiler room demolition and removal of the old underground oil storage tank was wrapped up at the end of April.

Work at Old County is concentrated on rough MEP, drywall, and masonry installation. Once complete, crews will begin installation of metal panels, windows, and exterior doors. Crews have moved inside the existing school during April break to work on MEP connections and fire suppression systems. **FROM TOP RIGHT: (1) Old County Road School addition; (2) Killdeer nesting at McCabe; and (3) LaPerche classroom.**



District Policies

The School Committee policies are located on the district website under district info (also directly at <https://policies.smithfield-ps.org/>).

This month, the School Committee continued its review of Section B: Board Governance and Operations. The following policies were reviewed:

- School Committee Conferences, Conventions, & Workshops
- Notification of School Committee Meetings
- Voting Method
- Minutes
- School Committee Member Authority
- School Attorney
- School Committee Review of Procedures
- School Committee Member Compensation and Expenses
- New School Committee Member Orientation

Congratulations French Students!

Top scorers in this year's National French Contest include these Smithfield High School students;

Level 3:

1 Silver Medal: Braden Crough
5 Honorable Mentions : Kaitlyn Creighton, Xiao Rugg, Elizabeth Blanchette, Lillie McCormick, and Bethany Slutter

Level 4:

2 Honorable Mentions: Ben Corriveau and Hannah Muhtaseb



CHILD OUTREACH SCREENING

**Free Screening!
3-5 year old Smithfield Preschool
Children**



This screening is free and recommended for every child, every year at the ages of three, four, and five years. Screening is offered to Smithfield residents, as well as non-residents who attend a Smithfield child care/preschool program.

Screening provides important information about your child's growth and development. It can help you understand how your child is progressing in the areas of vision hearing, speech/language, social/emotional, and general development. Screening can also assist in identifying children who may need further assessment and intervention at an early age in order to prevent the occurrence of more significant problems later.

With ASQ Family Access, parents/guardians can complete ASQ questionnaires online at their convenience or, if preferred, a screening can be completed in person. Email us at the link below for a parent permission packet or to find out more. We can also be reached by phone at 231-6608 or childoutreach@smithfield-ps.org.

Our goal is to screen every Smithfield preschool child, every year. Help us to reach that goal!



Parents as Teachers®

Parents as Teachers is a free parent education program. Families can participate by having home visits, video visits, or phone visits.

Being a parent is hard work. Parents as Teachers helps you understand child development and connects you to the resources you need to make the best choices for your family. During the first few years children learn more than at any other time in life! Be ready to parent.

For more information on how to enroll, contact Denise Shavers at 401-766-3384 or dshavers@cdfcenter.org

www.parentsasteachers.org

Blogging

The Super Scoop blog post added this past month is titled, "Achieving Change."

To access this blog, go to:

www.judypaolucci.edublogs.org .



SHS Teacher Preparation Education Pathway Playschool Program



We are accepting registrations for the 2021-22 school year.

This is a free program for children ages 3½ - 5 who live in Smithfield. Our students are trained to prepare lessons and activities appropriate for young children on a weekly rotating morning schedule two days a week.

Contact for more information:

Playschool Coordinator
Ms. Karen DiSano
kdisano@smithfield-ps.org
Smithfield High School

Teacher Appreciation Week

Teacher Appreciation Week is May 3rd - May 7th. In light of the phenomenal work teachers have done during this pandemic, this year's celebrations are most deserved.

Budget Update

Last month, the new Budget and Financial Review Board began its review of the Town Manager's proposed budget. A hearing was held on Wednesday, April 14th and answers were provided by the school department to a variety of questions. Following the hearing, new healthcare and dental rate increases were provided by The Trust, our health insurance provider. These increases were much lower than expected, resulting in a budget surplus.

The original budget request for Smithfield Public Schools was in the amount of \$40,579,679, requiring \$32,959,846 town appropriation. The corresponding increase in the overall budget was \$774,785 (1.9%) above the FY21 adopted budget and the increase in the town appropriation was \$421,671 (1.3%).

In addition to the health and dental rate changes, we recently received a new state aid estimate that is \$51,139 below that which was submitted previously. Additional district needs, such as the annual cost of new facility heat sensors (\$4,200), designed to reduce our risk of burst pipes, and an additional new CTE tuition to Ponagansett (\$14,642), have arisen, as is natural previous to a fiscal year. The reduced increase recently reported for health and dental rates more than makes up for these needs. The healthcare rate increase was budgeted at 5% and is reported to be 0.52% while the dental rates, also budgeted at a 5% increase, came in at a 1.2% decrease. The combined health and dental savings are estimated to be \$180,500. Since we have not yet hired for all vacant positions, this figure may be slightly higher or lower than this estimate.

Making up the state aid loss would bring us to a \$33,010,985 town appropriation, however, the net \$161,658 in savings reduce this need to \$32,849,327, which is \$110,518 lower than what was reported at the time of budget submission.

At the April 26th School Committee meeting, the Smithfield School Committee acted on the recommendation of the superintendent to revise the submitted budget to \$40,418,021 (1.54% increase), the state aid figure to \$6,966,851, and the town appropriation request to \$32,849,327 (a \$311,152 or 0.96% increase). We are also respectfully asking that the town consider fully funding our capital needs request of \$241,000 for auditorium sound and lighting, raising the Town Manager's original request from \$120,000.

