

January 16, 2017

Swift Creek Current

Swift Creek Elementary School, 5601 Tryon Road, Raleigh, NC 27606

<http://swiftcreekes.wcpss.net>

919-233-4320

From the Principal's Desk

Last Friday, I held our first "Coffee & Conversation" with parents. I was thrilled that so many Swift Creek families were represented, as well as two "future families."

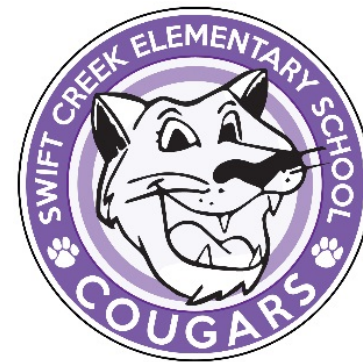
The first question was, "What has changed at SCES since last year?" From my perspective, the school seems to be a much more peaceful, calm learning environment (well, as much as any building with 440 kids in could be!). Staff, parents, and students all seem to be happier. Participation in school events are up, and word of mouth reviews are positive.

I shared with the group that our focus is very narrow: differentiated learning and creating dynamic learning experiences. Our goal is provide instruction to students that meet their strengths and needs and to make the learning engaging.

Test scores last year were indicative of the change and instability of the school for past several years. We project that you will see an increase this year. Mid-year benchmark assessments are in progress now, but we are very hopeful that the data will reveal student growth.

One parent asked about the lack of mention of holidays and cultural traditions at SCES. I believe that it is vital that we integrate holidays, customs, and traditions into our learning experiences. We are blessed with a highly diverse community and elementary school is the place for students to learn to appreciate world cultures. As a result of our conversation this morning, we are going to use our family night during the spring book fair to showcase the cultures represented in our school.

We talked about how Wake County has been very proactive in planning for the changes coming with the K-3 class size mandate. As of now, Swift Creek is in a good position to meet the requirements. Our goal is for this to be the least disruptive as possible. As far as we know, the information that went out last spring about renovations for Swift Creek in the next few years are still on track.



SCIENCE FAIR IS THURSDAY!

- All entries must be in the cafeteria by 9:15.
- Awards ceremony at 6:30pm

For more information about our science fair, see <http://swiftcreekeswcpssnetptahtml.weebly.com/science-fair.html>.

Any questions? Please contact Jen Miller at jcmille4@gmail.com.

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Our new WatchDOGS program has been a great way to bring Dads into the school. The kids love it! Interested parents should contact David Outlaw.

Our first "Coffee & Conversation" was such a success that we will schedule another one in the spring. Thank you all for what you do to make Swift Creek great.

Kindergarten Registration is Now OPEN!

Have an incoming kindergartener or know of a friend who does? Kindergarten registration is now open. To register, please bring these items:

- Certified birth certificate
- Parent ID
- Immunizations
- Current Electric or Water Bill
- Newly signed lease or purchase agreement

Want a tour of our school with one of our principals? Call the front office at 919-233-4320.

Science Fair is Thursday!





3rd, 4th, and 5th graders! Your Science Fair projects must be in the cafeteria before the 9:15am bell rings.

Here is how our Science Fair is run:

Volunteer judges with STEM backgrounds from the community judge all of our projects (we have both demonstration and experimental project categories). Up to three first - third place and unlimited honorable mention medals can be awarded per grade (depending on our partition numbers). All participants also receive prizes. In addition, the judges pick the three best overall projects. These receive "Best in Show" trophies. "Best in Show" experimental projects are eligible for entry into the regional fair. Swift Creek covers the registration fee for the regional fair and Jen Miller, Science Fair chair, will provide an information sheet to "Best in Show" parents detailing how to register for the regional fair. We also have a recognition ceremony on the evening of the Science Fair where Jen is available to answer any questions parents may have.

P2 (The Positivity Project) Corner

During January and February, students will be learning about these character strengths.

