



SPARTA AREA SCHOOLS

July 2023

BELL RINGER

Home of the Michigan Blue Ribbon Exemplary School

www.spartaschools.org

Sparta - The Right Place for You

It has been an amazing year. Our students continue to progress and achieve. The staff continues to invest their heart and soul into our learners. We have had academic and athletic successes. Our visual and performing arts continue to shine and make us proud. We are celebrating another class of high school graduates, the Class of 2023.

Our graduates have weathered quite a bit over the last four years. As is the Spartan way, they have worked hard and finished strong. The Class of 2023 earned hundreds of thousands of dollars of scholarship money. There were multiple state champions and state qualifying athletes. Our Senior band students have been highly decorated performers. As the role

models for the underclassmen, they have led honorably and will leave a lasting impact. We are immensely proud of them, wish them all the best in their next adventure and thank them for being the Spartans that they are and will always be.

With graduation and the closing of another school year, we turn our attention and focus toward another opportunity next school year to get even better. We expect to build on the success of this graduating class and work to reach even greater heights. This summer we have commitments from over fifty staff to come in during June to enhance their strategies used to foster a healthy classroom environment filled with care, respect, love and acceptance. We have

hundreds of days of work scheduled for instructional staff from Kindergarten through Twelfth Grade to come into school to work on curriculum, instruction and assessment. We have dozens of staff willing to work this summer to provide our students extended and remediated learning opportunities in summer school. Staff will continue taking graduate classes to enhance their content and pedagogy knowledge, always in pursuit of modeling lifelong learning. The next two months will permit our staff to focus their work on growing and strengthening as we focus on a future of excellence for our Spartan learners.

Our staff will have said goodbye to our learners on June 8 for the summer. We will come back together as a

staff on August 15 and welcome our learners back on August 21. Seventy three calendar days will have passed between saying goodbye and saying hello again. We continue to focus forward. Our learners deserve the continual pursuit of getting better. We are thankful to this community for trusting the education of their students with us. We do not take it for granted. Finishing strong in all we do to provide a better future for our learners is our preferred method of saying thank you. Enjoy the summer in our beautiful village! Everyday will be a great day to be a Spartan!

Educationally,

Joel Stoner
Superintendent of Schools



M-STEP Field Trips

Museums, symphonies and beaches! After a couple weeks of working hard on the M-STEP, the fourth graders took a break from the classroom and went on back to back field trips. First, they loaded up on charter buses and headed to the east side of the state to visit the Henry Ford Museum in Dearborn, MI. Students got to explore the museum and learn about civil rights, automobiles, the history of airplanes, and more! Some of the highlights were climbing aboard the bus Rosa Parks refused to give her seat up on, seeing the chair Abraham Lincoln was assassinated in and a lineup of presidents' cars spanning from Theodore Roosevelt to Ronald Regan. Students also got to see a movie called Superpower Dogs in the Giant Screen Experience at the museum. If your child is asking for a furry best friend this movie might be why!



The following day the students got back aboard some buses to head to the Frauenthal Theater in Muskegon to hear the West Michigan Symphony perform. Students got to bring along their recorders and play

some songs with the musicians. They learned about the different types of instruments that make up a symphony. There was also some dancing, disco lights and confetti involved. After the performance, the students headed to the Pere Marquette Park to have a quick lunch on the beach before heading back to school. The weather was perfect! After two long days traveling around I think the students were quite tired! At least the teachers were! Both days were great experiences and well deserved after all the students' hard work this year!



Collaboration

By Mrs. Sandy Davis

The kindergarteners at Ridgeview and the 5th graders at Applevue put a twist on art. Mrs. Mitchell, the art teacher at Ridgeview, had her kindergarten students design and color robots. The students learned about the freelance artist and illustrator Matt Dixon and his love of creating robots. They discussed the different parts of the robot and what materials robots could be made out of. Then, they drew and colored their pieces. When

they were finished drawing and coloring them, Mrs. Mitchell sent them over to Mrs. Davis, the art teacher at Applevue. Mrs. Davis also introduced Matt Dixon and his robots to her fifth grade students. They also looked at many images of robots and then listed the components of robots...gears, nuts, bolts, antenna, helmets, screens, etc...

As a group, they took a look at a couple drawings from the kindergarteners and brainstormed ways to take the robot to the next level

making it look more sophisticated. Each fifth grader was given a kindergarten student's robot picture and transformed it. They had a pretty good idea of what to do and were excited to draw, color and then glue both pictures side by side to give back to the kindergarten student. The fifth graders took a picture of both pieces and uploaded it into their art portfolio folders in their google drives so they would have a memory of it. The kindergarten students were thrilled when they got them back.



