



# Springfield Middle School Robertson County Innovation Academy



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Dr. Grant Bell, Principal ♦ Ms. Amanda Mounts, Asst. Principal ♦ Mr. Patrick Carneal, Asst. Principal

## “We are EPIC!”

### *The Jacket's Buzz*

December 17, 2018

*“Providing a well-lit path in the pursuit of purpose and happiness.”*

*“Every single day, we will strive to ensure that everyone is safe and respected; and that ALL scholars are responsible for working to master ALL standards.”*



*“The best way to spread Christmas Cheer, is singing loud for all to hear.”*

### **Buddy the Elf**

<b>Monday:</b>	8 <sup>th</sup> grade Career Fair Basketball vs Jo Byrns 4:30
<b>Tuesday:</b>	8 <sup>th</sup> grade “On My Own” 8:45 Cafeteria Intruder Drill Christmas Choir Concert 6:00
<b>Wednesday:</b>	BETA Trip Parent Meeting 5:00 Transition Intruder Drill
<b>Thursday:</b>	Half Day: Dismissal at 12:00 Staff Christmas Breakfast in the Library 7:30
<b>Friday:</b>	Christmas Break

### **Bus Duty:**

<u>Monday</u> Language Arts	<u>Tuesday</u> Related Arts	<u>Wednesday</u> Math	<u>Thursday</u> Social Studies	<u>Friday</u> Science
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On Tuesday evening, 9 extraordinary scholars presented TED Talks to a packed library here at SMS. Dr. Causey, board member Connie Hogan and Dr. Kumar were present and we appreciate their support!



Brianna Dunbar with Representative Dr. and Mrs. Sabi Kumar

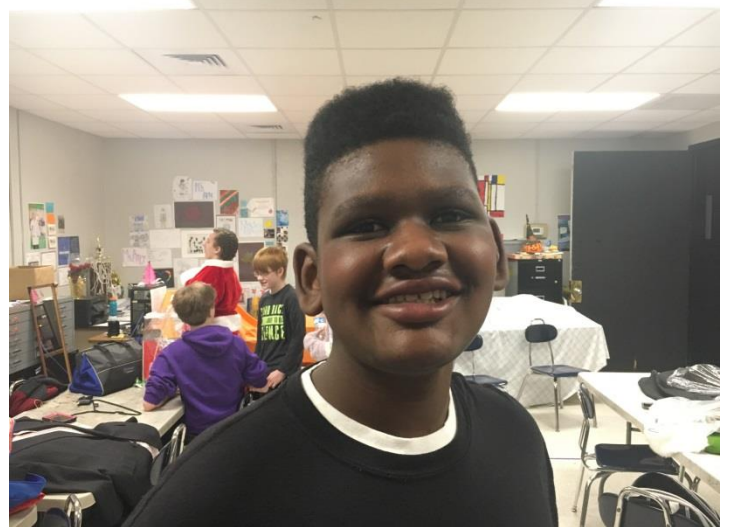
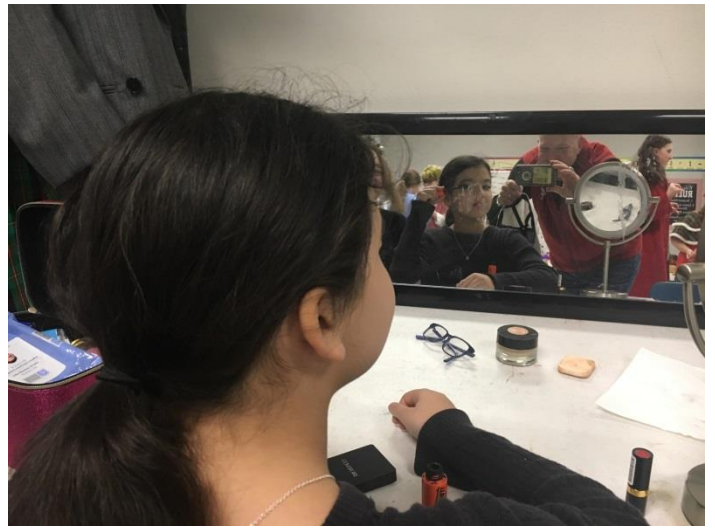
# elf The Musical JR.

