



# CUB REPORTER

Cub Reporter Edited By  
Simla Journalism Dept

Veterans Day 07

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The Boys Basketball team recognized Tatum Kocerha for being the 2025 Player of the Year at the first home game of the year! ▼



HIGH SCHOOL BASKETBALL IS HERE!!



## UPCOMING EVENTS

**February 5**  
5th Grade Field Trip to  
Challenger Space Center

**February 13**  
Regional Wrestling  
Elementary Valentines Parties  
True Sport Games

**February 19**  
State Wrestling @ Ball Arena  
Early Dismissal  
Parent/Teacher Conferences

**February 10**  
FBLA District Conference

**February 14**  
Valentines Day

**February 24**  
Read Across America

**February 11**  
Class/Group Pictures  
All School Valentines Shoot

**February 16**  
Monday School Today

**February 28**  
Father/Daughter Dance





Elementary Matchwits has begun and the Bearcubs are making waves! Congrats on your 3rd place finish!



The 4th grade boys won the championship in the league tournament on Sunday. Congrats boys and coaches!

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# TUCKER TIDBITS FOR ELEMENTARY

## KATHY TUCKER ELEMENTARY



5th/6th Girls Basketball Team hanging out between games during the 5/6th Tournament. 5/6th Girls were runners ups this year and their improvement was off the charts! Great job Bearcubs!

The month of February is best known for Valentine's Day and is celebrated by sending cards and goodies to those who are special in your life. Take the time to let those who surround you know how much you appreciate them!

### WRITING MONTH

January was writing month with students being assigned various writing activities. Did you know that writing provides children an avenue to freely express their thoughts and feelings? By putting their emotions into words, children can better understand and process them. Writing also enhances critical thinking and promotes problem solving.

In addition to the benefits mentioned above, all writing month participants who turned in their calendars on time received a snack, prize, and an extra recess. Thanks to everyone who participated!



### ELEMENTARY MATCHWITS IS BACK!!!

Our elementary Matchwits team, comprised of fourth and fifth graders, will be competing this year against other schools. They are being led by Mrs. Townley and Miss Lane. We are excited to hear about their successes this year.

### PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES

Second semester Parent/Teacher Conferences will be held on February 19th from 3 to 8 pm. School will be dismissed at 1:30 pm on that day, and buses will bring students home at that time. Please plan to attend and discuss your child's achievement with his/her teacher. Extensive research proves that students achieve more in school when their parents are involved in their education. So... the more involved, the more successful your child will become.

### CUBS DEN

The January theme was "Goal Setting". Fifth grade leaders showed a short video and then discussed the importance of setting goals. Mrs. Hoops then followed up with each class to reemphasize how important goals are. Thank you, Mrs. Stanko and Mrs. Townley helping our fifth graders be leaders.

## FEBRUARY STUDENT OF THE MONTH



### Our February Student of the Month is Tristan Pfefferkorn!

His teacher, Mrs. Smith, nominated him due to his "consistent effort and impressive growth! Tristan has shown remarkable growth across all subjects since the start of the year! His dedication and effort in class are clearly paying off. Another reason is Tristan's willingness to help and his consistently positive, upbeat behavior." Thanks, Tristan, for being such a great Bearcub!

## TRUE SPORT GAMES

Our high school True Sport Athletes, sponsored by Mrs. Montague, will be hosting our annual True Sport Games for elementary and junior high students on Friday, February 13, 2026. It is rumored that U.S. Olympic Athletes will also be in attendance. This is sure to be a memorable event!



## VALENTINES DAY PARTIES

Valentine's Day Parties are just around the corner! All grades, 1st-5th grade, will have their parties on February 13 at 3 p.m. In preschool, parties will be held on Thursday, February 12th. Thank you to all parents for providing goodies and treats!



## ACCOUNTABILITY COMMITTEE

Our February meeting will take place on February 11, 2026, at 3 p.m., in the library. Parents and community members, thank you for your continued support and involvement on this committee. If you have a desire to become more involved in your child's school, come and volunteer your time on our Accountability team!



## WE NEED YOUR HELP!

We need YOUR help! In an effort to ensure student safety, students are not allowed to stay after school unsupervised. If they are at school, then they must be with a parent or staff member. This includes staying after school for ballgames or basketball practice.