BELL RINGER



Junior Wildlife Wanderers

"Is everyone else seeing a solid white head on that bird?" our wildlife specialist, Mrs. Blackall asked Mrs. Singleton's third grade class. "Yes!" everyone exclaimed. They saw an eagle with their binoculars! "What a special day!", Mrs. Blackall announced as two honking Canadian Geese flew above Mrs. Glynn's class. Third grade students pointed up in the

air and awed in excitement as they peered through their binoculars at the wild birds. Every third grade class from Appleview Elementary was given the opportunity to classify different types of birds and observe their habitats with the guidance of Mrs. Blackall. Another special surprise was that each class was able to plant a Michigan native tree on a popular

Sparta community trail near the Sports Complex. Students learned the importance of Michigan native plants and trees and how they help nurture different organisms, especially birds and aid in their survival. This was a wonderful opportunity to not only get outside, but understand how science works right in our own backyard.



SEF Celebrates with You

June is a month of transitions and celebrations for families and communities. Sparta Education Foundation has much to celebrate this year.

First, SEF congratulates all the graduating seniors. We are proud of you and we look forward to seeing how you will make an impact on your community and the world! Specifically, we are pleased to announce the recipients of SEF-managed scholarships to six well-deserving seniors of the SHS Class of 2023.

The L. Edmond Eary Jr. MD and Athena S. Eary Scholarship for valedictorian: Emma Janesak

The L. Edmond Eary Jr. MD and Athena S. Eary Scholarship for salutatorian: Emalyn Benham

The Catherine Richmond Health Sciences Scholarship: Emanuel Cruz

The Lynn McFall Reed Schaner Education Scholarship: Nora DeLong

The Debby Tramper Helping Profession Scholarship: Madyson Oudbier

The Debby Tramper Trades Scholarship: Ethan Moberly

Congratulations to each of you for a job well done, and best wishes as you further your education and follow your dreams!

While we are congratulating our graduating scholars, we want to be sure to thank all of our community donors who make the scholarships and classroom grants possible. Without the generous financial support of



our contributors, SEF would not be able to provide funds for innovative learning opportunities. Your investment in the students of Sparta is an investment in the future of Sparta. One of our goals is to increase our financial impact. We are currently exploring the prospect for a major donor matching funds opportunity which will allow both the business community and individual donors to partner with us and double the impact of their financial gifts. Stay tuned! Exciting times ahead!

There are two additional "graduates" that SEF would like to recognize - our retiring board members. Ron Hoover has faithfully served as treasurer. His expertise has helped build the solid base that SEF enjoys today. Martha Markham has used her talents in many roles; most visibly as coordinating RetroBowl for many years, and providing annual skits for the staff. We will miss her wit and wisdom at our general meetings. We are thrilled that she plans to continue serving as an associate

member of SEF. The commitment and dedication of these two have made an impact not only on the students of Sparta, but also the SEF itself, and we thank them.

The last celebration I'd like to mention is the planned expansion of volunteer and fundraising opportunities. The SEF is very excited about connecting with the community in a number of ways. Beginning in July, there will be three levels of volunteering: general volunteer, associate membership, and board of directors. For information about how you can get involved, go to our website www.spartaschools.org/sef or stop by and see us at any Sparta Summer Events.

We can't wait to connect with you and celebrate partnering together to make a positive impact on our students and community for years to come!

LeAnn Kitson,
Sparta Education
Foundation President



Kindergarten Field Trip to John Ball Zoo

On May 4th all 9 of our kindergarten classes took a field trip to John Ball Zoo. We had a beautiful day that allowed us to explore the zoo. We were able to watch and learn about a variety of mammals, birds, amphibians, fish, and invertebrates. Some of the new animals John Ball Zoo had available for our kids to see were a sloth, a snow leopard, two eagles, and two coati. We spent the majority of the day at the zoo and got to have picnic lunches with our classmates. We even had the ability to provide tickets for our parent chaperones so they were able to create some lasting memories with their kids. All of the children loved the time they were able to spend at the zoo and still bring it up from time to time!





BELL RINGER

Fifth-grade students experienced their first taste of university life



A field trip to Grand Valley State University introduced them to amazing new technology, a beautiful college campus, and extensive athletic facilities. Students swam, learned, and toured the college campus on a beautiful May day. Many returned with aspirations of becoming a Laker!



Fifth Graders at Camp Rogers

The weather was beautifully cooperative as fifth-grade boys and girls experienced Camp Roger's amenities of nature! They participated in safe fire starting, team building, and archery while at camp. Upon their return to Appleview, they were taught important lessons regarding online safety. Kent ISD Tech Educators present information about internet safety, etiquette, and precautionary tales of internet presence. In our world, it is important for students to be educated both indoors and outdoors!



