

The Smyser Sentinel

An ISBE Honor Roll/Spotlight School

An Autonomous Management and Performance School

Welcome Back Students, Parents, Faculty, and Staff

It is with great enthusiasm and excitement that I welcome you back to Smyser Accelerated School. The start of each academic year, is a perfect opportunity to reaffirm high expectations and goals for making this a dynamic and wonderful year.

As always, Smyser School strives to provide high quality educational services to all children through a variety of programs.

The Vision of our school is as follows:

- We, the community of Smyser School, believe that all children can learn and are entitled to an outstanding education rich in opportunities and rewarding experiences. We are committed to providing all children with: a child-centered environment, a love of learning, pride in Smyser School, and preparation for the demands of the 21st Century. Our motto is, Smyser School: A Community of Learners.

The Mission of Our School is as follows:

- Our mission is to make Smyser School a great place to learn by emphasizing the needs of all students (general, gifted, bilingual, and special needs) including social, emotional, and intellection growth through a rich and rewarding literacy and critical thinking curriculum integrating technology and fostering an appreciation for the arts.

The Priority Goals as stated in School Improvement Plan are as follows:

- Goal 1 Reading: To promote literacy by emphasizing reading comprehension, fluency, vocabulary, and writing across the curriculum increasing student achievement in grades pre-K through 8.
- Goal 2 Math: To promote critical thinking, performance based, hands-on mathematics in grades pre-K through 8 so as to increase student achievement. Cross curriculum connections will be made in science and technology.
- Goal 3 Technology: To provide additional support and curriculum integration for students, teachers, parents, and community.

Smyser \$50 Instructional Material Fee

Children in grades K-8 are required to pay a \$50 work book fee. The money is used to purchase consumable instructional materials in language arts, math, social studies, science and other instructional areas. Work books are the sole possession of the child. Please submit your child's payment by Friday, September 18th. Payment can be given directly to your child's teacher or office using cash, cashier's check or money order (made out to Smyser School). Sorry CPS Policy prohibits the acceptance of personal checks. Kindly, place payment in a sealed enveloped labeled Materials Fee along with your child's name and room number. Our funding is limited and this fee is necessary for us to continue providing our children with high quality educational services and materials.

Join Today- Smyser PTO Family Membership

This year we hope to have 100% of our faculty and families join the Smyser Parent Teacher Organization (PTO). This hard working group composed of parents, teachers, and the principal is all about working together to provide the BEST educational environment for our children and to promote open communication between parents, teachers, and administration. Join our team and help us make a difference! Meetings are held once a month following the LSC meeting. You do not have to attend but everyone is always welcome. PTO membership dues are \$3.00 minimum per family (other monetary donations are always welcome). A family membership gets you a free school magnet. Visit our school website at <http://www.smyser.org> for more information.

Smyser Accelerated School

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Chicago, IL 60634

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www.smyser.org

Mr. Travlos, Principal

Mr. Beiza, Assistant Principal

Mr. Kosiek, LSC President

Mrs. Kosiek, PTO President

Attention 2nd-8th Graders- Study Island Comes to Smyser

Our school now has access to a great resource for preparing our kids for the state standardized tests. We have purchased a building license for a web-based program called Study Island. If you have Internet access, your child can access Study Island from home as well as school to prepare for the state assessments. Study Island has increased security features site-wide to provide greater peace of mind. The enclosed sheet provides an overview of the program. We are excited about the potential benefits this program can bring to our students, and we encourage you to take advantage of this opportunity by using Study Island. Please feel free to contact Study Island at 800-419-3191 or support@studyisland.com if you have any questions.

Since the Study Island state assessment program is completely web-based, students can access it from any computer with an Internet connection and a standard web browser. Results from student study sessions are recorded and made available to the teachers. This includes results from sessions completed at home. The program is divided into sections based on subject (math, reading, etc.). Each section is made up of 10 to 25 topics, which contain about 20 to 25 questions each. Most topics are accompanied by a lesson, which includes some brief information about the material covered by the questions in the topics. It is helpful to view the lesson before answering the questions in the topic.

Measures of Academic Progress to be administered in 2009-10

During the month of September children in grades 2-8 will take tests called Measures of Academic Progress™ (MAP). This assessment will replace the Chicago Benchmark Reading and Math Assessments (Learning First). We give students MAP tests to determine your child's instructional level and to measure academic growth throughout the school year, and from year to year in the areas of reading and math. Your child will take the tests on a computer.

MAP tests are unique in that they adapt to be appropriate for your child's level of learning. As a result, each student has the same opportunity to succeed and maintain a positive attitude toward testing. And with MAP tests, we can administer shorter tests and use less class time while still receiving detailed, accurate information about your child's growth.

