



## **Sumner County Schools News**

### **Committed and Focused on Growing Learners**

### **School Year 2016-17, Issue 5**

The National Association for Family, School, and Community Engagement (NAFSCE) endorses the following family engagement definition developed in 2010 by the National Family, School, and Community Engagement Working Group (now known as the NAFSCE Policy Council):

- Family engagement is a shared responsibility in which schools and other community agencies and organizations are committed to reaching out to engage families in meaningful ways and in which families are committed to actively supporting their children's learning and development.
- Family engagement is continuous across a child's life and entails enduring commitment but changing parent roles as children mature into young adulthood.
- Effective family engagement cuts across and reinforces learning in the multiple settings where children learn—at home, in pre-K programs, in school, in before/after school programs, in extracurricular activities, and in the community.

Sumner County Schools (SCS) concurs with these beliefs and is dedicated to engaging families in student achievement to promote the following goals:

- ♦ Students master the Tennessee academic standards evidenced by grades, test scores, and the earning of high school credits.
- ♦ Students attend school regularly.
- ♦ Students develop effective social skills, show appropriate behavior, and adapt well to school.
- ♦ Students graduate and be prepared for college or career.

These beliefs align with the mission of SCS, which is . . . "Sumner County Schools commits to growing learners who are college and career ready through quality instruction, effective use of resources, building a collaborative culture, and strong leadership." A strong school and family partnership will accomplish this mission!

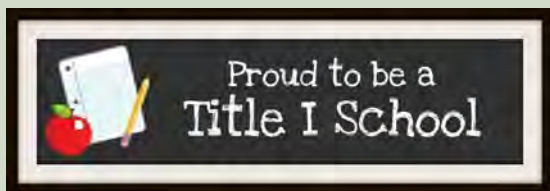
"Unity is strength...  
when there is  
teamwork and collaboration,  
wonderful things  
can be achieved."  
- Mattie J.T. Stepanek

## Family Engagement At Westmoreland Elementary

Student achievement is the ultimate goal for teacher instruction at Westmoreland Elementary School (WES). Research shows that parent involvement plays a large role in student success in the classroom. Student achievement is greater in many areas, such as standardized test scores and academic grades, in schools where parents/guardians are involved. Therefore, WES takes advantage of every opportunity to engage families in students' learning.

This year, one event that was hosted at WES was the annual Title I parent meeting. All parents/guardians were invited to attend. WES students in third, fourth, and fifth grades performed a music program in the gym. After the program, students remained in the gym for popcorn and a movie while parents moved to the cafeteria for a Title I meeting. The meeting allowed parents to learn about the school-wide Title I program. Some information that was shared was that Title I funds are used to add technology devices to the WES computer lab, to place projectors in classrooms, and to assist with learning activities at a family-centered fall festival. WES lead educator, Mrs. Brooks, discussed the new standards-based report cards and computer programs that are available for student use at home. After the meeting, WES teachers distributed lanyards to the families in attendance. The lanyards provided log-in information to access the computer programs discussed.

Before leaving the school, parents/guardians were invited to visit the Scholastic Book Fair to purchase quality literature for their children. Many families attended the annual Title I meeting. WES believes that useful information to engage families in their children's education was gained!



## Millersville Elementary and Families Hand-in-Hand for Learning



Each school year, Millersville Elementary School (MES) schedules several family engagement nights to provide hands-on opportunities for families to learn alongside their children. During MES Open House in August, teachers informed parents and guardians of the essential learning requirements for students to succeed in their grade levels. Then, as the year progressed, MES shared student successes and encouraged families to engage in their children's academic achievement.

In November, MES hosted one of its most popular family involvement nights. This was the third annual MES Reading Under the Stars Family Night. Different grade levels sponsored a themed tent that provided books for families to read together and activities for family participation. When a family had visited all the tents for the evening, a small prize was awarded to the group. There were also writing activities, iPad games, and door prizes that aligned with the different themed tents. This night allowed parents/guardians to engage in the importance of reading with their child.



When students returned for the second semester, MES hosted a Mid-Year Boost Night. This event allowed families to engage in interactive learning activities and to create make-and-take games that were aligned to grade-level academic standards. Families also received information and training on the benefits and utilization of several of the technology programs that students use daily at school.