Mental Health Resources

Kids Link 1-855-543-5365

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org

1-800-273-TALK (8255)

1-800-799-4889 (TTY)

Crisis Text Line - Provides free emotional support and information to teens in any type of crisis: Text HOME to 741741

SAMHSA - 24 hour disaster hotline to connect w/a crisis counselor. Call or text 1-800-985-5990

The Trevor Project - 24/7 crisis & suicide prevention helpline for LGBTQ+ youth 1-866-488-7386 www.thetrevorproject.org

National HOPELINE Network

24/7, free & confidential support for people in distress 1-800-784-2433

National Domestic Violence Hotline

24/7, free & confidential support for anyone experiencing domestic violence

1-800-799-SAFE (7233)

1-800-787-3224 (TTY)

Also via online chat at www.thehotline.org

The best resource is our own staff who can point families in the right direction for whatever need they may have. The social workers and psychologists have maintained a list of resources and can make individual recommendations based on how a student is presenting. Families are welcome to contact them. See contact information below.



School	Social Worker	School Psychologist
LaPerche	Michaela Costa mcosta@smithfield-ps.org	Cynthia Kovacs ckovacs@smithfield-ps.org
McCabe	Amanda Claus aclaus@smithfield-ps.org	Jennifer King jking@smithfield-ps.org
Old County	Michaela Costa mcosta@smithfield-ps.org	Jennifer Stepsis jstepsis@smithfield-ps.org
Winsor	Michaela Costa mcosta@smithfield-ps.org	Michelle DiRaimo mdiraimo@smithfield-ps.org
GMS	Peter Gibalerio pgibalerio@smithfield-ps.org	Jennifer Donnelly Taylor jdonnelly-taylor@smithfield-ps.org
SHS	Peter Gibalerio pgibalerio@smithfield-ps.org	Ashlee Barton abarton@smithfield-ps.org
PreK	Amanda Claus aclaus@smithfield-ps.org	Jennifer King jking@smithfield-ps.org

Science Olympiad News

The Gallagher Middle School Science Olympiad team placed 2nd in this year's virtual competition, held on April 17th from Rhode Island College.

Congratulations to our GMS team and their coach, Jeff Altomari.

Our Smithfield High School team placed fourth in a field of 14 teams and students earned bronze medals in 7 of the 16 events: Astronomy, Codebusters,



Designer Genes, Forensics, Geologic Mapping, Machines, and Sounds of Music. Congratulations to our SHS team and their coach, Kathleen Babcock.

The tournament was much smaller than in previous years, with fewer events and fewer schools participating. All of the engineering events were suspended, which is unfortunate for Smithfield, as engineering events are often our strength.

Hopefully next year, the competition will return to its normal format.

COVID Vaccination Clinics for 16-18 Yr Olds

Vaccination clinics will be held at SHS on Friday, April 30th and Monday, May 3rd for 16-18 yr olds. We will also be able to serve their parents and any staff who have not already been vaccinated. The clinic will be exclusively for Smithfield High School students from 11am to 1pm then will be open to their families, to other town 16-18 yr olds, to staff, and to Bryant University students from 2pm to 5pm.



To schedule an appointment please use the links below:

SHS Students and Staff Only: Friday, April 30th 11:00AM – 1:00PM
<https://www.vaccinateri.org/reg/1002959609>

Friday, April 30th 2:00PM – 5:00PM
<https://www.vaccinateri.org/reg/5901600792>

SHS Students and Staff Only: Monday, May 3rd 11:00AM – 1:00PM
<https://www.vaccinateri.org/reg/0519296006>

Monday, May 3rd 2:00PM – 5:00PM
<https://www.vaccinateri.org/reg/9110296005>

Per RI law, parental consent forms are not required for those 16 and older.

Vaccination, along with continued efforts to wear facial coverings, social distance, and hand washing is our best defense against COVID-19. Vaccinate before you graduate!

CDC's New Guidance will Guide Plans for June Activities

Activity	Fully Vaccinated People	Non-Vaccinated People
Walk, run, or bike outdoors with members of your household OR Attend a small, outdoor gathering w/fully vaccinated family & friends		
Attend a small, outdoor gathering with fully vaccinated and unvaccinated people		
Dine at an outdoor restaurant with friends from multiple households		
Attend a crowded, outdoor event, like a live performance, parade, or sports event		
Visit a barber or hair salon OR Go to an uncrowded, indoor shopping center or museum OR Ride public transport with limited occupancy		
Attend a small, indoor gathering of fully vaccinated and unvaccinated people from multiple households		
Go to an indoor movie theater OR Attend a full-capacity worship service		
Sing in an indoor chorus OR Eat at an indoor restaurant or bar OR Participate in an indoor, high intensity exercise class		

This Month's Spotlight:
Old County Road Elementary School

The Old County Road School community has collaborated to make the adjustments necessary to keep the focus on learning. Teachers and staff have developed activities to help students learn effectively while keeping everyone healthy and safe. By making sure that students have access to their own sets of materials and manipulatives to “learn by doing” and by integrating opportunities to physically move in the classroom, teachers keep learning active and engaging.



Teachers took advantage of opportunities to move learning outside, even during the winter months! OCRS is fortunate to have a basketball court, walking trail, and an outdoor classroom right on the school grounds, all of which allowed for a variety of creative activities for students to learn and play. Families volunteered to work with Mr. Gruczka in the fall to make renovations to the outdoor classroom and walking trail to ensure that as many students would be able to take advantage of these spaces.

While outside, whether for learning or for a scheduled break/recess, students were also able to watch the progression of the school construction, which has generated excitement for the changes that will welcome them next September.

We are most proud of the strength of the entire school community and how each day staff, students, and families worked collectively this year to make our school motto, “Be your best at OCRS!” come to life!