Each school year, students in grades 2nd through 8th take the tests three times a year. Following each testing period, you will receive a report showing your child's growth.

As we prepare for full implementation of MAP testing in the September you will be invited to attend informational meetings that fully explain the purposes of the tests and how we will use the information obtained to promote your child's learning.

We are truly excited to begin a new era that focuses on every child's individual growth and achievement. **Partnering to help all kids learn**, parents and teachers can have a profound positive effect on the lives of our children. For more information on resources for parents, download the *Parent Toolkit* at www.nwea.org.

10 Ways to Boost School Success

Whether your child is starting preschool or eighth grade, these little strategies can make a huge difference.

1. **Insist on a good nights sleep.**
2. **Check the backpack daily.**
3. **Teach your child to ask for what he or she needs.**
4. **Always go to open house/report card pick-up.**
5. **Focus on manners, social skills, and positive behavior.**
6. **Know the daily school routine.**
7. **Help your child be organized.**
8. **Volunteer whenever you can.**
9. **Read to your child.**
10. **Show you care about school.**

Notice to Parents and Staff Regarding the Asbestos Management Plan Notification

This is to notify you in accordance with Illinois and Federal Asbestos Regulations, that a copy of the Asbestos Management Plan is available at each school during school hours by appointment. Requests to review the Asbestos Management Plan must be made at least 24 hours in advance. Also please be advised that CPS conducts asbestos inspections of all schools every three years. The last inspection was completed in 2007. Asbestos surveillances are conducted every six months.

Order Your Gym Uniforms Today

Smyser School is taking orders for gym uniforms for all ages. Products and prices are as follows:

- Ash (small crest) T-shirt- \$7
- Red (large logo) Sweat Shirt- \$11
- Red Shorts (small logo)- \$10
- Red Sweatpants (Smyser + logo)- \$11

Pre-orders are required. Plenty of stock is available. Order will be filled and delivered to your child's room. Cash, cashiers checks and money orders are accepted. Please no checks!

Welcome New Staff

On behalf of the entire Smyser School community, I would like to extend a warm welcome the following new staff member:

Ms. Coleman, 3rd Shift PreK
Welcome to the Family!

Smyser Homework Policy and Parent Portal

In accordance with CPS policy homework is to be assigned to:

- Provide reinforcement, practice, application, and enrichment of what is taught in class.
- Prepare students for meaningful class participation.
- Develop independent activities beyond the school hours.
- Provide an opportunity for student creativity.
- Foster a closer home-school connection and ongoing parental involvement in the student's education.
- Provide opportunities for the student to gain experience in the utilization of community resources.
- Assist students in achieving the standards for promotion.

Suggested homework allocations per day for teacher directed homework by grade level are as follows:

- K- 15 minutes per day
- Grades 1, 2, 3- 30 minutes per day.
- Grades 4, 5, 6- 45 minutes per day.
- Grades 7 and 8- 90 minutes per day

Please monitor your child's homework daily by checking his or her planner and making sure homework is being completed.

The Parent Portal is a unique web-based tool that allows you to securely view your child's grades and attendance online. You can register to receive e-mail or text notifications when your child is absent or when his or her grades drop below a point you identify. Additionally, you will be able to communicate directly with your child's teachers, enhancing the opportunity for parent-teacher interaction.

You will need your child's CPS ID number as well as your unique school-issued personal identification number (PIN) prior to creating an account. Please contact Mrs. Luczak or Mr. Beiza to learn how to obtain your PIN. To ensure the security of your child's records, PINs will not be issued over the phone or via email under any circumstance.

A direct link to the Parent Connection login page has been added. Please go to the "web links" section on the lower right portion of the Smyser homepage.

Help Keep Our Children Safe

Your assistance is needed in helping keep our children safe. As you are aware Melvina Avenue is One-Way during morning arrival and afternoon dismissal. Due to heavy traffic congestion, I encourage you to walk your children to and from school. If unable to do so, I ask that you adhere to the following:

- Drive slowly.
- Do not double park. The Chicago Police Department will be ticketing automobiles.
- Do not block circular drive. No Parking in the circular drive. Circular drive will be blocked off for afternoon dismissal.
- Yield to school buses.
- Follow school personnel directives.
- Adhere to the posted One-Way and turning traffic

signs.

- Yield to pedestrians and be courteous to other drivers.
- Do not block private driveways or public walkways.
- Refrain from using obscene and immoral gestures and language.
- Cars are not to pull into the parking lot to drop-off/pick-up children.
- There is lots of space south on Melvina and on Berteau to park.