On May 2nd, MES had its final parent involvement night. It hosted a science night in conjunction with the Nashville Adventure Science Center. Students and families had the opportunity to work together to complete projects at science stations. The stations allowed families to dive into varied grade-level science topics and ideas. Families also had the opportunity to observe science projects that are part of the K-5 curriculum for MES students.





## Station Camp Elementary Creates a Sense of Community

The 2017 Fun Run at Station Camp Elementary School (SCE) was a huge success for all involved. The event was held in March in the school gymnasium. There were 43-plus classrooms, over 900 students, numerous parents/guardians, and SCE faculty and staff who collaborated to make the run happen.

The SCE Fun Run brought family, students, and school together in a way that promoted positivity, student achievement, student involvement, and overall student confidence in their abilities to thrive in a fun environment. Every student had the opportunity to be part of the Fun Run and was included in daily pep rallies which lead up to the grand finale. Each pep rally generated excitement while encouraging everyone to do his/her best to reach the run's goal.



The school goal was to assist students in building self-confidence and satisfaction in a job well-done by raising money to support school needs. SCE wanted every student to walk away from the run with the knowledge that all SCE stakeholders -student or adult- did their bests to be inclusive and to make a difference in the school.

When the SCE Fun Run for 2017 was finished, it raised roughly \$39,000. The funds will be used to build an outdoor classroom for all students to enjoy and will help update some of the school technology. Everyone involved shared that the event created a sense of community and pride in the school.



## Family Engagement at Indian Lake Elementary

Indian Lake Elementary School (ILE) feels the families and community that feed the school are a huge piece of what makes them ILE. These stakeholders play a tremendous part in fundraising and supporting students. That is why, whenever the school, faculty, and staff can support and engage the family, they will!

Last fall, ILE families had an opportunity to attend a Tennessee Titans game. Those attending had the opportunity to go on the field. What a great time for the community!



ILE students have been busy with several projects this semester. A Brownie troop planted flowers in the school garden. Some students presented STEM projects, and others shared recycled art projects at Hendersonville City Hall for Earth Day.



Recently, ILE third grade students focused on reading achievement. The collaboration that occurred helped stress the importance of reading both at home and at school. This amazing group

read 23,054,001 words, which earned them shirts to represent that "Today's readers are tomorrow's leaders."



Another ILE event that families look forward to each year is the related arts night. ILE families join in celebrating

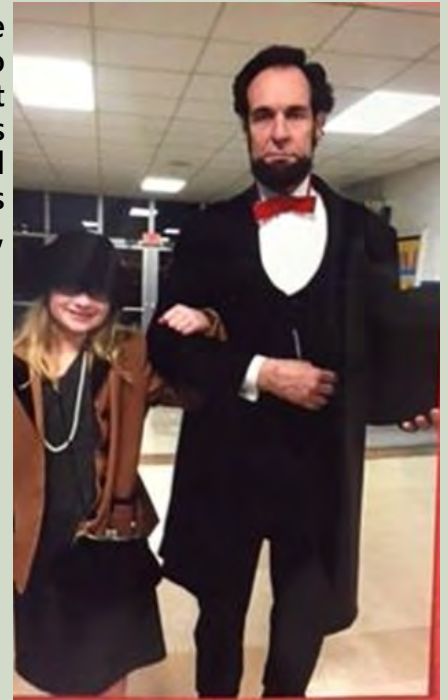
students' work in the related arts areas for the year. Students are excited to display the learning that has taken place in these areas. So, at the end of another terrific year, ILE wants to thank all of its families for generating pride in ILE!





## Gene Brown Elementary meets Mr. Abraham Lincoln

This spring, Gene Brown Elementary School (GBE) Bobcats were very lucky to get to meet Mr. Abraham Lincoln! During his visit to the school, families and students learned about his life and that he was the 16<sup>th</sup> president. Mr. Lincoln shared stories from his childhood, information about his family, and the hopes and dreams he had for the country. After he visited with the Bobcats and their families, he presented them with the best treat of all, The Gettysburg Address in his own words!