## MONDAY SCHOOL

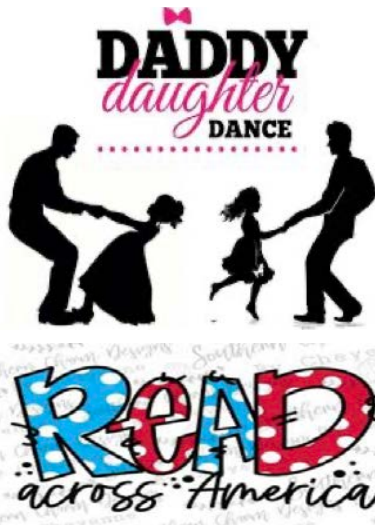
Remember...School on Monday, February 16th. No school on Friday, February 20th.



## DADDY DAUGHTER DANCE

Big Sandy Elementary will be hosting a...Daddy daughter dance on February 28, 2026.

Information will be sent home soon. Make plans to attend for a memorable night!



## READ ACROSS AMERICA

Big Sandy Elementary will, once again, celebrate National Read Across America by having various reading-related activities for the whole week beginning on Monday, March 2nd and end on Thursday, March 5th. This annual reading event motivates and encourages all children to celebrate reading. Each day will have a different theme and honor different books. The themes are as follows:

### Tuesday-Who Am I?

Dress up as your favorite letter or favorite book character

### Wednesday -Wacky Wednesday

Wear your wackiest socks and/or shoes

### Thursday-Book Madness Day

Dress like your favorite athlete or sport character

### Friday-American Dream Team/ We are America

Be proud to be an American! Wear your favorite patriotic clothes!



If the elementary reaches their collective reading goal of 1000 books during the week, then the week will end with a Dr. Seuss birthday celebration complete with "Minute to Win It" games. It is sure to be a fun learning time for all!

Parents, you can take advantage of this "Read Across America" week and read with your kids at home too! You may not realize it, but research supports the importance of parents reading aloud to their children, no matter what the age of the child. It's fun to take turns reading...get creative. So.....grab a book, cuddle up, and READ!

Would you like to join in the fun with your child and their classmates? We NEED parents to volunteer on Thursday, March 5th to run a "Minute to Win It" game at our Read Across America celebration. This will take place at 3 pm in the cafeteria. If you would like to get involved, please email Mrs. Tucker at ktucker@bigsandy100j.org. Thank you for getting involved!

The **MORE** that you  
**READ**, the **more things**  
you will **KNOW**.  
The **MORE** that you  
**Learn**, the **more places**  
you'll **GO**.

Dr. Seuss

You can find magic  
wherever you look.  
Sit back and relax.  
all you need is a  
**book.**  
--Dr. Seuss



◆ Even when its cold, Bearcubs always have lots of fun at Recess.



# STUDENT OF THE MONTH FEBRUARY: NATHANIEL CAUTHON

**Nathaniel is a good student who is well behaved and keeps to himself. He is in FBLA, various sports like Football and Basketball, he is involved in Industrial Arts, and his friends say he is very kind and uplifting while being a hardworking athlete. Nathaniel likes to hang out with his friends in his free time, and he likes to drive his truck. Nathaniel also enjoys playing video games. Nathaniel holds good grades while being an active member of his class.**



# What do You Love?

*Happy Valentines*



*Nathaniel: Mom*



*Anna: Taco Bell*



*Carlee: Family*



*Taylor: Dad*



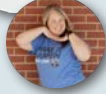
*Teague: Jesus*



*Brystol: Friends*

## COUNSELOR CORNER

CHAD THIEMAN &  
SHANNON HOOPS



### SENIORS

#### FAFSA Reminder

If you haven't already done so, it's time to complete the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid).

•Seniors and parents must first create an FSA ID (username and password) to electronically sign the FAFSA. Google "Create FSA ID" to get started.

•Once you have an FSA ID, complete the FAFSA at [fafsa.gov](https://fafsa.gov).

•The FAFSA uses your actual 2024 income tax information, which is automatically pulled from the IRS.

•This process is completely free. If you are asked to pay, you are not on the correct website.

