



Smithfield Public Schools

Newsletter

🍁 November 2022 🍁

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Find us on 

Our Promise:

*Every student will be prepared
for continued learning, career,
and life*

A message from the Superintendent

Dear Smithfield Public Schools Families,

November is upon us and the holiday season is near. There are many celebrations that are occurring in our schools, including honoring our veterans, celebrating Thanksgiving, recognizing our athletic teams for their incredible fall season, and also celebrating our students' academic successes.



The beginning of the holiday season can bring much excitement and joy. However, this time of year can also bring stress and anxiety. Grade reports are going home, the homework load may be heavier, and parent conferences are being scheduled. Our high school students may be beginning their college and career planning or seniors may be in the throes of the college application process. It is important for all of us to be mindful that even our youngest students may feel stress or anxiety at times.

Each of our schools has professionals to assist students, including our school counselors, social workers, student assistance counselors and school psychologists. Parents or guardians may contact our school principals for more information.

To help our families, we have partnered with Tri County and the Rotary Club to provide those in need with complete turkey dinners or frozen turkeys (more information on next page). The Rotary Club, through the School Department, also provides Birthday Bags with small gifts for children.

Some suggestions that have been shared for de-stressing with your children include:

- Taking some time each day or on a weekend to read together, play a board game, or watch a movie and enjoy popcorn
- Planning a short hike, bike ride, or even a walk around the neighborhood
- Attending a school or community event together
- Enjoying a meal together without electronics or the TV turned on

There is much to be thankful for within our school community. I am certainly grateful to be here in Smithfield.

Sincerely,

Dawn Bartz
Superintendent

Other events and news

Turkey Dinners and Frozen Turkeys

We have several community and service organizations who would like to donate complete Thanksgiving meals or individual turkeys to families in need. These meals may be delivered to your children's school for pick up or they can be delivered to your home. The deliveries are confidential. **If you are a family in need, or if you know of a family,** please contact Lisa Petrone at the Smithfield Public Schools at 401-231-6606 or lpetrone@smithfield-ps.org. The meals and turkeys will be delivered prior to Thanksgiving. **Please contact Lisa by Nov. 11, 2022.**



Bike Safety at our Elementary Schools

Over the past two months, every 5th grade student has received bicycle safety training at our schools. For some of our students, this was the first time they have ever ridden a bike before and the excitement was palpable. At each of our elementary schools, each 5th grade class took part in a safety lesson, received a bike helmet that they kept, and learned about bike safety by riding through a course set up outside of our schools. This is a fantastic program that was expanded this year to all elementary schools through a grant.



SHS Incredible Fall Season



**Family Consumer Science Class
enjoying breakfast they made!**

Upcoming Important Dates

- 11/7 – School Committee Meeting
- 11/8 - Election Day, No School
- 11/11 - Veterans Day, No School
- 11/17 - No School: Parent-teacher conferences for SHS & GMS and Professional Development Day for elementary teachers
- 11/21 - School Committee Meeting
- 11/24-11/25 - Thanksgiving Break



Check school websites for additional events

Congratulations!

The school committee recognized SHS art teacher, **Kristine Straus**, on being selected as the 2023 RI Art Education Association Outstanding High School Art Educator of the Year.



Reporting Teen Dating Violence and Sexual Assault

A report of dating violence and/or sexual assault will be acted upon according to district policy (see <https://policies.smithfield-ps.org/home/jick-b>). The school staff shall report all aspects of teen dating violence and sexual assault that may come to their attention. The victim, anyone who witnesses an incidence, and anyone who has credible information that an act of dating violence or sexual assault has taken place may also file a report.

Students who observe any act covered by this policy or who have reasonable grounds to believe an act is taking or has taken place in violation of this policy are obligated to report the incident to school authorities. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary actions. The victim of the dating violence or sexual assault shall, however, not be subject to discipline for failure to report.