However, the trip into the past didn't end there! To welcome Mr. Lincoln to the school, GBE fifth grade students created their very first GBE Wax Museum. The museum included other influential people from the nation's past too.

Visitors for the event traveled GBE's version of a timeline and stopped often to bring one of the wax museum's special guests to life. Historical figures from Albert Einstein to Mohammed Ali and Amelia Earhart to Helen Keller were present to share information about their lives.



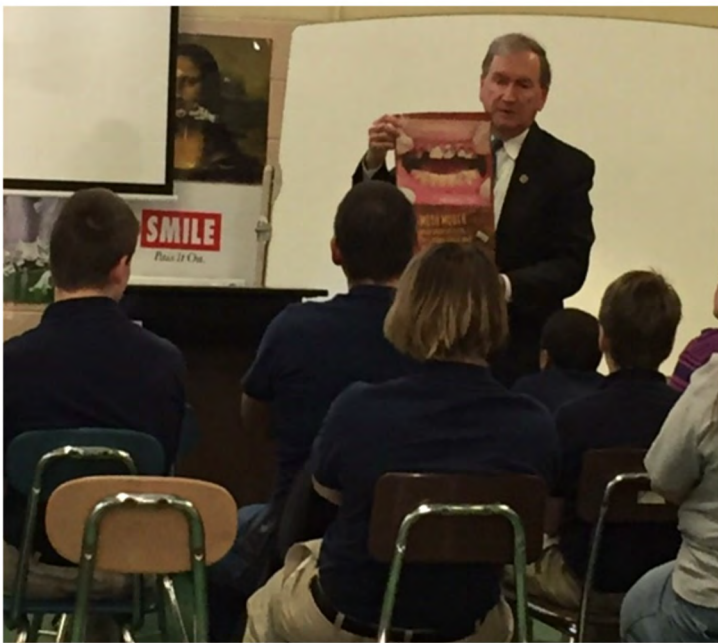
## Face It at R.T. Fisher Alternative

The Sumner County Board of Education (SCBOE) sponsors the FACE IT program for students to have the opportunity to recognize the benefits of living without alcohol, tobacco, and drugs. A portion of this program has students participate in a personal assessment of their own views and experiences relating to alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use. Self-reflection is a key component in making the life changes needed for a student to lead a healthy lifestyle.

For students who have violated SCBOE drugs, alcohol, or weapons policies (zero-tolerance), FACE IT provides an opportunity for families and students to work together to address and cease these behaviors. FACE IT is an expectation at R. T. Fisher Alternative School (RTF) for students with these types of violations.

Participation in the FACE IT program, which includes both the RTF student and family members, provides tools for the families to encourage alternatives and coping skills to help youth avoid and stop using alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs. The students and families also learn about the consequences and effects on the body and relationships if alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs are used. Incidents of alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use and possession at school can be eliminated through the practice and application of positive life skills by the student and the enhancement of parenting skills for the families. These skills will help families

develop and provide clear no alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use rules for their children. FACE IT is an effective program used at RTF to support needs and improve communication for students and families.



*Pictured: Honorable Ray Whitley, Sumner County District Attorney General, speaks to RTF students and family members about the affect illegal drugs might have on their futures.*

*Pictured: RTF library where students may learn more about life skills by reading available materials.*





## Community Matters at White House Middle

### Parent Night with the Principal

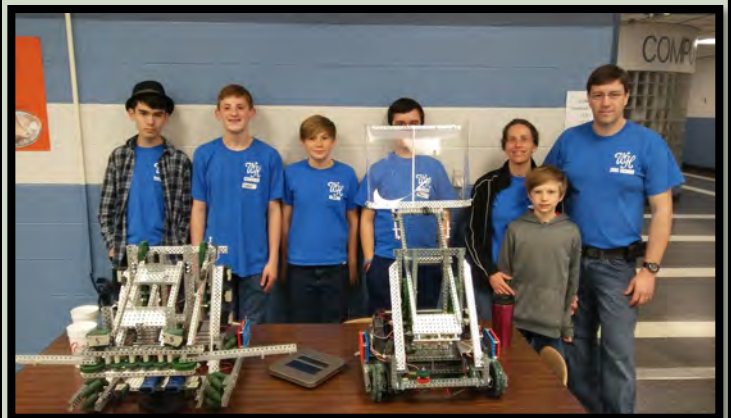
This school year, parents and guardians of White House Middle School (WHMS) students had the opportunity to meet with Principal Mills and faculty members to learn about events, clubs, and other school operations in an informal setting.