#### After Submitting the FAFSA

Once your FAFSA is processed, you will receive an email with instructions on how to access your FAFSA Submission Summary. This document:

•Summarizes the information you reported

•Includes your estimated eligibility for a Federal Pell Grant, federal student loans, and your Student Aid Index (SAI)

•Indicates whether you were selected for verification

The colleges and universities you listed on your FAFSA will receive your SAI and will post a Financial Aid Award Offer in your student financial aid portal. Please check these portals regularly for updates and instructions on how to accept or decline awards.

When reviewing your award letter, pay close attention to:

•COA (Cost of Attendance)

•Grants and scholarships

•Work-study



•Loans (Perkins, Direct Stafford, and Direct PLUS loans)  
Important Loan Information

•Subsidized Stafford Loans: The government pays the interest while you are enrolled.

•Unsubsidized Stafford Loans: Interest accrues while you are enrolled and is your responsibility.

•Loan repayment begins 6 months after you are no longer enrolled full-time (fewer than 12 credits).

•You are NOT required to accept any loans offered.

I am happy to review financial aid award letters with students and families—please reach out if you have questions.

#### Scholarships & Senior Seminar

Seniors are actively working on scholarship applications during Personal/Workforce Readiness (Senior Seminar). Students have access to information on hundreds of scholarship opportunities.

Reminder: The only guaranteed way to not receive a scholarship is to not apply!

Every Friday through April 15 is designated as a scholarship work day. Please check in with your senior

to ensure they are using this time effectively.

We are grateful to representatives from Farmers State Bank, who continue to meet weekly with seniors to provide valuable financial literacy instruction.

#### Graduation Reminders

•All senior photos must be submitted for the graduation video and yearbook.

•Information regarding caps and gowns will be provided in class soon.

#### Selective Service

All 18-year-old males must register for Selective Service within 30 days of their birthday. Registration can be completed at [sss.gov](https://sss.gov).

#### College Visits

Seniors may miss up to two school days for college visits without affecting attendance.

Forms for job shadows or college visits are available from Mr. Thiemann. Visiting a campus is highly recommended if you are seriously considering attending.

Parents are always welcome to contact my office at 719-541-2291 with questions regarding college admissions or financial aid. Remember—reliable information should always be free.

### JUNIORS

•All juniors will take the Colorado

SAT (digital) on Wednesday, April 15. SAT scores are used for college admissions and many merit-based scholarships.

•The ACT is offered at various test sites on Saturdays.

oNext test date: April 11

oRegistration deadline: March 6

oCost: \$68

oRegister at act.org

### Leadership Opportunities

•**Colorado Boys State:** May 31 – June 6 at NJC (Junior boys)

A free, six-day hands-on leadership experience focused on government and civic responsibility.

See Mr. Thieman for application details.

•**Colorado Girls State:** June 7 – 13 at NJC (Junior girls)

A free week-long program emphasizing leadership, citizenship, and government.

Student Aid (FAFSA) is now open at studentaid.gov. Families will use information from their completed 2024 tax forms. Please remember that FAFSA is always free—if you are being asked to pay, you are on the wrong site.

### FRESHMEN & SOPHOMORES

The Sophomores recently visited Pikes Peak State College

to explore career pathways and academic programs. Earlier this year, 8th-grade students also participated in a similar visit. These experiences help students begin thinking about career goals and educational options. Thank you to Mrs. Hoops for coordinating these valuable opportunities!

All enrolled freshmen and sophomores will take the Colorado PSAT 9 & 10 (digital) on April 15. Results are used for school accountability and SAT preparation.

### ALL STUDENTS

•February's Elementary Counseling theme is friendships. Mrs. Hoops will be delivering classroom lessons throughout the elementary.

•Mrs. Hoops, along with Miss Eide and Mrs. Tipton, continues working with 6th graders on important life-skills topics.

6th Grade boys won the league basketball championship! Congrats Bearcubs, we are proud of you!



Our teaching staff recently completed Trauma-Informed Educator training, gaining effective classroom management strategies that support student success.

This professional development was made possible through the School Counselor Corps Grant, which also funds our second school counselor. We are committed to strategies that are best for kids.

### Counseling Support

Counseling offices (Mr. Thieman and Mrs. Hoops) are always open to students. Conversations are confidential unless there is concern for student or others' safety. Please encourage students to stop by if they need support.