Jan 15-26	 Hope/Optimism You expect the best from the future and work to achieve it.
Jan 29 – Feb 2	 Prudence You plan for the future and achieve your goals by making careful everyday choices.
Feb 5-9	 Fairness You believe that all people have value. You approach situations with an unbiased mindset and treat everyone with respect.
Feb 12-16	 Love You value close relationships with others and being close to people.

Need Proctors for ACCESS Testing

Mrs. Burkhalter needs proctors for ACCESS testing starting Feb. 5th through the end of February. If you are able to volunteer for one session or multiple sessions, please email her at cburkhalter@wcpss.net as soon as possible. She will send you a link to the sign up sheet. You will need to attend the proctor training before you can begin. You also must be a registered volunteer with Wake County.

Attention 5th Grade Parents! Time for Those Dedications

It's time to acknowledge your fifth grader's graduation at the end of the school year with a message in the yearbook! It's a great way to let them know that you are proud of their accomplishments! For just \$7, you can place a personalized congratulatory note in the yearbook! For \$10, you can place the note along with a small picture of your child in the yearbook! Family members, such as grandparents, may like to provide a note as well. Deadline for submissions is Friday, March 16. Please look for the flyer in this week's Tuesday folder for more information. (Or see the form on the PTA website.) Questions? Send an e-mail to kristypickurel@gmail.com.

Have Yearbook Pictures?

Do you have pictures to share for the 2017-18 yearbook? You can send them to yearbookpics.sce@gmail.com.



Volunteer Opportunities

Happy New Year, Swift Creek Parents!

I hope that everyone had a wonderful, relaxing break with good friends and family. I'd like to remind everyone of the various volunteer opportunities here at The Creek. Listed below are areas where your time/talent would be greatly appreciated:

- **Father/Daughter Dance** – This special “Ties and Tiaras” event will be held at the school on Feb 16. The details are being finalized and a Sign Up Genius page will be published soon. If you like party planning, this event might be just right for you. We will need help with decorations, food, and setup/cleanup.
- **Cougar Counter** - The Cougar Counter sells fun pencils, erasers, pens, and more. Help is needed on Tuesday mornings between 8:30 – 9:15.
- **Book Fair** – Our Spring Book Fair will be here before we know it, and extra hands are always valuable. Assistance is needed with setup, helping the students when they come to preview and/or purchase, and take down.
- **Hospitality** – The Hospitality Committee hosts several events throughout the school year to support our teachers by sponsoring luncheons on early release days, and celebrating staff appreciation weeks (such as teacher appreciation week, bus driver week, office admin staff week, and so on).
- **Field Day** – This day comes later in the school year and help is needed to run some of the events on the field.

Please contact the school if you need to register as a WCPSS volunteer. If you have an interest in any of these opportunities, or would like to be added to the master volunteer list, please contact me at:

Email: dmragsdale@yahoo.com

Call/Text: 919-817-4112

Thank you and have a wonderful rest of the year!

Delores Ragsdale, Volunteer Coordinator



Tips from your School Psychologist

Kristen Lewis

Klewis2@wcpss.net

Evenings can be crazy with homework, after school and evening activities, and managing tired children after a long school day! It can be difficult ensuring that your children get enough sleep, but sleep is so very important. Studies have found that sleep is key in repairing and healing the body, such as repairing the heart and blood vessels. It is important in helping to increase immune system function so that children can fight off illnesses faster. Adequate sleep is also key to optimal learning and memory function and ensuring that children are ready to learn at school. School aged children need approximately 10 hours a sleep a night. If your child falls asleep within 20 minutes of going to bed, wakes up relatively easily in the morning, and doesn't fall asleep during the day, they are likely getting adequate sleep. Consider the following tips to help your children get enough sleep:

- Routine, routine, routine. Set a bedtime routine, and stick with it. It can take up to two weeks in order for a habit or routine to become second nature. An example of a bedtime routine might include: a warning 20 minutes before it is time to begin the routine, putting away all toys or electronics, a bath or shower, brushing teeth, picking out clothes for the next day, and then reading a book with a parent for 15 minutes. Consider using a checklist or chart to encourage older children to do these steps independently.