In the last meeting of the year, Mr. Mills and WHMS guidance counselors discussed state testing and answered questions from families regarding the process. The parent nights have been well-received, and WHMS is looking forward to continuing them next year.



### Community Pancake Breakfast

The cafeteria staff at WHMS sponsored a pancake breakfast in April. The breakfast was a fundraiser for the nutrition program and WHMS student clubs. WHMS student clubs helped with the breakfast and provided pictures and information about each organization. It was a well-attended and fun community event!



### End of the Year Events

Events that occur as WHMS ends its school year are the National Junior Honor Society induction ceremony, a school tour for incoming fifth graders, a school carnival, and the WHMS Awards Night which is a time to congratulate all WHMS students for their hard work and achievements. It has been a great year for the school!! Way to go, WHMS!!



## Guest Speaker Brings World History to Life at Portland West Middle



**Mr. Aliradi**

**Parent Guest Speaker**

**M**r. Aliradi, parent of two Portland West Middle School (PWMS) students, brought history to life for some very lucky seventh grade students in Mrs. Richey's class recently. He volunteered his time to share his life experiences with students who were learning about different cultures and religions.

Mr. Aliradi is an Iranian refugee who fled to Germany. He received an education there and in other countries. Eventually, he immigrated to the United States of America where he married. Currently, Mr. Aliradi uses his fluency in the Arabic language to serve as a translator for the U.S. Army.

As he shared his life story, Mr. Aliradi spoke about Iranian customs, food, and life in general. He also talked about his job as a translator, why he chose to leave his birth country, and why he is no longer a Muslim. He even taught the students to say "hello" in Arabic!

The seventh graders asked great questions of Mr. Aliradi. Some of those questions were:

Q: What is your favorite American food?

A. *Hamburgers*

Q: Do you miss your family?

A. *Yes. But I see them when I travel for work.*

Q: What did you think of America when you got here?

A. *Wow! I can't believe how amazing it is!*

Q: What do you think about the fighting in the Middle East?

A. *The guerilla warfare there is terrible, and the people need help.*

Working with parents/guardians, such as Mr. Aliradi, creates open lines of communication and great first-hand learning opportunities for the students at PWMS. Thanks to Mrs. Richey and Mr. Aliradi for creating this fun and informative event!

## Portland East Middle March Madness: Sports and Reading Combine



How does a school encourage reading, incorporate physical activity, involve families, and raise money all at the same time? Just ask Sarah Combs, a teacher at Portland East Middle School (PEMS). During the month of March, Ms. Combs helped organize PEMS to do all of these things while taking advantage of the mayhem brought about by college basketball's climatic ending that our nation lovingly refers to as March Madness.

The fundraiser was titled *East March Madness: Read, Move, Reward*. For the first two weeks of March, PEMS students were challenged to set a *Read and Move* goal. Then, students asked friends and families to sponsor their work toward the completion of that goal. Students could achieve eight levels based on the number of minutes they read, moved, and received donations. Each level earned a student a colored wristband. During morning announcements at PEMS, a wristband color would be announced, and students with that color received a prize (*Reward*). The higher the level that students achieved, the better chance of a cool prize in the morning!

Top level earners were entered into a drawing for a pair of Beats headphones, a coveted item to anyone between the ages of 12 and 25. Timothy Milirones was the recipient of this awesome prize! While the *Read, Move, Reward* fundraiser produced fewer monetary benefits than other fundraisers have, PEMS still hopes to make it an annual event. The PEMS community knows that some things, such as physical activity and family involvement, are worth more than money.



## Building Community & Engaging Families at Rucker-Stewart Middle

Rucker-Stewart Middle School (RSMS) families, faculty, staff, and community members collaborate to create an atmosphere of united support for the students. This year, they joined together to accomplish several events. One event was the spring musical which was a huge success due to the RSMS group's commitment to assist. Families volunteered to create costumes, find donations, make set designs, do ticket sales, and much more. In this effort, RSMS had the opportunity to share the talents of its students while engaging families and community.