Parents who would like to meet are encouraged to email [cthieman@bigsandy100j.org](mailto:cthieman@bigsandy100j.org) to schedule an appointment.

Private counseling resources in Simla, Limon, Elizabeth, and Colorado Springs are available upon request. Please reach out if we can help connect your family with additional support.

# SECONDARY PRINCIPAL NOTES:

SAMMI SWENNES

## STUDENT HONORS

### High School Wrestling

The wrestling team is off to a great start this season! We will be hosting a tri on Thursday, February 5 at 5 p.m. This is your chance to come watch your Simla Wrestlers at a home wrestling event. We have 7 wrestlers working hard to compete at the Regional Wrestling tournament coming up on February 13th & 14th in Rocky Ford.



### High School Basketball

The boys and girls teams are working hard to earn their spot in the post season...which is coming quickly! Both teams have had a strong start to the season and will push these next few weeks before regionals.

### Junior High Basketball

Great season to our junior high boys and girls teams this year. Both teams finished 2nd in the Black Forest League.

### High School Matchwits

The high school Matchwits team with finished their season on January 26th. They won the Regional Knowledge Bowl Competition for 2A and qualified for the STATE KNOWLEDGE BOWL in March!!

### FBLA

Good luck to all of our FBLA students that will be participating at the District FBLA meet on February 10! Results from their competition will be posted next month

## ATTENDANCE REMINDER

It is the belief of the Big Sandy School District that students who attend school regularly learn more and are more successful. Do-

ing the assignment for the day, can never completely make-up for the learning that is missed during an absence from school. As a parent, you can help Big Sandy and your student by assuring their regular attendance each day. If it is necessary for your child to be absent, please contact the office at 541-2291. Absences that are not reported are automatically considered unexcused and can carry both attendance and academic consequences. As we begin a new semester, review the teacher expectations with your child and revisit your student handbook for clarification of the attendance policy. Here are three ideas to help your son/daughter make the most of his/her educational experience:



1. Limit late-night work hours to the weekend;
2. Make sure your student has a loud alarm clock; and
3. Stress why he/she needs to get to school on time. An employer will not let him/her show up whenever he/she feels like it.

Students are allowed 8 excused absences (only 2 unexcused absences) per semester, and many students have exceeded that number from the first semester. 16 excused absences are allowed for the entire school year. When your student goes over the 8 absences for the semester or 16 absences for the year a Monday school or multiple Monday schools may be a consequence that is enforced. After 16 absences in the school year, the student and parents may be required to appear before the Big Sandy Board of Education. If your child has more than 16 absences (excused and/or unexcused) you may be invited to the April board meeting. The School Board reserves the right to allow academic sanctions, loss of credit, or other suitable measures for violations of the district's attendance policy.

We encourage students to be in school, but with all the crazy sickness again this year we also encourage students to stay home this year when they are not feeling well. Parents you have done an outstanding job this year keeping your kids home when they have been sick or having any sickness symptoms, and we appreciate that! Please contact your child's teachers for missing work, how to make participation points and any questions that may arise from your child's absence.



### NHS GUIDELINES

Students having a 3.5 GPA after the second semester of their sophomore year are considered for membership by a faculty committee. The committee also looks at a student's character, leadership abilities, and community service. Applications will be given to students, and we will begin the student interview process in the near future.

### PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

Parent teacher conferences will be held on February 19th from 3 – 8 p.m. Secondary Conferences will all be open conferences on a first come first serve basis. We will dismiss school early that day at 1:30 p.m. You are also welcome to call teachers to conference if you are unable to attend.

### END OF THE DAY PHONE CALLS

Please try to call before 3:30 p.m. if you are trying to get a message to your child by the end of the day. This is especially important for junior high students. Junior high has PE last hour of the day, and if we receive a call right before 4:00 p.m., the office sometimes is unable to relay that message in the transition after PE class. The earlier the phone call, the more time we have to relay the message.



### WE ARE SIMLA

Don't forget to follow We Are Simla on Facebook to stay up to date with updates from the secondary school. School Closures and delays are posted on this page, as well as athletic schedule changes and updates.