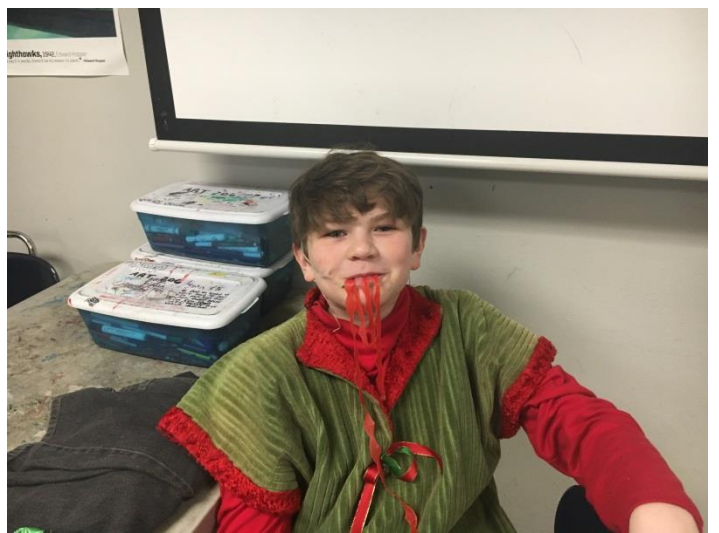


The EPIC Players presented Elf Jr. this past week, with 3 performances open to the public, and 3 performances to middle school scholars from across the county. All told, the show was enjoyed by over 2000 people! Thank you to Ms. Lisa Owensby, Mrs. Vanessa Waller, Mrs. Casandra Goostree and Mr. Rusty Riddle for their leadership. And thank you to the 40 scholars that worked hard every day to prepare! You are EPIC!











### Classroom Expectations

#### Be Safe

- Keep hands, feet, and objects to self
- Respond appropriately to conflict
- Follow directions

#### Be Respectful

- Listen and pay attention to the speaker
- Use kind words and actions
- Use an inside voice

#### Be Responsible

- Come to class on time and prepared
- Exercise self-control
- Participate in all activities
- Always use best effort

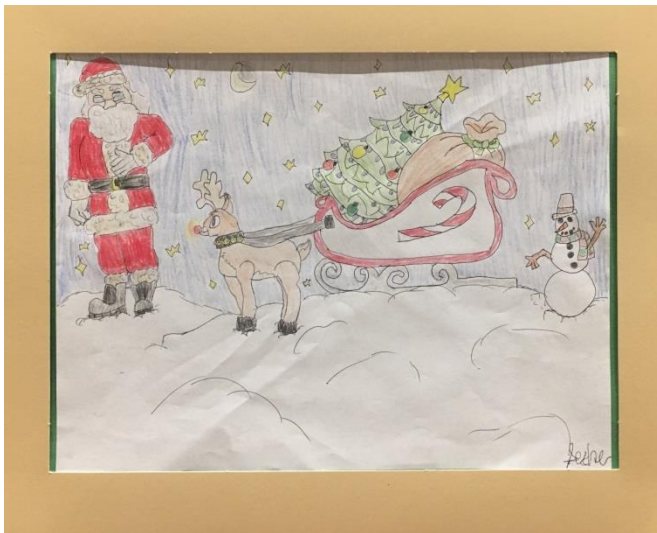
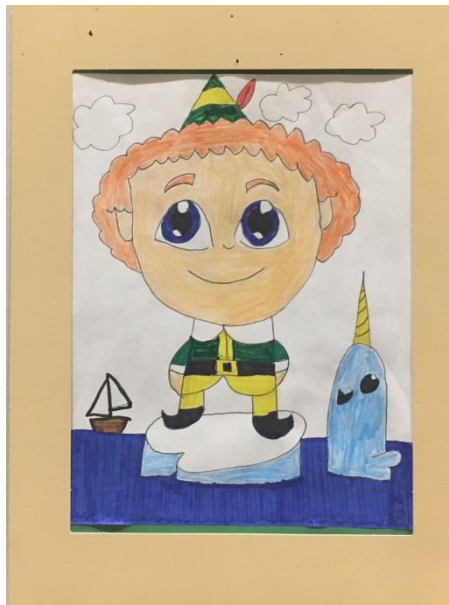
### art Self-Portrait, 1966, Andy Warhol