At another event, RSMS families pulled together to provide and serve ice cream to students as a reward for their hard work and positive behavior. This was one of the many ways that students are encouraged to be the best that they can be at RSMS. Rewarding positive efforts creates pride in the community and supports good character and achievement.



Another family and community support for the RSMS Rams this year was the Daughters of the American Revolution. The organization teamed with teachers and parents to present RSMS with a beautiful portrait of George Washington that will hang in the library for students to enjoy. The portrait represents the perseverance that George Washington showed throughout history and reminds students to work hard, to reach for the stars, and to never give up.

RSMS believes family engagement directly impacts student achievement and supports success, not only for students, but for educators and the school. Feedback from families, as well as strong communication, helps to determine the school's effectiveness as a community. RSMS families enjoy being involved in their child's education and learning, and students enjoy the support and feeling of belonging to a strong, caring school community.



## Portland High Knows Family Engagement Impacts Student Achievement

*A New Wave of Evidence: The Impact of School, Family, & Community Connections on Student Achievement* written by Anne T. Henderson and Karen L. Mapp was published in 2002 by the National Center for Family and Community Connections with Schools. The authors state, "When schools, families, and community groups work together to support learning, children tend to do better in school, stay in school longer, and like school more." Also, Henderson and Mapp's research results support other studies conducted around the country finding that:

Many studies found that students with involved parents, no matter what their income or background, were more likely to:

- Earn higher grades and test scores and enroll in higher-level programs
- Be promoted, pass their classes, and earn credits
- Attend school regularly
- Have better social skills, show improved behavior, and adapt well to school
- Graduate and go on to post-secondary education

Keeping the families of students involved and engaged is a high priority at Portland High School (PHS) because the school sees firsthand how significantly family engagement impacts student achievement. When students see that there are people who believe in them, they have more motivation to succeed. That is why at PHS, the faculty, staff, and administration do their bests to keep the family and community involved with what is happening at school.

As part of the PHS commitment to family engagement, the school started a quarterly email newsletter, *The Panther Parent*. This newsletter is filled with numerous pictures of students and a variety of events as its focus. *The Panther Parent* also strives to highlight information about the activities that students can be involved in or special recognition for accomplishments like college acceptance. The newsletter has been very well received with lots of beneficial feedback from stakeholders.

Another way that PHS has made intentional efforts to involve the families of students is through social media. PHS clubs and sports teams, along with Principal David Woods, have either Facebook, Instagram, and/or Twitter pages that families and students can connect with to keep up-to-date on what is occurring at PHS. Most recently, a Panther Parent Facebook page was created to specifically target families. The parent Facebook page has created another great PHS communication tool!





## Gallatin High Preps Students, Parents, and Guardians



This semester, Gallatin High School (GHS) hosted a GHS Freshman Orientation Night. Over 160 students and their parents or guardians attended. The event began in the GHS theatre where the participants observed a presentation. Then, Dr. Becker, GHS Principal, explained the registration process to the group. Afterward, the families moved to the cafeteria to meet with guidance counselors who made registration appointments for the incoming freshman.

Several school club members were present to provide a taste of what high school has to offer to the new students. Clubs represented were FFA, HOSA, cheer squad, dance team, NJROTC, chorus, and band. To add to the fun for students, there was even a photo booth in which to record the special memories. Stakeholders shared that Freshman Orientation Night was a definite success!