### DANIELS FUND SCHOLARSHIP FINALIST

Congratulations to Teague Jones for being named a 2026 Daniels Fund Scholarship Finalist. Teague will interview in February/ March for this prestigious scholarship. Way to go Teague!!



# THEN VS. NOW



*Joseph Caldwell*



*Kyleigh Cavender*



*Landree Cox*



*Kami Bell*

*Nathaniel Cauthon*



# DREAM JOBS



Ashley  
The new Mr. Beast



Reese  
Labor+delivery nurse



Micah  
Dancer



DJ  
Nurse

# SUPERINTENDENT BOARD NOTES

## DAVE ROBINSON

It is a great day to be alive and a Bear Cub!

### BOARD APPRECIATION

January was Board appreciation month and we want to give a huge thanks to our board members! Hank Smith (president), Curtis Stanko (vice president), Judy Book (Secretary/Treasure), Julie Pfost (director) and Debbie Carter (director). These individuals volunteer their time to help oversee our budget and policies for our district. When you see them, make sure you thank them for their volunteer service they provide for our district.

### EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCES

Our students are currently engaged in a wide array of clubs, athletics, and extracurricular activities. These programs are vital to the holistic success of our students at Big Sandy. We are incredibly grateful to the coaches, sponsors, and teachers who dedicate their time to providing these enriching educational experiences beyond the traditional classroom setting.

### FINAL BUDGET

Regarding district operations, the Board recently approved the final budget for the 2025–2026 school year. We continue to monitor state and federal funding developments closely. We anticipate more clarity on school finance by May, following the Governor's finalization of the Colorado State Budget.

### THANK YOU

On a personal note, it has been one year since my family and I began our journey with this district. I want to reiterate my thanks to the staff, students, and the entire community for making our transition so welcoming. It is an honor to serve as a Bear Cub.

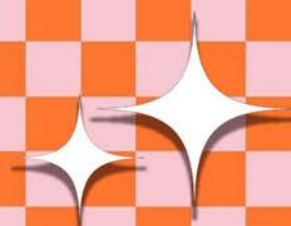


## 2026 YEARBOOK ORDERING IS LIVE!

Get your 2025-2026 Yearbook now before it's too late. You can order online by using the QR code or you can fill out an order form with Mrs. Sedlak. Yearbooks are \$55 and can be customized with your name and icons if you order online. The Journalism classes are working to make this the best yearbook yet so don't miss out!



# WHAT



## DOES IT MEAN ?



### 6-7

“Literally nothing it’s just funny!”



### CLOCK IT

“Calling someone out or like ‘ooh burn.’”



### RESPECT

Louis’s special invention-based off of a couple of TV shows. Use it when you like what someone is doing.

### IT'S GIVING



“Has the same vibe as something.”

### GLAZING

“Hyping someone up more than they deserve.”



### BUSSIN'

“It’s really good.”

# Teacher of the Month



Get to know our student  
advocate/counselor and SADD sponsor...  
**Mrs. Hoops!**



What high school/ college did you attend?

High school: **Pine Creek**, College: **University of Colorado, Colorado Springs**

What is your favorite class you have taken?

**"Anatomy and physiology in college."**

What is a quote you live by?

**"Do the best you can until you know better, then do better." - Maya Angelo**

What is a fun fact about yourself?

**"I was a Chinook helicopter mechanic in the military."**

What advice would you give your 16 year old self?

**"You don't have to have it all figured out. Enjoy life as it comes to you!"**

**CONGRATULATIONS!**

Made by: Reese Baker



# Most Likely To

## VALENTINES DAY EDITION

*Have a sugar crash on Valatines Day*

*Receave the most flowers*

*Forget it's Valatines Day*

*Wear black on Valatines Day*

*Buy their dog a Gift*

# FAVORITE MOVIE

BY: ZOEY L

**Hamilton**



**REESE**

**The Conjuring 2**



**DJ**

**Invincible**



**AYDEN**

**Baddies Africa**



**CECILA**

# SCHOOL NURSE

FROM THE SCHOOL NURSE

MARGARET (MAGGIE) VOLOSIN, BSN, RN

MVOLOSIN@BIGSANDY100J.ORG

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S

First, I would like to thank all of our Bear Cub families for your timeliness in ensuring your children are compliant with state immunization requirements. Your efforts and attention to this are greatly appreciated and help make tracking immunization compliance across the district much easier.