Printed black and white with red, yellow, and blue ink. The image shows a self-portrait of Andy Warhol, a pop artist, wearing a white lab coat and holding a red flower. The background is a grid of colors.

### Daily Schedule

1 <sup>st</sup> period	8:41 - 9:26
2 <sup>nd</sup> period	9:35 - 10:15
3 <sup>rd</sup> period	10:18 - 11:04
4 <sup>th</sup> period	11:08 - 11:53
5 <sup>th</sup> period	12:02 - 12:42
6 <sup>th</sup> period	1:31 - 2:11
7 <sup>th</sup> period	2:14 - 2:54
8 <sup>th</sup> period	2:57 - 3:37

# Elf Art: Courtesy of Ms. Jernigan Art Classes





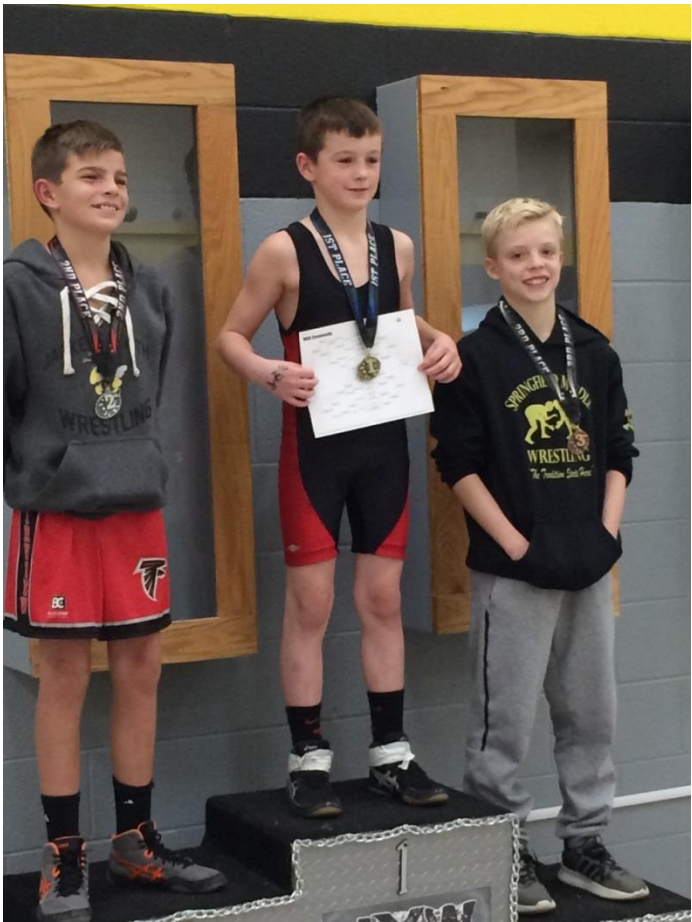


# Bruise Brothers Wrestling



The SMS wrestling team wrapped up their first season this weekend at the MCAC Individual Championships. 10 teams participated and crowned champions at each weight class. The Bruise Brothers brought some of their best wrestling to their last match this weekend! Several wrestlers were one match away from placing. We are so proud of this team! Our last practice ended in a dice-throwing-seran-wrap-ball-silly-string-fight with goodies from Santa!





Preston O'Neil-3<sup>rd</sup> place  
91 lb. weight class



Kelton Hollingsworth-tied for 4th place  
83 lb. weight class



Hayden Reynolds-1st place  
76 lb. weight class



Connor Reeves-1st place  
99 lb. weight class





Perfect Attendance- Coach Holman: \$50 Cracker Barrel Gift Card  
Teacher of the Month- Marcie Eberle: \$50 Restaurant Gift Card

# Scholar Celebration



Oliver Rodriguez  
Mrs. Price: Graduation from Speech!