Reporting Bullying

A report of bullying may be filed by victims, parents, or anyone who witnesses an incidence of bullying. The report form and the associated policy are available on the district online policy manual (see <https://policies.smithfield-ps.org/home/jick-c>).



Any student who believes he/she is being bullied should immediately report such circumstances to an appropriate staff member, teacher or administrator.

The Smithfield School Department takes all reports of bullying seriously and takes action to address the situation, regardless if or if not a determination of bullying is made.

Assistant Superintendent's Curriculum Corner

Elementary Report Cards

Next year, the district is expanding its use of the Infinite Campus online gradebook to the elementary level so that families of students in grades K-12 will have real-time access to grades throughout the grading period. In preparation for this change, the elementary report cards have been revised to condense the number of graded standards.

Please see the newly revised report card family guides below. These family guides provide an overview of the new report card followed by detailed descriptions of the revised standards for learner behaviors, English language arts, math, science, social studies, health, and special subjects.

[Grade K Family Guide](#)

[Grade 1 Family Guide](#)

[Grade 2 Family Guide](#)

[Grade 3 Family Guide](#)

[Grade 4 Family Guide](#)

[Grade 5 Family Guide](#)



Math Update

The elementary Math Selection Team has narrowed the list of RIDE's high-quality elementary math programs to the two that best align with Smithfield's vision for mathematics: [Illustrative Mathematics](#) and [Eureka²](#).

Over the course of the next several months, teachers from the team will be piloting units from each program to collect additional evidence of alignment to the district mission. A decision will be made in the spring of 2023 with implementation occurring in the fall.



Digital Citizenship Week

Smithfield Public Schools celebrated [Digital Citizenship Week](#) October 17th-21st. Students at the elementary level learned to “be internet awesome” by being kind online. As part of their library centers, they learned how to “share with care” by completing a

variety of online challenges and then used the new makerspace centers to design a message of kindness or create a kind scene.

During library class, students at Gallagher Middle School learned about digital media and the brain, dealing with digital drama, chatting safely online, and finding credible news. Students also signed a pledge to stay positive online.

Smithfield High School students participated in Digital Citizenship lessons and activities in advisory throughout the month of October. Students also learned what the school wide expectations (Positive, Respectful, Inclusive, Dedicated, Empowered) look like in the digital environment.

See the following family resources to continue the conversation about digital citizenship at home:

[Family Media Agreement](#)

[Tips by Text](#) - Free weekly tips for families with kids ages 3-11

[Digital Citizenship Resources for Family Engagement](#)



Walkthroughs

Classroom walkthroughs are utilized in Smithfield as an integral part of school improvement efforts. During these walkthroughs, administrators, consultants, and teachers spend time in classrooms to identify trends across grades and schools. While the purpose of some visits may be as simple as determining if learning objectives are posted, others focus on more complex practices such as the use of questioning in instruction. In all cases, walkthroughs are non-evaluative and are utilized to determine next steps in improvement efforts.

Walkthroughs are powerful in assisting with the implementation of new instructional programs. When Smithfield adopts a new program, formal walkthroughs are conducted at least three times per year using an observation tool called the Instructional Practice Guide which is focused on three areas: rigorous content, effective instruction, and student engagement. The team of observers debriefs after the classroom visits to determine strengths and opportunities for continued growth and professional learning in these three areas. Once the professional learning occurs, the team visits classrooms once again to determine if the change has taken hold.



debriefing. Following walkthroughs this fall, secondary English teachers worked together to “unpack” their new units of study and plan lessons aligned with the focus standards.

According to educational expert Dr. Richard Elmore, “To improve student learning, you can raise the level of the content that students are taught. You can increase the skill and knowledge that teachers bring to the teaching of that content. And you can increase the level of students’ active learning of the content. That’s it.” These are the three areas that Smithfield continues to focus on in order to improve student achievement. The district supports rigorous content by purchasing high-quality instructional materials and then supports effective instruction by providing teachers and administrators professional learning opportunities focused on the use of the materials to engage students.