Middle School Rain Garden Ditch

Research by Mrs. McKellar's STEM classes prove that only long roots of native plants can clean storm water runoff, and the ditch between the Middle School and Early Childhood Center empties into the Rogue River! So many classes are going to help plant over 5,000 rain garden plants next fall. Fourth and fifth grade classes already removed old stems

of non-native invasive weeds from the banks. The local high school robotics group, "That One Team," cut hard to reach stems and even pulled an old television out of the ditch. The Middle School Rain Garden Ditch will become a beautiful urban natural habitat to observe butterflies and other native species. Thank you to these non-profit groups who are

investing in the lives of our youth and watershed: Sparta Education Foundation, Groundswell of GVSU, Rogue River Partners, Kent Conservation District, Kent County Drain Commission and Wildflowers of Michigan. A special thank you to our school groundskeeping crew for supporting our work.



Spartan Up Day

Fifth-grade students enjoyed a challenge encompassing a variety of stations as they transition to middle school. Spartan Up is a day of collaboration and competition that was created by Mrs. Utter five years ago. Students competed against the dreaded "Captain Kent

Cedarhawk" to rescue Sparty from a physical escape room of 50+ locks and puzzles. Students had a lesson on reducing stress from Rachel Crothers. Deputy Costa ran a station in which he stressed personal safety. Parent volunteers manned the "7 Habits of Successful Spartans" where students played to complete minute to win it games

that were related to the 7 Habits. SHS junior athletes taught our fifth-graders about the 4 "C's" of sportsmanship through some fun games. Students rose to the challenge to "Spartan Up!"





BELL RINGER

Thank you for a great school year!

Dear SMS Parent/Guardian,
On behalf of the staff at Sparta Middle School, I want to thank you for what has proven to be a great school year; filled with many amazing moments, challenges and achievements. I know I speak for our entire staff when I say that Sparta is a very special community, from our students and their families, our staff, our beautiful facilities and the tremendous support we receive from our Board of Education and Sparta Education Foundation. At its core, education is about caring for people and supporting their growth. Thank you to all the members of our learning community for helping us care for our student(s) at SMS! I hope you and your student(s) have a great summer! We are looking forward to seeing our students again in August!
Sincerely,

Brad Wood, Principal
Sparta Middle School

Mark Your Calendar Now...Important Dates/Information for the 23-24 School Year:

SMS 2023 Beginning of School Year Open House...

- **Date:** August 17th (Time TBD)
- **All SMS Students & Families Welcome!**

Student Pictures:

- Student Pictures will be taken at Open House
- Picture Retakes will be September 25th

Student Schedules:

- Student Schedules will be distributed at Open House and released on that same day.

Chromebook Pick-Up:

- Chromebook pick-up will be at the SMS Open House.
- Students who did not pick-up their Chromebook will receive it on the first day of school.

First Day of School

- Thursday, August 21st

Summer Office Hours at SMS:

- June 9th-30th: 8am-3pm, Monday thru Friday
- August 1st-11th: 8am-3pm, Monday thru Thursday
- August 14th-18th: 8am-3pm, Monday thru Friday
- August 21st: First Day of School!



Summer Communications for Middle School Families:

All families who have a student entering the 6th, 7th or 8th grade will be receiving informational "NEWS YOU CAN USE" newsletters over summer. These newsletters will have important information that will help you prepare for a successful start to the 23-24 school year.



23-24 SMS Recommended School Supplies List

2023-2024 SMS Recommended Supply Lists link:

Content Area	Recommended Supplies
English/Language Arts	-A binder with pockets, used only for this class (or a folder with pockets and fasteners for paper) -A notebook for writing, used only for this class -Pencils and pens with blue or black ink -Headphones or earbuds to use with audio text.
Mathematics	A 1.5 inch binder Divider tabs (optional) Spiral notebook or loose-leaf lined paper Pencils Erasers (cap erasers preferred) Ruler and/or Protractor Scientific Calculator A highlighter
Social Studies	3 Ring Binder 2 Spiral Bound Notebooks Pencils/Colored Pencils Highlighters Headphones/Earbuds for school only
Science	1 Inch 3-Ring Binder Spiral Notebook or Loose Leaf Paper Pencils & Colored Pencils Headphones or Earbuds
Art	Pencils/Colored Pencils Markers
Spanish 1 & 2	3 Ring Binder, Earbuds and a writing utensil
Band & Choir	Pencils 1 inch 3-ring binder with pockets and page protectors Instrument (band only)

*Please note it is not a requirement that your son/daughter arrive with these materials on the first day of school. However, if you are able to provide them with these items, it would be greatly appreciated.