Although our weather has been relatively mild so far this winter, we know that can quickly change as we head into February and March. December was a challenging month for illness, particularly viral infections such as Influenza A. The good news, according to Children's Hospital Bug Watch, is that Influenza A cases in Colorado appear to have peaked and are now steadily declining.

That said, it remains important that we continue to be diligent with cleaning habits and respiratory hygiene. Please remember to wash your child's water bottles regularly, as well as coats and backpacks. Encourage frequent handwashing—especially after coming in from outside, before eating, and after using the restroom. Our classroom teachers do an excellent job reinforcing these habits during the school day, and continued reinforcement at home is very helpful.

Lastly, to minimize the spread of illness within our school, it is essential that children and adults stay home when they are sick. Sending a sick child to school not only increases the risk of spreading illness to others, but it may also prolong your child's recovery. Viral illnesses cannot be treated with antibiotics; rest and hydration are key to recovery. A typical viral illness may last 7–10 days. While over-the-counter medications and fever reducers can help manage symptoms, they do not prevent the spread of illness. Staying home and resting truly is the best medicine. As always, please contact your family's primary care provider for individualized medical guidance.

If you are unsure whether your child is well enough to attend school, please refer to the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment's "How Sick Is Too Sick?" guidance for specific details.

ChildCare\_How\_Sick\_Is\_Too\_Sick\_English (r2505).pdf - Google Drive

Thank you for your continued partnership in keeping our school community healthy.



## Preventing Colds and Flu



Cold and Flu season is upon us. As the weather gets cooler and we move inside, so do germs. Children need reminders to decrease the risk of colds and flu at school and home by:



- **Washing hands often**
- **coughing/sneezing into their elbow**
- **Keeping hands away from nose/mouth**
- **not sharing food/ drinks with others**



To help limit the spread of germs, please keep your child home from school and activities if they are feverish, coughing a lot, have thick yellow or green boogers, or are otherwise unwell. Remember:



- **handwashing is the most effective way to stop the spread of germs that cause colds and flu**
- **wash hands before and after eating or handling food, after using the toilet, handling pets, coughing, sneezing, or wiping noses**
- **the most effective treatment for a cold is rest and fluids**
- **If you do catch a cold or the flu, try to stay away from others to avoid spreading it**





# FEBRUARY 2026

## Big Sandy 100J

This institution is an equal Opportunity provider. Menu subject to change.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
2 Chili Frito Pie Lettuce, cheese Churro, Salad bar Fruit, Milk	3 Spaghetti Cheese Bread stick Lettuce, Salad bar Fruit, Milk	4 Hot Dog Mac-n-Cheese Corn, Salad bar Fruit, Milk	5 Chicken Whipped potatoes Gravy, Dinner roll Green beans Milk	6 BBQ chicken sandwich Chips, Potato Salad Carrots, Salad bar Fruit, Milk
9 Corn Dog Tater Tots Corn, Salad Bar Fruit, Milk	10 Tostada Lettuce, cheese Cinnamon apples Salad bar, Milk	11 Tater tot casserole Mixed vegetable Dinner roll, Salad bar Fruit, Milk	12 Chicken and Noodles Whipped potatoes Green Beans, Bread slice Salad bar, Fruit Milk	13 Sloppy Joe Chips, Baked beans Carrots, Salad bar Fruit, Milk Cookie
16 Orange Chicken Rice/Nooodles Mixed vegetables Salad bar, Fruit Milk	17 Ham Cheesy potatoes Green Beans, Dinner roll Salad bar, Fruit Milk	18 Pizza Lettuce, Salad bar Fruit, Pudding Milk	19 Hamburger Chips, Baked beans Lettuce, Tomato Salad bar, Fruit Milk	20 No School
23 Chicken Sandwich Chips, Carrots Potato Salad, Salad bar Fruit, Milk	24 Egg, Sausage, Cheese English Muffin Hash brown, Salad bar Fruit, Milk	25	26	27

Our favorite Rodent Weatherman will pop outside today...  
And if he spies his shadow Then Spring is 6 weeks away. But if he doesn't see it, Then Spring is in the Air.