All Course Network Informational Event

Hosted by SHS Guidance Department *November 15th @ 6:00 pm*

There will be an All Course Network overview where families will learn about the EnrollRI platform, how to search courses, and register. Resources will be shared and there will be Q&A. This will be no longer than an hour.

The link for parents and students is below.

Join Zoom Meeting <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82973821417?pwd=b2krM2VzeEdna1U1dEhCVjUrbjVEUT09>

Meeting ID: 829 7382 1417

Passcode: 159121

One tap mobile+16469313860, 82973821417#, *159121#

Information on the Charter School Application to the state and its impact on the Smithfield Public Schools

Recently an application was sent to the Rhode Island Department of Education(RIDE) for a charter school, the Be Well Leadership Academy, to open in Smithfield next year for students in grades 7-12. Below are some important differences between Public Schools and Charter Schools. Of importance, charter schools receive their funding directly from the school district, financially impacting our schools.

- Public School teachers and administrators must have state certification in their subjects and grade levels. This means that teachers must have expertise in their grade and subject matter. Charter school teachers and administrators do not need to have state certification.
- Public Schools must follow state guidelines specifying content knowledge and skills that students must gain in their content and grade levels; this includes the types of classes and graduation requirements. Charter school curricula are "flexible" and do not need to follow the same standards, according to RIDE.
- Public schools must follow state and local regulations, graduation requirements, and other rules to ensure students are receiving a comprehensive education. Charter Schools are authorized by the state to operate "independently from many state and local rules and regulations."
- Public schools are funded through a state aid formula in which funds are distributed once per year and through local funds. The cost per student that Smithfield receives for the 2022-23 year is \$17,308 per student. This funds our teachers, administrators and other personnel; curricula; materials and textbooks; transportation; maintenance; and more.
- Charter schools receive their funding from the public school system in which they are located. This means that a charter school in Smithfield would take funding directly from the Smithfield Public Schools and the Smithfield Public Schools would lose the enrolled cost per student based upon the charter's enrollment.
- The loss of funding would impact our district as a whole, and enrollment at our middle and high schools.

If you do not want to see a charter school in Smithfield, please voice your opinion and concerns to RICharters@ride.ri.gov by Nov. 15. Thank you.

In Appreciation

In recognition of *National Bosses' Day*, Central Office staff surprised Administrator's with a luncheon celebration.

Thank you to all of our District Administrators and to all faculty & staff for all that you do!



Veterans, thank you for your service



Elementary students in Smithfield learned about the American flag and flag etiquette. Thank you to the members of the American Legion Post 64 for visiting all of our elementary schools for this important lesson. *Thank you to all currently serving and to all the Veterans for your service!*



FY24 Budget Calendar

Preparations will soon be underway for the FY24 budget. The schedule, below, includes internal and public meetings **subject to finalization** by the Town Council and School Committee.

November 14, 2022	Budget rollout to school department directors and principals and re-training on iVisions budget process	January 25, 2023	School budget workshop - Focus: Non-staffing needs/draft budget
Week of November 14, 2022	Staffing meeting with school administrators: discussion of a staffing plan for FY24	February 6, 2023	FY24 school budget presented at regular School Committee meeting
Week of November 28, 2022	Town Manager, Superintendent, Town Finance Director, School Department Finance Director meet to discuss budget priorities, projections, and goals	February 27, 2023	Revisions made and final FY24 school budget presented at regular School Committee meeting (if needed)
December 5, 2022	School budgets due to central office	March 1, 2023	Submit budget to Town Manager
December 12-23, 2022	Individual meetings with superintendent, asst. superintendent, and school director of finance to review & revise budgets	On or after March 15, 2023	First Public Hearing by Budget and Financial Review Board
December 19, 2022	Discussion of school department budget parameters and goals at regularly scheduled School Committee meeting	On or before May 15, 2023	Budget and Financial Review Board submits a proposed budget to the Town Council
January 17, 2023	School budget workshop held prior to or at start of regular School Committee meeting. Focus: Staffing plan	After May 15, 2023	Town Council conducts a public hearing and makes amendments it deems appropriate prior to final adoption