SCS Kindergarten Registration 2017



**Kindergarten Class of 2017-18/Senior Class of 2029-30!**



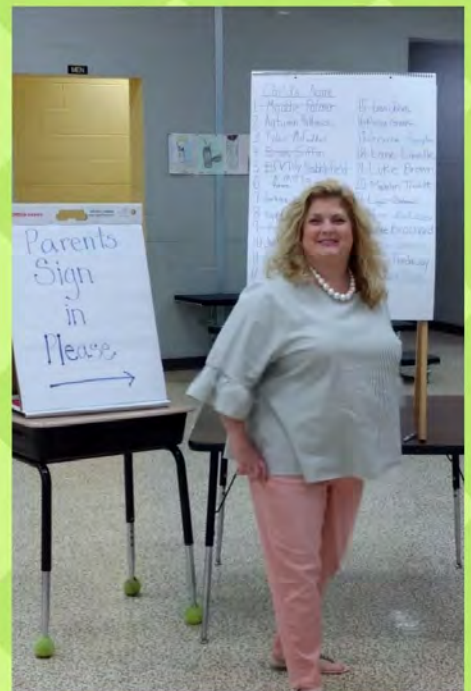
## SCS Kindergarten Registration 2017



*Together, may we give our children the roots to grow and the wings to fly.*



## SCS Kindergarten Registration 2017



**"Every accomplishment starts with the decision to try."—John F. Kennedy**



## SCS Kindergarten Registration 2017



"You're off to great places. Today is your day! Your mountain is waiting, so get on your way."--Dr. Seuss



## SCS Kindergarten Registration 2017



*"Education is the kindling of a flame, not the filling of a vessel." – Socrates*



## SCS Kindergarten Registration 2017



**“Intelligence plus character—that is the goal of true education.”—Martin Luther King, Jr.**



## SCS Kindergarten Registration 2017



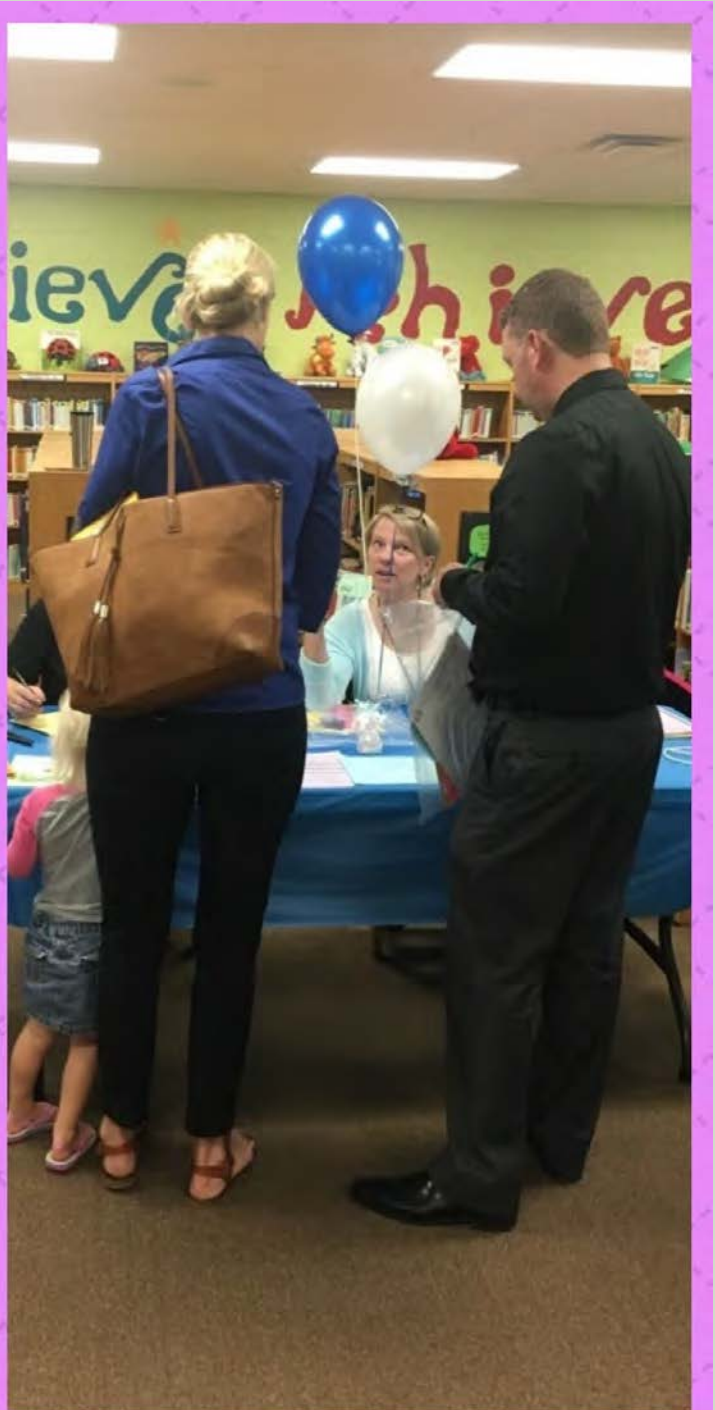
*"The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams."—Eleanor Roosevelt*







