

Hello Samantha Smith Families,

We are excited for another successful year here at Smith! Many of your families are familiar with our school community, but being a growing school, we are welcoming many who are new to our school.

As a school community, we believe in "Success, Care, and Respect for All Learners." All students will have the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to be successful now and in the future. As adult members of the Samantha Smith Learning Community, we accept the charge to do everything in our power to ensure that students will be taught, cared for, and respected each and every day by school staff, parents and the community.

This will be my eighth year as the Principal of Samantha Smith Elementary. When I was first appointed, our school was transitioning from K-6 to K-5. One thing that has not changed, even before my time here is the commitment of our staff. Our teachers care about all of our students. In every decision we make, we always ask ourselves, "What is best for kids?" I am thankful each day to work with such talented teachers and staff. We are also lucky to have supportive parents. I would highly encourage you to join our PTSA (Parent Teacher Student Association). This group works closely with me to ensure our students get the best educational experience.

On a personal note, I have been in education for thirteen years. I started at Washington State University (Go Cougs!). I was a teacher before moving into administration. I love working with kids. This is my passion. In the past 5 years, our school community has watched me also step into motherhood. I have two girls at home, Kennedy who is almost five and Pierce who is almost three. I am thankful every day for my small wonders at home. They have taught me so much more about my role as a principal and as a partner in your child's education.

As mentioned before, we are excited for another great year. Here are some dates for you to remember:

Back to Business: Wednesday, August 29th 5:00-7:30. (You will want to attend this night. You can get all of your back to school paperwork done and *this is where you are given your child's classroom teacher assignment.*)

Meet and Greet: Thursday, August 30th K-2nd (includes 2/3 Quest) 2:00-2:30 and 3-5 (includes 4/5 Quest) 2:30-3:00. Come meet your child's teacher and see the classroom. *Children attend.

Curriculum Night(s): *Children do not attend.

K-1 Thursday, August 30th 6:00-7:00 (Kinder parents start in the library and 1st grade families head to the classroom)

2-5 (includes all Quest) Thursday, September 13th 2nd-3rd 5:30-6:10 and 4th- 5th 6:35-7:15

As our school is growing and changing, we have experienced some issues with our current schedule. Last year we convened a committee to create a new schedule that will ensure we are contractually compliant, create solid blocks of instruction time with fewer transitions, passing times between specialists and lunches, and balanced breaks throughout the day. One of the changes to the schedule is that lunch will now be before lunch recess. Another change is that we are moving from three recesses a day to two. Students will now receive fifty recess minutes a day; a total reduction of five minutes.

The safety and security of students is a top priority of our school and district. Over the past year, our superintendent and her team have communicated the district's ongoing efforts to ensure Lake Washington schools are safe and positive places for students to learn. To review information about the district's ongoing safety efforts please visit the [district's safety webpage](#).

One of the new safety enhancements is the implementation over the summer of Entry Control Systems at all schools in the district. These controls allow schools to keep all exterior doors locked and will require all visitors to use a video call system to request access. These types of systems are similar to how visitors gain access at many

apartments or condominiums that keep all entry doors locked. The district installed our system at Smith in July. The goal of the system is to:

1. Maintain control of access to the building interior, and
2. Maintain knowledge of persons entering the building interior.

More detailed instructions will be sent to you as we roll out this system at the start of the school year.

Please note that our start and end times have changed for the upcoming school year: school starts 8:50 and ends 3:20 (Wednesdays school ends at 1:50).

Sincerely,

Mrs. Warner

Principal- Samantha Smith Elementary