- Keep in mind that the recommended 10 hours is all sleep time; therefore, a child that is sent to bed at 8p.m. may not actually fall asleep until 9p.m. Begin your bedtime routine with that in mind.
- Keep electronics right before bed to a minimum as studies show that screen time right before bed interferes with being able to fall asleep and getting quality sleep.
- Perhaps an evening activity each day of the week interferes with the evening routine and getting to sleep on time. Children enjoy and need unstructured “down” time at home in the evenings after a long day at school. Although weekends may be a time to relax in the evenings and stay up later, keep in mind that it may be harder to get back in a good routine on Sunday evening and may lead to your child requiring even more sleep to catch up.
- If your child gets the recommended amount of sleep, but is still tired all of the time, bring up this concern with the child’s pediatrician for possible further evaluation.



February is Cultural Arts Month at the Creek!

During February, the PTA will host these cultural arts performances:

- **Feb 8 – Billy Jones presents Music from Anything: Making Instruments from Recyclable Objects.** For this workshop 2nd grade students will be using recycling that they have brought in as well as their knowledge of sound that they are learning in class to build instruments that will be used during their Sound Concert on February 13.
- **Feb 15 – African American Dance Ensemble** will perform their program titled Come Dance With Us! During this performance, students will learn about traditional dance and music of African and African American cultures. Performers will demonstrate and share history of dances and movements, as well as context about certain instruments and how they were made before modern technology.

This program is supported by the Swift Creek PTA as well as, in part, by a grant from the United Arts Council of Raleigh and Wake County. Additional support is provided by the North Carolina Arts Council, a division of the Department of Cultural Resources.

Your January Calendar

- ❑ **Jan 15-26:** The Positivity Project: Hope/Optimism
- ❑ **Jan 18:** Science Fair for 3rd, 4th, and 5th graders.
- ❑ **Jan 19:** College Spirit Day
- ❑ **Jan 22:** Regular School Day to make up for January snow.
- ❑ **Jan 29-Feb 2:** The Positivity Project: Prudence
- ❑ **Jan 31:**
 - Deadline for applying to a Wake County magnet or year round school for next year. See <https://www.wcpss.net/Page/33754>
 - Box Top Collection day! Turn in your Box Tops and Coke bottle tops to your child's teacher.

Your February Calendar

- ❑ **Feb 2:** School Spirit Day
- ❑ **Feb 5-9:** The Positivity Project: Fairness
- ❑ **Feb 8:** Billy Jones presents Music from Anything: Making Instruments from Recyclable Objects.
- ❑ **Feb 9 1:15pm:** Early Release. School dismisses at 1:15.
- ❑ **Feb 12-16:** The Positivity Project: Love
- ❑ **Feb 13 6:30pm:** PTA Meeting followed by 2nd grade Sound Concert!
- ❑ **Feb 15:** African American Dance Ensemble. Cultural Arts performance for entire school!
- ❑ **Feb 16:**
 - Father/daughter dance. More details coming soon!
 - College Spirit Day!
 - Box Top Collection Day! This is the last big collection before our school's submission for a Spring check! Please turn in all your Box Tops and Coke bottle tops so we can get a great big check!
- ❑ **Feb 19:** Regular School Day to make up for January snow.

SCES Basketball Schedule

Come cheer on Ms. Graves and our 5th grade basketball team!

- 1/31 Home vs. Creech Road 5:00pm
- 2/13 Home vs. Dillard Drive ES 5:00pm
- 2/21 Away at Barwell Elementary 5:00pm
- 2/28 Home vs DDMS 5:00pm
- 3/7 Away @ Walnut Creek Elementary 5:00
- 3/14 Away @ Creech Road Elementary 5:00pm (possible to change)



Coming Soon! -- Read Across America Week

We will be celebrating National Read Across America week February 26-March 2. Similar to last year, the week-long celebration will have activities that will get students excited about reading. The Dr. Seuss inspired celebration will conclude with community readers visiting classrooms to share their favorite children's book with each class. If you know any prominent members of the community or business leaders that would like to come read to a class, please email Sarah Mailhot at smailhot@wcpss.net with contact