Counselor's Corner

In May we continued working on our Social/Emotional health through classroom lessons from the Michigan Model for Health. Pre-K students learned about resolving conflicts. They watched a read aloud entitled Talk and Work it Out and reported about how the friends solved their problems kindly. Kindergarteners watched a read aloud entitled Why Should I Help?, by Claire Lewwelyn. We talked about being helpers at home and in the classroom. Students created helper coupon books to bring home and give to parents. Grade 1 & 2 students continued focusing on making good decisions by gaining self-awareness. All watched another great Rocket Kids video, 'Self-Awareness: 5 Reasons It's Important. Each grade level considered slightly different aspects of self-awareness, and created self-awareness collages. The idea is for them to learn about themselves, and to track how their goals, interests, values, strengths and weaknesses evolve. Please ask your children about these and encourage their practice and growth in these areas.

Consider working to strengthen your children's SEL skills over the summer. SEL (Social Emotional Learning) is an integral part of human development. SEL is the process that helps people develop healthy identities, manage emotions, feel empathy for others, maintain supportive relationships with friends or family members as well as make responsible decisions.

I found a great resource offering suggestions about how to foster these. Check out this link: Summer SEL Family Activities

Students in all grades continue learning about the Zones of Regulation; they identify and manage emotions if uncomfortable. We have talked about how 'regulating' emotions is like dialing in a new radio station if we don't like the one that is playing. Students identify tools to 'dial in new emotions', including taking deep breaths, counting to 10, getting a drink of water, crunchy caterpillar, getting hugs, and more. Consider talking about more ways to manage emotions with your children.

If you would like to learn more about the Zones of Regulation, see this link: Zones of Regulation

Last, we have a Career and College Readiness bulletin board in the hallway near the cafeteria. This features a different Career Pathway each month for 6 months. In May our Career Board featured Natural Resources and Agrisciences. Studies show that if children make connections between what they are learning and the world, they value education more readily, graduate at higher rates, and are able to set post-secondary goals (Kent ISD Career Readiness) Here is our readiness flyer including a link to the State's website: Career and College Readiness Brochure.



Sparta Administration Building

2023 Summer Hours


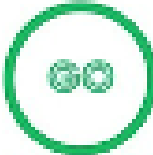


June 12th - August 17th

M-Th: 7:30am - 4pm

Fridays: Closed



ZONES OF REGULATION

 REST AREA <small>BLUE ZONE</small> <small>Low level of arousal</small>	 GO <small>GREEN ZONE</small> <small>Mid level of arousal</small>	 SLOW <small>YELLOW ZONE</small> <small>High level of arousal</small>	 STOP <small>RED ZONE</small> <small>Very high level of arousal</small>
<div style="border: 1px solid blue; padding: 2px;">Calm</div> <div style="border: 1px solid blue; padding: 2px;">Tired</div> <div style="border: 1px solid blue; padding: 2px;">Sad</div> <div style="border: 1px solid blue; padding: 2px;">Disappointed</div> <div style="border: 1px solid blue; padding: 2px;">Shy</div> <div style="border: 1px solid blue; padding: 2px;">Depressed</div> <div style="border: 1px solid blue; padding: 2px;">Angry</div>	<div style="border: 1px solid green; padding: 2px;">Happy</div> <div style="border: 1px solid green; padding: 2px;">Calm</div> <div style="border: 1px solid green; padding: 2px;">Thankful</div> <div style="border: 1px solid green; padding: 2px;">Proud</div> <div style="border: 1px solid green; padding: 2px;">Confident</div> <div style="border: 1px solid green; padding: 2px;">Relaxed</div> <div style="border: 1px solid green; padding: 2px;">Ready to Learn!</div>	<div style="border: 1px solid yellow; padding: 2px;">Calm</div> <div style="border: 1px solid yellow; padding: 2px;">Shy</div> <div style="border: 1px solid yellow; padding: 2px;">Anxious</div> <div style="border: 1px solid yellow; padding: 2px;">Nervous</div> <div style="border: 1px solid yellow; padding: 2px;">Embarrassed</div> <div style="border: 1px solid yellow; padding: 2px;">Overwhelmed</div> <div style="border: 1px solid yellow; padding: 2px;">Confused</div> <div style="border: 1px solid yellow; padding: 2px;">Frenzied</div>	<div style="border: 1px solid red; padding: 2px;">Upset</div> <div style="border: 1px solid red; padding: 2px;">Angry</div> <div style="border: 1px solid red; padding: 2px;">Aggressive</div> <div style="border: 1px solid red; padding: 2px;">Mad</div> <div style="border: 1px solid red; padding: 2px;">Cried</div> <div style="border: 1px solid red; padding: 2px;">Frustrated</div> <div style="border: 1px solid red; padding: 2px;">Out of Control</div>