SUBSTITUTES NEEDED

There is a need for substitute teachers and paraprofessionals. These individuals are needed in each of our schools. To be a substitute in Smithfield, a person just needs an associate's degree. Currently, there is a shortage of substitutes throughout the state. Substitutes may choose days they are available and preferences for specific schools. Please apply on [SchoolSpring.com](https://www.schoolspring.com) or email lpetrone@smithfield-ps.org *(Please refer to the postings in the links below for requirements)*

Teacher substitutes: Associates Degree required <https://www.schoolspring.com/job.cfm?jid=4037919>

Teacher assistant substitutes: Certification required <https://www.schoolspring.com/job.cfm?jid=4037921>

Secretary substitutes: <https://www.schoolspring.com/job.cfm?jid=4037925>

Custodian substitutes: <https://www.schoolspring.com/job.cfm?jid=3739771>

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.

We can be reached by phone at 231-6608 or through this link: childoutreach@smithfield-ps.org

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.

Our goal is to screen every Smithfield preschool child, every year.

Help us to reach that goal!



Best wishes!



Thank you Virginia Harnois for four decades of devoted and dedicated service on the Smithfield School Committee! During Jean's tenure, she has served on numerous boards and committees. Thank you Jean for your commitment and service to Smithfield. Congratulations on a job *well done!*



At a celebration event, attended by many friends, family, local legislatures, town employees, former and current school faculty and staff, Jean was awarded with many citations of recognition for 40 years of service.



Thank you to Rose Marie Cipriano for eight years of *outstanding* service on the Smithfield School Committee and for the many years of devotion and dedicated service to several boards and committees with the School Department as well as the Town of Smithfield. **Congratulations on a job well done!**



This Month's Spotlight, Pleasant View Elementary School



Cathy Pleau
Principal



Jessica Borges
Assistant Principal

Pleasant View's school opening has been exciting, joyous, and focused on all of the ways that we can continue to "grow ourselves" as a school family and community. In conjunction with our Responsive Classroom social and emotional framework, we have concentrated on our **Panda PRIDE** school wide expectations for each adult and student: Positive, Respectful, Inclusive, Dedicated and Empowered. These expectations are the "thread" that should tie all aspects of our school day together. This learning and relearning also foster opportunities for students to mentor one another in these practices.



"It only takes a minute to say, Hello, but it can make a big difference in someone's day!"

-Katie Summers

Our clinicians are working with our fourth grade Kindness Committee. On Friday, October 28th, Pleasant View celebrated our **Start with Hello Day**. The *Start with Hello* program was developed by the Sandy Hook Promise. The program teaches students to make a difference with their peers in a simple, fun, and impactful way. They take small, but powerful, actions to promote connectedness and inclusion, and identify and help lonely students who are showing signs of isolation.



Each Pleasant View student and staff member created their own hello style label and wore it to support connectedness and inclusion in our community. A slide was shared with classes containing a special message from our very own fourth grade Kindness Committee. This included directions for our school wide activity. In addition, there were links to read-a-longs, music, and movement breaks that teachers were able to share with students. What a successful *Start with Hello Day* we had!



Smithfield's Unity Day was another way for Pleasant View to celebrate our concentration on kindness, respect, and inclusion for all. Our Smithfield police, fire, and high school Unified Team welcomed Pleasant View students and adults to their school day. During a school wide assembly, we recognized former Unified Students and promised to continue our kindness, respect, and inclusion work.

Pleasant View began this year's weekly **Walking School Bus** on Wednesday, October 12th. The Walking School Bus is a group of children



walking to school with one or more adults. The "bus" follows a predetermined route and "picks up" children from assigned "bus stops" at designated times along the route. Pleasant View, with the partnership of our families, staff, and Smithfield's fire department, enthusiastically participates in this program. Dr. Bartz joined us for our opening walk and celebration. It continues to be a great way to start our school day!