# JOHNSON ELECTRIC



Thank you to Johnson Electric for inviting our scholars to participate in the 2018 Jr. Engineering competition!



# Happening Around SMS



Demetre Kouzouglidis, Anna Gunn and Max Baldwin performed Friday



Our newest council members led announcements

# Staff Member of the Week



Name: *Jordan Hirschhaut*

Grade: *PK-12*

Subject: *N/A- School Psychologist*

Hometown: *Knoxville, TN*

Family: *Parents, brother and sister-in-law, two energetic nephews and the cuddliest cat, Marley.*

Education: *I received my undergraduate degree (B.A.) from Clark University in Worcester, MA and my graduate degrees (M.Ed. and Ed.S.) from Kent State University in Kent, OH*

How did your career lead you to Springfield Middle School? *Prior to my current role, I worked as a school psychologist in Youngstown, Ohio for five years. I have been a school psychologist with RCS for the past four years working with Greenbrier Elementary, Coopertown Elementary, and Coopertown Middle Schools. Due to some reorganizing within the special education department, my assignment was adjusted. This change led me to Springfield Middle. I am also serving Cheatham Park and Coopertown Elementary as well.*

What do you love about our school and children? *Teachers and staff are invested in building positive relationships with and providing great models of resiliency and work ethic to our scholars. Our scholars are passionate, inventive, and continue to surprise me. Seeing them progress and develop into strong, independent individuals is my greatest motivation.*

What is the most challenging aspect of your responsibilities? *With so many factors contributing to or hindering the success of our scholars, it is extremely challenging to ensure all stakeholders (parents, staff, and scholars) are on the same page and working towards a common goal. I am fairly used to elementary schedules and it has been difficult adjusting to the middle school framework. When meetings take place, not all staff members who are involved in a particular case may be available to attend and therefore, may miss out on key information. I am working to ensure that important information is passed along to all relevant parties.*

Personal Philosophy of Education: *Each child enters the world with unique strengths and challenges. Regardless of disadvantage, I believe all children are capable of intellectual, emotional, and social advancements when school staff, parents, and the children themselves are willing to work in collaboration to identify appropriate and effective strategies to teach and support them.*





## Growing Empathy

Contributed by Jody McVittie, MD

Empathy is a word that gets used a lot these days. What IS it really? I like Brené Brown's (of [TED talk fame](#)) definition: "the skill or ability to tap into our own experiences in order to connect with an experience someone is relating to us." Empathy is what helps us sense that we are not alone in the world. It connects us to others and, as Brené Brown reminds us, it is the "antidote" to shame.

The skill of empathy requires that we can, without judgment, see the world as another person sees it *and* that we can "get" another person's feelings and communicate to the person that we understood.



Since our children learn best by observing and experiencing us, one of the most powerful ways to teach empathy is to practice it ourselves. By growing our own empathy, we can grow theirs.

### **Challenge for the week:**

Seeing the world through their eyes – without judgment. Without doing anything differently become a scientist and notice. What are your judgments and then of what might be going on for the other person? And then what happens – if all we do is see things differently? What if we extend this practice to ourselves? If we relax a bit on our own self judgment?

### **What happens**

Your child does not have his shoes on when it is time to leave in the morning.

**Possible judgments**

He is dawdling.

He is making things hard for me.

He knows better.

**The world through his eyes**

I'm enjoying spending time with Dad this morning.

This game is fun and I don't feel like stopping.

I'm not sure I want to get on the bus – it is really loud.

**What happens**

Your teen refuses to set the table.

**Possible judgments**

She is being defiant

She is unreliable

She only cares about herself

She knows better

**The world through her eyes**

I'm just trying to relax after a long day.

Mom is always telling me what to do. I'm tired of being bossed around.

My best friend isn't friends with me anymore

**What happens**

You are late to the meeting again.

**Possible judgments**

I'm always late

I can't get it together and I'm not being a team player.

