



# **SOUTH SHORE CHARTER SCHOOL**

## **WEEKLY UPDATE**

**September 17, 2004**

**To: SSCS Community**

**From: Mike Munhall, Head of School/Executive Director**

Welcome to South Shore Charter School, Norwell! We have gotten off to a wonderful beginning in our new home. Classes are moving along, students seem happy, teachers are uncovering their things stuffed in boxes from the move and we are getting our new systems in place. Many of you have commented on the new building, the program and how happy your children are with their school. As many of you know there have been some issues around arrival and dismissal. We feel that the system explained below will cut the time for pick up in half...please read it.

Getting the school renovated, moved and grown in enrollment by 27% in one summer took many hands. There are many people who need to be thanked for their work in getting us into our permanent and expanded home. The SSCS Board of Trustees made tough financial decisions several years ago, saw the vision, and took the opportunity to make this building available to our students. In particular, parent and Trustee, John Pollets, was a man with a mission to get us a new campus as head of the Facilities Task Force for the last several years. He kept the ball rolling as we searched for this spot to call home. People on the staff who have worked tirelessly to make this a reality are Kristine Shipp, Business Manager and Steve May, Project Manager. Daily for the last year they have devoted their working hours and beyond to get the building purchased and renovated. Without their work we would not have opened here this week. Our architects Jeff Davis and Blane Waldref of Tappé Associates, Boston put our needs into a tangible shape and oversaw its construction. Richard Paine of A.W. Paine Construction was committed to getting us into the building on time on a highly aggressive building schedule...we are deeply grateful to him for his commitment to our goal of this facility. Every time something put him off the timeline, he would make the changes necessary to get back on schedule. Few people know one other person who was our shepherd. Dwight Berg of California is the financial wizard who put together the financing to allow us to purchase and renovate this building. He has done similar magic for other charter schools but without him, I am confident we would be sitting on the beach in Hull wondering what to do. There are many construction workers, bankers, attorneys and supporters without whose help this all this would have been merely a dream.

Vinnie Zappi, our maintenance chief, was the force behind the move from Hull to Norwell. Working with our movers: New England Office Connection, he pulled off several smooth transitions from March to September. Last but far from least, I need to thank the work of the teachers, who, in 48 hours, turned an empty building into a school. Painting shelves, unpacking numerous boxes, working late into the evening, the dedication they showed in the

week prior to opening the doors is indicative of their commitment to working with your students.

Getting our enrollment to the required 468 and keeping it there has been a juggling match as students came and left over the last six months. Pam Algera and the administrative team met continuously to balance classes and levels and make calls to inform families of their acceptance. They took much care to make this all work, and I thank them for their efforts. The school, now at full enrollment, can move ahead with confidence and focus to be a leading school on the South Shore.

As we begin to settle into this new building over this year, there will be many opportunities for members of our community to help mold this entity. The school did not get to where it is by itself nor will it continue without support and creative drive of the community. But for today, let's enjoy this space and make it work for our students.

### **NEW AND IMPROVED DROP OFF AND DISMISSAL PLAN**

Being out in front of the school each morning and afternoon, I am very aware of the time it has taken for parents to drop off and pick up their students. I thank those of you who have demonstrated patience with this as we work out the kinks. The pick up is about half the time of what it was on Monday. However, we have students walking all over to meet their parents. This is not good for the students, or for area businesses. THEREFORE, after considerable discussion and planning on what will work today and all year, we are putting a new plan into effect as of MONDAY, September 20. Please read this plan, if everyone follows it, it should reduce the line time by at least 50%.

1. The Bus and the Commercial Van will drop off and pick up on Longwater Circle directly out from the school front door.
2. All cars will enter single file through the main entrance and then DIVIDE BY TOWN.

#### **FRONT DOOR**

Abington  
Braintree  
Bridgewater  
Brockton  
Cohasset  
Dorchester  
Halifax  
Hanover  
Hingham  
Holbrook  
Hull  
Kingston  
Marshfield  
Middleboro

Milton

#### **REAR DOOR**

Norwell  
Pembroke  
Plymouth  
Plympton  
Quincy  
Randolph  
Rockland  
Scituate  
Stoughton  
Westwood  
Weymouth  
Whitman

3. Level 1 students will leave from both the front and the rear door, depending on their town.
4. CARPOOLS WITH STUDENTS FROM MORE THAN ONE TOWN in them, need to decide which town will be designated for the carpool (e.g. if students from Marshfield and Scituate in one carpool choose Marshfield, that carpool will always be dropped off and picked up at the Front Door). Notify Ted Hirsch by email at [thirsch@sscs-ma.org](mailto:thirsch@sscs-ma.org) by Sunday noon (9/19) of which town you will be using.
5. All traffic will flow the same way for both drop off and dismissal.
6. Cars are asked NOT to park on Longwater Circle and have students walk out to the car.
7. If parents would like to park next door at the Weichert Relocation Resources building on the corner of Longwater Drive and Longwater Circle and *walk over* to pick up their student, they may. DO NOT park in front of any other property on Longwater Circle.
8. SUGGESTION: If parents arrive at 3:15 PM the line is pretty much gone and you can pick up your child immediately.

We believe this new division by town format will work if everyone follows it. Thank you for your patience and cooperation.

### **CHANGES IN DISMISSAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR YOUR CHILD**

If you have any changes to how your child is to be dismissed, a note is required at the beginning of the day. When parents call, we have no verification of who is making the request nor can we promise that there is time to relay the message to the classroom. In emergency situations where a pick up will be late, the parent needs to come to the office to pick up their child.

### **NAME CHANGE APPROVED**

I received word this week that SSCS has been formally approved to change its name to South Shore Charter Public School. For those of you new to the community, this is something our Board of Trustees approved in the spring in an effort to undo some of the negative publicity around charter schools as being considered private schools and not public schools. For us here at school there will be little tangible change. Our stationary and signs will reflect this change in the coming weeks.

### **PARENTS' NIGHTS**

Beginning this coming Tuesday night from 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM parents at each level will have their opportunity to hear from their child's teacher(s) what this year has in store for them. It is an evening that you should plan to attend. PARKING: when the school's parking lot is full, parents may park at the Weichert Relocation Recourses parking lot next door (the driveway just before the school's main entrance).

The Parent Night schedule is:

Tuesday, Sept. 21 – Levels 1 and 2 (Grades K-4)
Thursday, Sept. 23 – Levels 3 and 4 (Grades 5-8)
Tuesday, Sept. 28 – Levels 5 and 6 (Grades 9-12)

## **PICTURE DAY**

Monday, September 27 is Picture Day for the entire school. If you would like your child to dress up, you may want to include play clothes for them for later in the day. Parents will receive more information in the September 22<sup>nd</sup> Update.

## **NEW PUBLICATION DATE FOR *THE UPDATE***

In order to get menus and calendar items to parents and returned in a timely fashion, *The Update* newsletter will be published and sent home on Wednesday s beginning next week, September 22.

## **CALENDAR**

Attached is the calendar for September and October. Take a look at it each time it is sent, event dates change and you need to be aware of them.

## **LANDSCAPING**

The School would like to thank Quincy Adams Nursery on 3A in Weymouth for the plantings at the main entrance. Parent, Laurie Carnes, made the contact and did the planting. Parents with the gardening bug may sign up for the Grounds and Beautification Committee. Contact Laurie Carnes at 781/335-8015.

## **COMMUNICATION**

Attached you will find the new telephone extension directory for all teachers, faculty and staff. Our website is in the process of being updated and will be completed by the end of September.