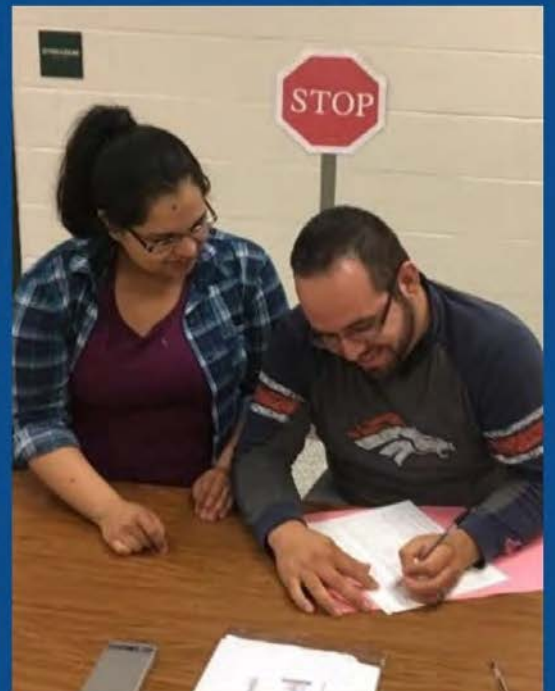
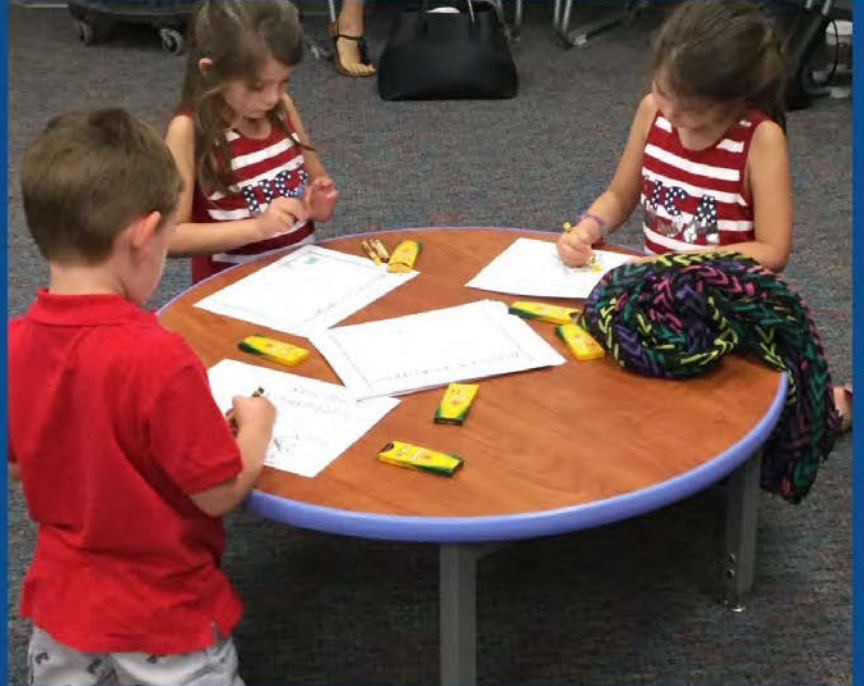
## SCS Kindergarten Registration 2017



“A book is a gift you can open again and again.”—Garrison Keillor



## SCS Kindergarten Registration 2017



**“Whatever you are, be a good one!”—Abraham Lincoln**



## SCS Kindergarten Registration 2017



**"How wonderful it is that nobody need wait a single moment before starting to improve the world."—Anne Frank**



## SCS Kindergarten Registration 2017



"Always believe that something wonderful is about to happen."-Dr. Sukhraj Dhillon