My partner doesn't help enough

**The world through the inside eyes**

I feeling embarrassed and afraid I'm not doing enough work for the team.

I'm frustrated that the baby sitter was late again this morning.

I did my best, but my partner was supposed to get the kids off to school there was a work emergency.

# Lagniappe



WHAT WORKS IN EDUCATION  
THE GEORGE LUCAS EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION

## The Pygmalion Effect: Communicating High Expectations

Research shows that positive expectations will influence performance positively. Start modeling excellence, celebrating small victories, and refusing to accept failure -- and watch what happens.

**By Ben Solomon**

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In 1968, two researchers conducted a fascinating study that proved the extent to which teacher expectations influence student performance. Positive expectations influence performance positively, and negative expectations influence performance negatively. In educational circles, this has been termed the [Pygmalion Effect](#), or more colloquially, a self-fulfilling prophecy.

What has always intrigued me about this study is specifically what the teachers did to communicate that they believed a certain set of students had "unusual potential for academic growth." The research isn't overly explicit about this, but it indicates that the teachers "may have paid closer attention to the students, and treated them differently in times of difficulty." This raises the following questions:

- Why can't teachers treat all of their students like this?
- How do we communicate to students whether we believe in them or not?

## Excellence, Celebration, and Success

Based on my experience coaching [AVID](#) schools around the country, there are ways that I've seen teachers communicate to all of their students that they have high expectations. Here are a few practical tips that you can borrow from them:

### Be Excellent in All Ways

Everything speaks. We can't expect students to be excellent if we don't model that for them in every element of our classroom. I may not be able to infuse excellence into every classroom and hallway of my school or in every interaction that students have outside of school, so I must leverage and maximize every element that I do control. Too often, I walk into a classroom and know immediately if it's an honors class, just by how attractive the walls are or how organized the books on the shelves are. Every student deserves a clean, organized classroom. Every student deserves a structured and engaging learning environment. Every student deserves lessons that are well thought-out and delivered every day. Excellence is a habit that is cultivated. When we model this every day, we communicate to students that excellence is the expectation.

### Celebrate Small Victories

Say, "I'm proud of you" -- and say it often. The day that I opened my college acceptance letter was the only time that I ever remember my dad saying, "I'm proud of you." It was so impactful and memorable for me that I tried to say that phrase to students every chance I got. Passed a test? "I'm proud of you." Got to class on time? "I'm proud of you." It's a low-cost investment with the potential for life-altering rewards. I love hearing teachers say, "Great job" or "You did it!" It's positive reinforcement at its finest.

### Make Failure Unacceptable

The single most impactful way that we can communicate our beliefs to students may be [how we react when they fail](#) an assignment, test, or grading period. Rather than ignoring the situation or moving students to a different class, we must communicate this:

My job as your teacher was for you to learn this material, so let's figure out how to make that happen. If you're not learning the way that I teach, maybe I need to teach the way that you learn. Is this a cognition issue? Then let's get you to tutoring. Is it a learning strategies issue? Then let's talk about other ways to study, learn, and organize your thinking. Is this a motivation issue? Then let's talk about the short- and long-term repercussions of failing.

Failure cannot be the path of least resistance in our classes. Rather, we must do everything that we can to make failure unacceptable and difficult. When we accept students' failure, we give them permission to accept it as well. However, when we show that nothing they can do will ever make us give up on them, we give them permission to start believing in themselves.

## Raise the Bar Right Now

In AVID schools, we espouse a philosophy that encompasses the items above, called "Rigor with Support." It's the idea that we believe every student can and should be prepared for college and career readiness, and that we will keep the expectations high, but also offer the support to help students get there.

So here are my challenges to you:

- Look around your classroom or at your lesson plan for tomorrow. What is one component that you can make more excellent?
- Find one thing to celebrate tomorrow, and look one student directly in the eye and tell him or her, "I'm proud of you."
- Think of one student who has failed an assignment or grading period recently, make time to meet with him or her individually, and figure out a plan to not let it happen again.

I'd be very interested to hear how your results looked and felt. Please share them in the comments below.

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