It is everyone's responsibility to keep our children safe and to be positive role models. Please do your part and help others to do the same. Remember, **NO DOUBLE PARKING ON STREET OR DRIVEWAY.**

2009-10 Initiatives at a Glance

- Northwest Evaluation Association- MAP
- Study Island
- Active use of e-tools support teaching, learning, and communication.
- BDHS Cohort PD: Marzano 9, Question Answer Relationships, and Higher Order Thinking Skills professional development.
- Summer Reading: What Successful Teachers Do
- LRE- Least Restrictive Environment
- After School All-Stars Elite Programs.
- Community Partnerships

- Establishment of Leadership, Technology, Special Education, Bilingual Education, Curriculum, and School Spirit Committees.
- New Adoptions and Purchases:
 - Zaner-Bloser Handwriting Grade 5
 - Corrective Reading Program Grade 6
 - Study Island
 - ELL Resources
 - Purchase of Dell Computers
 - NCLB Parent Workshops.
 - Increased Parental Involvement
- PTO Special Events.
- Assessments: DIBELS; MAP; ACCESS; NAEP; ISAT.

Smyser School Dress Code

Appropriate school dress promotes a positive school climate. Dress and grooming should not disrupt the teaching or learning process. Parents are to make sure that their child complies with this policy. Detentions will be given to students who do not comply with these uniform dress code policy requirements:

1. Pants/Skirts must be dark navy blue or black. Dark gray or charcoal colors are not acceptable.
2. No jeans/denim or sweat pants. Pants/Skirts that are "jean look-alikes" are not acceptable. Pants must be belted at the waist. Clothing should not be too loose or too tight.
3. Shirts/Blouses must be light blue (not baby blue) or white and have a collar. Polo shirts are acceptable. No navy or royal blue. All shirts must have a collar.
4. Types of shoes are left to the discretion of parents and children. For safety and security reasons, students are strongly discouraged from wearing high heels, sandals or open toe shoes.
5. Sweaters and solid colored sweatshirts must be red, white, navy or black. No logos on any sweatshirt except the Smyser logo. Hooded sweatshirts are not allowed.
6. From May 15 through September 30, students will have the option of wearing knee length dark blue or black shorts. Jean/denim shorts are not acceptable. Shorts should not be loose or tight.
7. All clothing must be free of printing, except for the Smyser School logo.
8. Uniforms should be worn to field trips as you are representing the school.

Meal Information

In an effort to increase efficiency and reduce paper usage, CPS has introduced a Household Lunch Application. Only 1 meal application should be returned to each school of attendance. If you have any questions contact the Main Office. Lunch forms will be distributed the first day of school. It is imperative that every family submit a completed form. School funding and supplemental resources are granted to our school based on data gathered from these forms. Fee free to call the office if you have any questions.

In an effort to expedite meal service and increase instructional time, we are now able to accept payment for meals in advance. Students are to drop-off payments to Ms. Ticarat, Lunchroom Manager or designee from 8:30-9:15 AM outside of the cafeteria. Teachers are no longer be accepting money in the morning. Also, pre-payment will be accepted in cash only. You are encouraged to pay for at least 10 meals at a time. This is 2 weeks worth of meals. The prices for the 2009-2010 school year are as follows:

- Full price student breakfast \$1.50
- Full price student lunch \$1.85
- Reduced price student breakfast \$0.30
- Reduced priced lunch is \$0.40
- Milk only is \$0.35.

Please enclose payment for your student's meal in a re-sealable baggie or envelope with the following information included:

- Student name
- Student homeroom
- Amount enclosed
- Meal (breakfast and/or lunch)
- Date range of meals

If your student decides not to eat a school meal for which you have already made payment, a credit will carry to the next unpaid service day. Students receiving free breakfast/lunch will are not affected. If you have any questions, please contact our Lunchroom Manager or the Main Office.

Calendar Reminders

HOLIDAYS- School Closed

Labor Day	September 8
Columbus Day	October 12
Veterans Day	November 11
Thanksgiving	November 26-27
M.L. King's B-Day	January 18
Lincoln's B-Day	February 12
President's Day	February 15
Pulaski B-Day	March 1
Memorial Day	May 31

VACATION DAYS- School Closed

Winter Vacation	12/21-1/1
Spring Vacation	3/29-4/2
Summer Vacation	6/28

NON-ATTENDANCE DAYS

<i>Professional Development/Institute Days-</i>
September 25
October 23
November 6
December 4
January 29
February 11
April 9
June 17

REPORT CARD PICK-UP-

November 11 and April 21

**Join Us for Our
Annual
Family Night
Wednesday,
September 16th
5:00-7:00 PM**