

September 10, 2013

Dear Patriot Family,

We have certainly started this year off with a fast pace. More than ever, it is critical that we stay focus on our school and district initiatives. In our school meetings, you have heard me discuss our school-wide achievement goals, and why it is important to us on multiple levels. I have begun to examine mathematics from other countries and the realization of how children must see a real-world connection has permeated their teaching and ultimately has contributed positively to those countries' successes.

As SWMS families, you know that I have a heavy emphasis on writing and a writing-based curriculum. We are ready to take the next steps as a team and move forward with a continued emphasis on writing and a new emphasis on project-based learning, utilizing the Understanding By Design model for backwards planning. You will begin to see more hands-on projects, more community service, and more problem solving opportunities than ever before. This component is where we need your help. Many of you have a knowledge base and skill set that could help us create these real-world problem-solving opportunities. Please take the time to fill out the volunteer form located on the CMS Website. Then, let us know your skill set or some things you would like to do to help us serve you, your child, and our community.

Our students' interests are broad, and our teachers are always looking for ways to make their lessons more interesting and hands on. Your ideas and help can certainly move our lessons from the classroom to our world around us through multiple levels of instruction, including modeling specific skills that illustrate how to utilize the world around us to create our career of the future.

This year we have some major initiatives that include: major beautification projects of our grounds and building, creating more displays to showcase our students' awards and for their future awards, improve our athletic fields and maintain those that have undergone improvement, expand our course offerings, expand our scheduling model, and increase our numbers in Honors Courses and HS Credit classes. We have an incredible agenda. However, it is possible when our community unites for our children.

Please join me in thanking our community sponsor throughout Rivergate Shopping Plaza, our businesses along South Tryon, and the Steele Cree Corridor. These businesses have continued to support our school and your children by helping us with fundraising , providing support for our programs and End-of-year testing program, and supporting our students' events, such as dances, eighth grade week, and other celebrations. Let's remember to support them as they support us.

Thank you all for a wonderful opening of school. Our Superintendent, Community Superintendent, and Superintendent of Human Resources Services spoke highly of our schools cleanliness and of the great things going on in the classroom. I personally want to thank all of our staff members and our students from NJHS and Student Council for working together to have a successful opening.

Sincerely,

Barry Blair, Principal

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Information to help our children become Healthy, Active, and Knowledgeable young Patriots:

Technology—Computer Usage—Community Awareness

Please be mindful of your child's computer usage. When children are participating in on-line gaming, there are various websites that offer instant messaging to their membership. Instant messaging opens channels to people outside your families and friends with whom you may not be familiar.

Lastly, please make sure that you are aware that when pictures are taken on your smart phone if your **location services** are in the **on position** GPS data is linked to those pictures. Police are warning citizens that this GPS data is being used to **cyber-case homes**.

Immunizations

**Families have 30 days from the first day of school to submit proof of the required immunizations and/or health assessments.** After the 30 days, students not in compliance are to be excluded from school until their records are up to date. **The 30<sup>th</sup> day for the 2013-2014 school year is Tues., Sept. 24, and the exclusion date is Wed., Sept. 25.**

**See the list below for dates, times and locations for free healthcare options during Big Shot Saturdays or Family Health Link:**

**Saturday, Sept. 7**, from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. at  
the Mecklenburg County Health Department (249 Billingsley Road)

**Saturday, Sept. 14**, from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. at  
the Mecklenburg County Health Department (249 Billingsley Road)

**Saturday, Sept. 28**, from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. at  
the Mecklenburg County Health Department (2845 Beatties Ford Road)

Family Health Link provides immunizations, health assessments, physical exam, vision and health screenings, dental checks and activities for children. The event is available to the first 100 children on **Saturday, Sept. 21**, from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. at Phillip O. Berry Academy of Technology, 1430 Alleghany St.

Parents must bring the child's original or certified shot records to the event. Call the health department at **704-336-6500** for more information.